

# Teddy's visits to The Valley

A photo tribute to Ted Kennedy from his last visits to the cities of Lawrence and Methuen Page 23



PHOTO:TOM DUGGAN

Lawrence Mayor Mike Sullivan at the podium introducing Senator Ted Kennddy in 2006 during the Lawrence floods that shut down sections of North Lawrence for nearly a week.



PHOTO:TOM DUGGAN

Senator Ted Kennedy in 2007 with his wife Vicky, then-candidate for congress, Niki Tsongas, Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi, and Methuen State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell at Manzi Gardens in Methuen during a Tsongas event.

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## VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

### James H. Derby

Lawrence "Lonnie" Brennan  
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

This is the secnd in the three-part series of  
"Heroes in Our Midst  
The Mt. Vernon Neighborhood."

"I was 18 and 4 months (of age) when I joined the Air Corps," Valley Patriot of the Month James H. Derby began, "I was a navigator. I got 24 missions in then I was in the hospital." The missions were B-17 bombing runs during WWII when "Jim" and his squadron flew daring daytime bombing runs from their base in England against heavy German defenses.

Now a spriteful 84 year old, the former WWII B-17 navigator had joined Mt. Vernon neighbors Ed Hickey and George and Helen Haynes at Joe's Landing Caf  at Lawrence Municipal Airport following a Summer open house and tour of a restored B-17 bomber. Mr. Hickey and Mr. Haynes are also Valley Patriots of the Month (see note). Mr. Derby is now a retired engineer, married to Kathryn (Wills) Derby.

"Yes, we got hit. I remember when we got hit on our second mission, engine blown out, when we got close to Hol-land and the pilot asked, should we go to Sweden, or can we make it home. I asked

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PHOTO: LONNIE BRENNAN

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# EDITORIAL

## The Massachusetts Congressional Delegation Betraying Our Most Precious Legacy

It took centuries of economic and political experimentation coupled with tremendous intellectual effort for human beings to discover the concept of individual liberty. It took the blood of millions to establish a beachhead for freedom and to protect it so it could grow and prosper.

Now that precious legacy is being squandered by the representatives of the very state that gave birth to the American experiment. In John Tierney's case, after cowering under his desk afraid to meet with his own constituents.

Will our representatives be ashamed when they vote to deprive us of the right to make our own health care decisions, or when they deny workers the right to vote in a secret ballot, or when they impose government's will through cap and trade?

Don't they understand the importance of being able to live our lives without the steel boot of government on our necks?

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But whatever you do, don't make your own decisions, and don't stand erect and proud. You are now a ward of the government. We know what you want, but more important, we know what you'll get. Now shut up and be happy.

2010 can't come soon enough.

Most of the citizens of Massachusetts no longer value their freedoms or their independence. They have elected representatives like Tierney who will gladly trade all our liberties for a few hand-outs. The risks and challenges of life are too much for them. They prefer a guaranteed existence even if the price is chains.

The public schools have left them ignorant of history and economics. They are ripe for slavery and the leftist political class.

We'd like to congratulate Congressman Niki Tsongas for holding town meetings and facing her constituents, treating them with respect and facing the tough questions on health care and at least listening to the voters who disagree with her.

We also want to thank Congressman Tierney for showing his true colors when it comes to "representative democracy" when he resisted the urge to hold a town hall meeting with constituents this past month.

We're sure Tierney would have liked to hurl some choice insults at the few remaining true Americans that wanted to meet with him and share their concerns regarding his complicity in the destruction of our liberties -- liberties that first took root in Massachusetts' soil. But we'll never know because, unlike his colleague Niki Tsongas he didn't have the courage to face the voters and answer the tough questions.



## Christy Mihos reads The Valley Patriot

To the editor:

Having read your perfect piece "Health Insurance Idiocy" in The Valley Patriot, I wanted to let you know what a wonderful public service you provided us all today. As a former Trustee of the University and a true believer of the great engine Lowell provides the entire region I am thrilled that you spoke out and put this all in

perspective.

Dr. Michael Foley is the Chairman of my Gubernatorial campaign and a former trustee with me during the Chancellor Hogan days we always enjoyed being on campus and supporting the mission of UML.

Thank you for your invaluable piece. Christy Mihos.

## Reader disagrees with editorial

To the editor:

I'm curious what the editorial board in their most recent column, "Fostering Black Racism," means when they say, "as if a meeting in the White House [...] will solve anything."

Specifically, the use of anything seems rather ambiguous. If by anything they mean the ruefully neglected race problem in this country then they are correct. A closed beer summit between a Cambridge cop and a Harvard scholar seems like a fairly juvenile and unproductive way to go about things. But, if by anything—and from the tone of the editorial I tend to this second meaning—they are referring to the terrible specter of black racism that haunts our hallowed nation then, well, that's a completely different matter. For one, it's like listening to the Ohio Express on repeat, that is to say, mind numbing. Or, maybe a better example, like two infants slinging baby slop at one another . . . except for one it ain't exactly slop (if you catch my meaning).

Of course, the editorial board couldn't mean that racism towards blacks does not exist, only to say that racism as practiced by blacks is just as reprehensible (surely not worse!) as racism practiced by whites. Well, even so, this still seems to resemble just a lot of slop slinging, and if there is

one thing that we all know about slop slinging is that it's really just a knee-jerk reaction against thoughtful extrication. Shouldn't we be asking about the causes of racism? For instance, is there something in the long and storied history of this country that would cause blacks to be distrustful of white authorities? Or, are we all just living in the immediate moment with no responsibility to our past?

Frankly, I have come to expect a great deal more from the editorial board who I have all known to be students of a somewhat history (in particular, Mr. Ormsby, whose "Thinking Outside the Box" I seek out first every month). So, in order to better educate said editorial board, and perhaps to provide them with a bit more perspective on the race issue, I would like to personally invite them to rise from their "whited sepulchers" (Matthew 23:27, King James Version . . . also Conrad if you prefer) and take a field trip down (and out) to any of the vast inner-city projects in order to cry fowl. I know a good one in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, but I think you'll find plenty closer to home. Please let me know, I'd like to come along.

As always, keep up the good work, and I will see you next month.

Grable D. Stubblefield- N. Andover

### News tips

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

### Letters to the editor, columns and op/eds

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**Corrections;** Please contact the editors at [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com)

The Valley Patriot is not responsible for, nor do we necessarily share the opinions of columnists and contributors that are published in the paper. Columns, by definition are opinion pieces.

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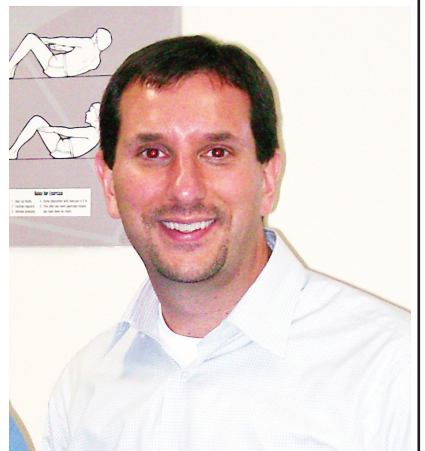
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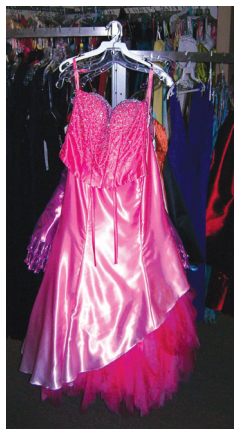
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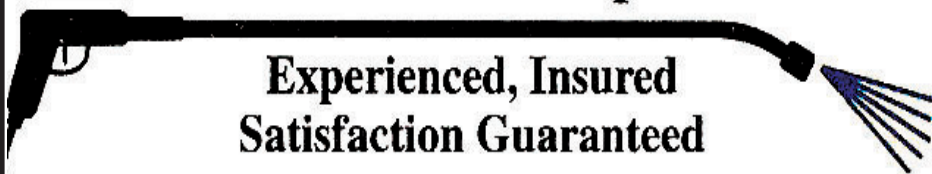
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## THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

# The government healthcare tar baby

Dr. Charles Ormsby

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

Having consulted with their constituents over the August recess, our elected representatives will be heading back to Washington fully intending to ignore what they were told. Their meetings with voters ranged from respectful (Niki Tsongas) to downright contemptuous (Barney Frank) to non-existent (John Tierney).

Presumably, Tierney knows what's good for us and he can't be bothered to mingle with the commoners. While enjoying his Lamborghini-style health insurance plan – paid for by his constituents – he doesn't want to hear about our preferences when it comes to managing our healthcare choices.

Oooooopppssss ... I forgot! Under the government-run healthcare system Tierney intends to vote for, we won't be making any choices; government bureaucrats, czars and expert panels will make those decisions for us.

So, you have this big lump growing at the base of your skull? How old did you say you were? Hhhmmmm ... maybe we can fit you in for a biopsy or MRI next year, but only if demand slackens.

You say you are afraid it is cancerous and may be inoperable by then? Don't worry. If we did the tests now, we couldn't operate anyway because your Societal Cost of Health Intervention Test (SCHIT™) score shows that, even if we did bestow treatment on you, you only have four years of socially useful life remaining. Yes, you might hang on longer than that, but what good will you be to society? And the costs of those final years ... Oh my God, society can't afford that!

What did you say? "But it's my life"? How quaint!

No, you can't offer to pay for all or part of the cost yourself because, you see, if you buy those services there will be just that much less available to others with a higher SCHIT™ score than you have.

You know that society has just so many resources, so we commissioned a panel of experts to determine how to best distribute them and to minimize societal costs. The experts came up with a model called Determination of Available Medical Necessities™. The DAMN™ model dictates that if your SCHIT™ score isn't at least five, we can't allocate such scarce resources; and, it has to be ten or higher to justify surgery or chemotherapy.

Too bad you didn't contract this problem earlier when your DAMN™ SCHIT™ score was much higher! Looks

like you are SCHIT™ out of luck!

Did you say something about death panels? No, no, no, no! We don't have those. Heaven forbid! Don't listen to that whacky woman from Alaska. We are just managing limited healthcare resources in the face of excess demand in order to maximize the common good.

What else would you expect from socialized medicine?

"Healthcare is a right" may be the rallying cry prior to passage, but once everyone has a right to it, at no out-of-pocket

shared by this writer. The seemingly easy way to assuage these feelings is to shift our moral responsibilities to the government.

Unfortunately, government control invariably makes the problem worse. Costs shoot upward and attempts to control costs lead to either denial of care (by force ... you can't have it) or reductions in compensation to providers (by fiat).

If you like the "reductions in compensation" approach, think again. This leads to only two options: either a reduction in

and sell them nationwide. Let unfettered competition force them to tailor policies to reflect your actual risks and the insurance protections you want ... at prices that objectively reflect those risks and the resulting financial obligations.

Let customers save money by just protecting themselves from catastrophic events and paying for all non-catastrophic events out-of-pocket. These customers, who now care about costs when they shop for medical services, will force providers to compete on both quality and cost. Providers, if freed from regulations that stifle innovation and raise costs, will devise more efficient ways to provide healthcare services and stay in business.

Stop subsidizing unhealthy lifestyles. Unhealthy behaviors are known to cause high medical costs. People can make these choices if they wish, but they shouldn't be allowed to impose the consequences on others. Their insurance premiums will reflect their choices.

When all this is done, Americans will need fewer healthcare services and those they do need will cost less. The overall magnitude of our national healthcare problem will be dramatically reduced.

Of course, there still will be hardship cases: the indigent, children with birth defects, those who decide to risk not having even catastrophic coverage, and even those who cause healthcare issues due to bad choices – smokers, alcoholics, drug-users, the obese, couch-potatoes, and motorcycle daredevils.

What about them?

The ultimate safety net is charitable giving. America is already the charity/giving capital of the world. With overall national healthcare costs dramatically reduced, substantial resources will be freed up for additional giving including expansion of charity hospitals and clinics.

While such charity will not be guaranteed and the charitable services offered may be less convenient or less extravagant, that is the incentive to not need it. That being said, those who face such issues through no fault of their own will, almost certainly, be well taken care of.

If you don't think so, you can always take out your wallet and be a do-gooder that actually DOES some good instead of one that dodges their moral responsibilities by laying them off on others and, in the process, embracing a tar baby that we will never be able to shake.



*Dr. Ormsby is an ex-member of the N.A. School Committee. He is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate from MIT. He is currently an adjunct professor of Math at UMASS, Lowell. You can email him*

*at: ccormsby@comcast.net*

**- President Ronald Reagan**

**"... But I suggest there is no such thing as a left or right. There is only an up or down: Up to man's age-old dream - the maximum of individual freedom consistent with order - or - Down to the totalitarianism of the ant heap. Regardless of their sincerity, their humanitarian motives, those who would sacrifice freedom for security have embarked on this downward path."**

cost, demand will skyrocket and rationing will be imposed, as it has been in every country that has put government in charge ... no exceptions.

There will just not be enough supply to satisfy demand. Someone will have to perform triage. With the government in charge the bureaucrats will need a DAMN™ SCHIT™ score to make the triage decisions appear objective (obviously with a different name, like MOMMY or PUPPY).

Access to healthcare will no longer be a right; it will depend on your score or whatever the government says it depends on. You will have no rights and no recourse, unless of course, you have pull with someone in Washington.

Decisions regarding one's health and providing resources for one's healthcare is a personal responsibility. No one has a right to free medical services. Healthcare can't be a legal right because, if it were, it would impose a legal obligation on others to perform such services which would be tantamount to ... slavery.

The imposition of slavery can be masked by paying people to perform the services commanded, but this just shifts the burden of slavery to the broader population in the form of increased taxes. The voter's resistance to taxes (those selfish lowlifes!) and the demand for healthcare services eventually reach a political balance and we end up losing both the right to manage our own healthcare and the right to keep the fruit of our labors. Only the bureaucrats win.

Compassion for those unable to afford healthcare is a common emotion and is

quality as competent professionals leave their medical practices (the most likely consequence), or forced labor (competent people forced to serve at wages below their market value).

If you don't like rationing of service, or reductions in quality/competence, or forced labor ... what is the alternative?

Let's grant that there are a substantial number of individuals that cannot afford, or have great difficulty affording, needed medical care. What can we do without imposing tyranny?

Let's think about our goals and how we can reasonably achieve them.

Here are goals we can all share: better quality, lower costs, more options, more choice, greater incentives for healthier lifestyles, less paperwork, and less bureaucracy.

Note that the last three items, if achieved, would further lower costs. Also note that more people would be able to satisfy their healthcare needs themselves if costs in general – and especially their costs if they chose healthier lifestyles – are lowered.

Does anything about government control suggest it can or will accomplish or even incentivize ANY of these objectives?

Go down the list. Won't government move everything in the wrong direction?

If moving a lever one way moves us in the wrong direction, maybe we should try to move it in the opposite direction: Less government.

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# Idling reduction campaign launched

Phil DeCologero & Lisa Conti  
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST REPORTERS

As North Andover parents begin driving their children to school this September they will notice there has been a minor change along school roads and parking lots: the addition of signs warning drivers not to idle their vehicle's engine.

This past spring the town of North Andover was awarded a modest grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. The focus of this grant was for communities to be given the resources to educate residents on Massachusetts anti-idling law, the penalties that breaking this law can carry, and the health and environmental impacts of idling. Through the work of Tina Klein, North Andover was fortunate enough to be awarded this grant.

Why is North Andover pushing residents to reduce idling? Because it is against the law!

The resources given to North Andover through DEP's grant were limited, and members of the North Andover Sustainability Committee chose to focus the bulk of these resources at venues where idling is most prevalent – our schools.

Our focus on idling reduction in school zones is driven by two equally important points.

First, as a suburban community North Andover does not experience frequent and excessive traffic problems. Congestion is not an issue. However, the idling that does occur in our community – and with startling frequency – is in school zones. This is because parents often line up outside schools as they wait to pick up their children, in most cases arriving 10 – 20 minutes prior to school being let out.

There is nothing wrong with a parent arriving to pick up their child from school. Unfortunately, in most cases the parent arrives, parks their car, and lets their engine run for anywhere between 5 – 20 minutes. This is not only an incredible waste of gas, but it is in violation of Massachusetts

General Law Ch 90, Section 16a. In addition to engine-idling carrying a fine, idling also has a huge impact on human health and the environment.

Health concerns are the second reason why NASC have chosen to focus on idling reduction around schools. Engine exhaust is heavy in particulates, which when inhaled can damage a person's lungs. When cars idle, especially around schools, the exhaust from multiple engines can dramatically affect air quality. In many cases, the exhaust from idling vehicles can make its way into classrooms with open windows – especially classrooms located near "pick-up" locations.

In the case of children, exhaust is even more of a hazard because children's lungs don't stop developing until the age of 18. Studies show that the frequent inhalation of exhaust can significantly retard the development of lungs.

Given the concerns for our younger residents, and the high concentration of idling vehicles, NASC is happy to begin North Andover's idling-reduction campaign by focusing on our schools. This campaign will include the addition of anti-idling signs around each of our town's five elementary schools, the Middle School, High School, Pre-K building, and Saint Michael's school.

In addition to posting signs, NASC will be providing educational material to students throughout the district, so that they (and their parents) are better aware of the health effects of idling – and of course that idling in excess of five minutes is against the law.

A simple google.com search of "children's lungs" will yield a number of informative studies on the affects of idling on children's lung development.

To learn more about the environmental effects of idling, or to read on why idling an engine isn't even necessary, please visit [www.MakeALeap.org/idling\\_myth](http://www.MakeALeap.org/idling_myth) or check out the Massachusetts Department of Energy at [www.mass.gov/dep/](http://www.mass.gov/dep/).



PHOTO: COURTESY

Tracy Zisk from Wiggles and Jiggles Dog Care Service in North Andover shows off the new pet oxygen masks she donated to the fire department after holding a fundraiser on July 4th on the common. The masks will help firefighters save pets they pull out of burning buildings.

## Pet Oxygen Masks donated

Tracy Zisk of Wiggles and Jiggles Dog Care services in North Andover held a fundraiser on the 4th of July to raise money for animal oxygen masks for use by firefighters when rescuing animals from a house fire. The masks cost \$55 each and Tracy was able to raise enough money to equip all four fire trucks in North Andover with the masks. "What I learned was that, when firefighters rescue animals from a burning building the often have to maneuver the human oxygen masks to try and fit over the mouths of the pets they save and sometimes they can't get them to fit. So these masks are designed to go right over the dogs and cats mouths to deliver oxygen more effectively." Tracy said after donating the masks to North Andover she had \$100 left over and donated that money to the North Andover Police for their K9 unit.

## North Andover Senior Center socials and events

Thursday, September 17, 2009, 12:00 – 2:00 PM, Rolling Ridge Conference Center is hosting an Artist's Luncheon. Rolling Ridge was built in the 1920's and is an historic Georgian Manor nestled in the woods on Lake Cochichewick with award-winning landscape, walking trails, historic fountains and a peace and meditation garden. Meal choices are: Atlantic Salmon filet or Roasted Chicken Breast. Cost: \$12.00, please call the center to sign up at 978-688-9560.

Wednesday, September 9, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. "Diabetes and You, Partners in Health" There will be an information table at the Senior Center with educational material regarding diabetes. You will also be able to sign up at that time to attend a 6-week program at the Center.

SHINE Counselors available at the North Andover Senior Center starting Tuesday, September 22, 2009. The SHINE

Counselors will be holding office hours at the Center on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of every month from 12:00 – 3:00 PM. Please call 978-688-9560 to set up an appointment.

Autumn Keep Moving Walks - The North Andover Senior Center is planning two trips for walkers sponsored by the Mass Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Friday, October 2, 2009 at the Upper Charles Trail in Milford, MA and Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at the Cape Cod National Seashore.

You can choose a 1-mile or 3-mile walk, bring a picnic lunch to enjoy following the walk and meet people from other communities. All walkers will receive a complimentary gift. Please call 978-688-9560 to sign up.

Limited seating on the bus, so sign up early. Cost is \$5.00 for 1 date or \$8.00 for both dates.

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# Ten candidates vie to be Mayor of Lawrence

**Tom Duggan**  
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

There are ten candidates running to replace Lawrence Mayor Mike Sullivan in the September 22nd city primary elections. The top two candidates will face a runoff election on November 3rd. Here is a snapshot of each candidate.

**Dave Abdoo** - Abdoo is the District E city councilor representing South Lawrence West on the council. He was elected two years ago and is in his first term.



Abdoo is a lifelong resident of Lawrence and a 1985 graduate of Central Catholic High School. He then earned a Bachelor's degree from Salem

State College and is presently working on his Masters in Public Administration from Suffolk University. Abdoo is the Governmental & Public Affairs Director for the US Department of Health & Human Services in Boston.

Prior to working for the federal government, Abdoo worked in State government as the Chief Policy Analyst for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation. He is an Armored Cavalry Officer in the Army/Navy National Guard and a member of Saint Patrick's Finance Council.

As an aide to State Senator Bruce Tarr, Dave helped constituents resolve problems with state and local agencies and receive services through government programs. Abdoo has been a member of the Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Association since 1999. He is married with 2 children. He is also the former Chairman of the Lawrence Planning Board and the Lawrence representative to the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission.

Abdoo has taken a tough stand on Lawrence Superintendent Wilfredo Laboy saying on WCAP radio last month that even if Laboy is not found guilty of any wrongdoing in the schools "he no longer has the moral authority to lead the school system". Abdoo lists constituent services as one of his top priorities and says he will have one full time person working in the mayor's office to handle phone calls, emails and resident complaints.

Dave has put forth his vision for a master plan for the city and has called for a full audit of not only the school department but every department in the city within his first 90 days as mayor. He says that he knows he will find waste within the city's budget and will shift those dollars to more effectively run the city.

Abdoo has shied away from the shenanigans that occur at the city council table and avoids the shouting matches and personal attacks that go on at meetings, preferring a more laid back style of governing. He opposed the current development of the Saunders School being used as a half way house (which is in his district) and has been harsh in his criticism on the administration's budgets.

He has not been involved in any major controversies since being elected two years ago, but has taken criticism by fellow candidates for his acceptance of police chief John Romero's endorsement in the race. During the Oiste debate last month, Abdoo said he would be a hands-on mayor when it comes to public safety but broke with the police department when he said he wants to have an "outside body" investigating allegations of police abuses rather than an in house internal affairs department.

Contrary to claims by some of his opponents Abdoo is a registered Independent

and has been for years.

**Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez** - As a district councilor in the Arlington Neighborhood (District "C"), Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez was an independent voice for her constituents



for more than six years. In 2005 Nilka was forced to move out of her home (her landlord refused to fix the heat in the building). And because her new home address was outside her district, she was compelled to step down (though not legally required to) and allow the city council to temporarily appoint a replacement (which turned out to be Barbara Gonzalez).

That year she ran for city council at-large capturing one of the three open seats and was reelected in 2007. Nilka is now running for mayor after ten years on the city council.

Alvarez-Rodriguez is an adjunct professor at Merrimack College and a consultant for the Massachusetts Department of Retardation. She has the endorsements of Oiste and several labor and human service organizations. She has generally worked well with her colleagues during her eight years on the council, has an understanding of budgets, non-profits, the workings of city departments and the flow of grant money through city coffers.

She is not afraid to go against the wishes of political insiders when she is passionate about an issue, and cannot be manipulated by outside forces like State Rep. Willie Lantigua, (though she is influenced by Lawrence Community Works).

In 2003 Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez enjoyed the distinction of being the only Latino candidate who was not endorsed by the "Latino Agenda," a racist group of political activists who endorse candidates based solely on their ethnicity.

She does, on rare occasions, have a tendency to allow race or ethnicity to enter into some of her political decisions, especially when Latino activists pack the council chambers to bully the council. Alvarez-Rodriguez did oppose selling the city owned, in-town mall on Common St. to Northern Essex Community College for a \$26 Million Health and Technology Center.

Alvarez opposed the NECC project because a Latino named Benny Espallat was the other bidder on the property and Alvarez was pressured by Spanish speaking activists in the city to be "loyal" to a "Latino," something Alvarez-Rodriguez was more than happy to do. In both 2003 and 2005 she lobbied other councilors to be elected council vice-president saying a "Latino" councilor should be president or vice president, which did not sit well with her colleagues.

But Alvarez-Rodriguez is no racist and she is no race-baiter. She is not looking to be the "leader of the Latinos" and though her positions can be tainted by racial pressure, Alvarez has no problem at all siding against Latino activists when it suits her. One example of Alvarez bucking the racist trend in the Latino community was her brave vote to hire David Cammasso as City Comptroller while some activists were pressuring her to vote against him for being white.

Alvarez voted against allowing police officers to take home undercover vehicles, and supported a measure by council president Patrick Blanchette to have the council take control of the day to day operations of the police department.

Alvarez Rodriguez says one of her main issues is affordable housing in the city and helping city non-profits. She has been a

strong supporter of Lawrence Community Works and using city money for social and cultural programs in the city.

**Patrick Blanchette** - Blanchette is the city council president and has been on the council for ten years. He was appointed by Governor Deval Patrick to be a conciliator at the state's Industrial Accident's Board, the agency that holds court on worker's compensation claims in Massachusetts. He has since taken a leave of absence to run for mayor.



Blanchette previously served two years as the city council vice-president, six years as president, is the former chairman of the council's ordinance subcommittee, is the former chairman of the city's Charter Review Committee, and a member of both the Vendor Committee and the Community Development Advisory Committee.

Blanchette is also a member of the Lawrence Democrat City Committee and a former volunteer for the Prospect Hill Little League. Blanchette is currently unemployed after failing to meet the requirements of state testing as the discipline coordinator at the Greater Lawrence Technical School.

Blanchette was first elected to the council in 2001, the same year City Councilor Mike Sullivan ascended to the mayor's office. Blanchette endorsed Sullivan's opponent Isabel Melendez that year, but quickly became Sullivan's strongest ally on the council when the election was over.

Blanchette and Sullivan worked well together at first, hashing out the details of the new \$110 million dollar Lawrence High School project, renovating the Veteran's Memorial Stadium, approving the multi-million dollar water treatment plant and providing tax incentives to businesses moving to Lawrence.

A few months before Sullivan's reelection in 2005, however, Blanchette applied for a job with the city's workforce investment board but did not get hired because budget and finance director John Griffin did not recommend him for the job. That's when Blanchette jumped off the Sullivan bandwagon and became his harshest critic, attacking Sullivan and Griffin both politically and personally and eventually demanding that Griffin be fired by the mayor.

Despite his wrangling with the mayor, Blanchette stood with Sullivan and his family at the mayor's campaign headquarters on Essex Street in 2005 when Sullivan ran for re-election against Marcos Devers There, Blanchette announced, "I hope you will join me and my family ...when we vote for Mayor Michael Sullivan for re-election on Election Day."

Within days of Sullivan's reelection, however, Blanchette turned on Sullivan yet again, publicly attacking him and his administration. Blanchette made the Boston news when he referred to Mayor Sullivan as "Saddam Hussein" at a public meeting. After months of personal attacks and political harassment at public meetings, Blanchette eventually drove both budget and finance director John Griffin and city comptroller Jim Limperis into resigning from their jobs.

He also attacked City Attorney Jim Bowers, whom Blanchette said should be "disbarred" and threatened to go to the Board of Bar Overseers to have Bower's license to practice law revoked because Bowers negotiated a buyout of Griffin's contract. Blanchette claimed Bowers had committed "criminal acts" while working for the city and placed official items on the council agenda humiliating Bowers and calling for him to be fired. Blanchette did retract his

accusations a week later the public learned that the allegations Blanchette made against Bowers were simply made up.

The council president has also been the subject of controversy when it was reported that the Lawrence DPW paved High St. in front of the Blanchette family home at nearly 200% of the legally quoted price. Residents of Prospect Hill complained that High Street was paved in front of Blanchette's family home, but the other half of High Street was never finished. DPW Director Frank McCann and his wife Andrea Traficanti-McCann have been strong political supporters of Blanchette for years.

Blanchette initially bowed out of the mayoral race when it was learned that he owed nearly \$9,000 in back taxes to the IRS and had made no attempt in three years to pay of that debt. Once the controversy died down in the media however, Blanchette jumped back in the race saying he is the only candidate with the experience to run the mayor's office.

Blanchette told The Valley Patriot during his reelection campaign two years ago, that he "believes that a civil tone needs to be brought back to Lawrence politics and he will work toward that goal for the next two years." Two years later however, Blanchette seems to have not only failed to bring a civil tone to Lawrence politics but set a new low standard of degrading discourse in public debate, often personally attacking the budget and finance director.

His supporters say Blanchette is only holding the Mayor Sullivan accountable for what he sees as an administration "out of control" with "no fiscal accountability" and "lacking in leadership" when it comes to the day to day operations of city hall. Blanchette was on the forefront of the Northern Essex/In-Town Mall controversy, supporting the college's move to purchase the In-Town Mall for a multimillion dollar Health and Technology center over the objections of State Representative Willie Lantigua. He also fought to stop a land grab at the Veteran's Memorial Stadium when the school department tried to take a parcel of Stadium property for use by Lawrence High School. Blanchette rightly brags about a newly renovated park on Prospect Hill. Though Blanchette's lack of standards as council president directly led to the breakdown in decorum, procedure and civility at city council meetings during the numerous budget crisis', he did refuse to support councilor Grisel Silva's motion to cut city services by \$3 million. He also fought to stop Mayor Sullivan from raising property taxes to the levy limit.

**Dan Cotnoir** -This is hero marine Dan Cotnoir's first run for public office. He has been running Racicot Funeral Home for 19 years and was in the United States Marine Corps from 1999 - 2006. Cotnoir's task in Operation Iraqi Freedom was to recover the dead

bodies of American Servicemen on the battlefield, often times under enemy fire. He was charged by Lawrence Police and prosecuted (persecuted?) for discharging a firearm at teenagers who were throwing rocks and bottles at his home on Broadway at 2am. A jury found Cotnoir not guilty of any wrongdoing in the shooting. Since that time Cotnoir has taken his message of reforming the police department to the public on Boston news channels and in his campaign. He has publicly discussed his frustration with the Lawrence Police, saying they had refused to respond to continuous 911 calls from his home prior to the shoot-





# Only Politicians can have good ideas?

Mark Gray

CANDIDATE FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEE

In Feb, 2007 I put on the city council agenda an idea to follow up on statements I had made to the city council. The idea was to have an oversight board for the police department, and to walk the sub-committee and the city council through the idea. Knowing that committees are riddled with back door politics that drown out the intent of what should be happening, with what does happen.

The idea was basically a board with no political connections, members to be ex-military to be sympathetic to policies, procedures, and situational tactics. Other members would include people in high crime areas, and those that are open to HEAR the public. The members would also deploy ideas like a complaint system that does not exist currently. The complaints could be picked up at the police station, city hall, anywhere. The members could go on 'ride alongs' like other cities in other states do. The members could also make sure that crime scenes are being preserved and information is being gathered (policies, at least in other states). The board can point out problems as well as validate any misconceptions the public may have about things that are being done.

The drafting of the board would include ways to get rid of board members should they fall under the commonly known title of 'rubberstamp'. It would also outline ways to give the board 'teeth' in the event that the city council and police department ignore the board.

I hope that gives a general idea of the board, without writing pages of what I had intended. The idea of the oversight board isn't even the main point of my question to the mayoral candidates and the voters.

During a mayoral candidate debate, posted by the Valley Patriot, several mayoral candidates talked about an oversight board for the police. With the exception

of Mr. Cotnoir who proposed not only the idea, but an immediate way to get intervention and Mr. Devers who were not on the city council when I addressed the issue of a oversight board, I'm curious to know why a police oversight board or a outside investigation is a good idea now that they proposed it. Not when Mr. John Q Public comes up with the idea. Well, you don't need to hear my answer to that I can quote one mayoral candidate who said "...and I'm the person who can do that type of thinking for you"

For anyone thinking that you the tax payer is unaffected by the city council ignoring the members of it's public, and the politics over the well being of the community is something to live with. Let me just leave you with one example of how the city council could be costing you 300,000 to a million dollars (on 1 two minute public speech) because they can't be bothered to lift their heads and pay attention to what the public is saying. Again, because they do our thinking for us. M.G.L ch 71 sec 7a, 12b, 16c, 7b, etc deal with ways for cities to get reimbursed from the state for transportation of students annually on or before November 20th. The city pays for general student transportation, or can pay for it and it would seem, get reimbursed for it. So why, when John Q Public goes before the council to share this type of information are they ignored?

Since your city council can't be bothered to listen when John Q Public speaks, you the tax payer will just have to pick up the tab. Your job this election, is to find out who the people are who ignore the public, and who listens (the rare few).



Mark Gray is a school committee candidate from District E with 3 sons in the Lawrence Public School system. He served in the Marine Corps, the Army reserves, and has been active with the issues and problems facing the community. Mark can be reached by e-mail at [ghostapollo@yahoo.com](mailto:ghostapollo@yahoo.com)



PHOTO: COURTESY

## Memories of Summer 2009

Sarah Matar

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

Sadly, the summer is coming to an end but the memories will last forever. The list goes on and on with all the great times I had so I can only share a few.

Every summer I go away to visit my dad in California. This year it was even better because I would bring my good friend along, Tara Martin. Tara has been my friend since freshman year at Central. She is also very close with my sister, Jessica. I knew we would all have a blast together.

Jessica, Tara, and I took a flight together on July 4th and made it to San Jose, CA, in time before the fireworks. Our week in Northern California was really fun. We took two person bikes and biked the Golden Gate Bridge, went to Santana Row, and often hit the pool to hangout. Our time at the pool was a time to relax from all the excitement and of course to meet cute boys.

After spending about a week in Northern California, my dad surprised us with a four day trip to Vegas. We were shocked but so excited.

Vegas was extremely hot! Every morning we would go to the wave pool and

then tan until the weather "cooled" down a bit. At night, we would walk through the strip or watch entertaining shows. Vegas was a blast and I wish I could tell more but hey, "what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas."

Tara's last week was the week my brother also flew in from Boston. When he arrived, my brother, Roger, did most of the driving to Southern California. Southern California was a blast and the weather of course was amazing. We went to Universal Studios, Newport Beach, and Disneyland. My dad also took us to a Lebanese restaurant where we ate, watched a belly dancer, and also danced. We told Tara that she could be Lebanese like us for that night.

I really had a great time on my trip to California. I consider myself very lucky. I have a great dad to thank for his generosity. I have him to thank for the best, most unforgettable summer.



Sarah Matar is in her senior year at Central Catholic High School and is The Valley Patriot's new High School columnist. You can send story ideas or comments to Sara at: [sara06matar@yahoo.com](mailto:sara06matar@yahoo.com)

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# NOTEBOOK: FROM PAGE 8

ing incident. During a recent debate sponsored by Oiste, Cotnoir pledged to have a civilian review board oversee complaints against the police and said that officers who drive around using their cell phones interfere with them doing their jobs.

Cotnoir has also been very involved in Veteran's organizations and civic groups in Lawrence and Methuen. He is a Member of Lawrence Exchange Club, the Board of Directors Holy Family Hospital Men's Guild, VFW post 8349, AMVETS post MA29, the Marine Corps League, American Legion Post 122, and the Lawrence Knights of Columbus # 67.

**Marcos Devers** – Devers has served the city of Lawrence as an at-large city councilor, the council vice president, the council president and acting mayor. He was the first Latino mayor in the history of the city.

Devers is a civil engineer, was an educator at Lawrence High School and the Greater Lawrence Technical School and taught at Santurce Community College, Santurce, Puerto Rico.

Four years ago Marcos Devers won a hotly contested primary for mayor and was the finalist against incumbent mayor Mike Sullivan. Devers pushed hard for a GIS (geographic information) computer system, integrating all city departments and offices in the city to a centralized computer system. Devers says this system would integrate information in such a way that city inspectors, police officers, DPW and other city workers would have access to vital information to serve the public better.

Devers ran twice for state representative against Willie Lantigua, once having his name removed from the ballot over an address dispute where he mounted a sticker campaign and pulled an impressive number of votes. Devers was appointed by Governor Deval Patrick as the office manager for the Industrial Accidents Board in Lawrence, a job he resigned from to run for mayor this year.

A strong proponent of a residency requirement for all city workers, Devers says he would fight to bring back the old law requiring all city workers to move into the city within two years of being hired. The law was voted out of existence during the Patty Dowling administration but the issue has seemed to resurface during this campaign with Devers taking the lead and other candidates echoing his position.

During his brief stint as mayor, Devers investigated and identified nearly \$18,000,000.00 in deficits in the city and began the process of tracking and reversing the debt. He petitioned Washington DC to designate Lawrence as a Renewal Community and has been active in dozens of private and civic organizations in the city.

Devers has a very loyal, very strong base of support throughout the city and in a field of ten that puts him on even footing with the other major candidates. Among his many accomplishments was his tireless fight to save the Veteran's Memorial Stadium and support a \$7 million bond to renovate the once crumbling structure.

**Nunzio DiMarca** – DiMarca served two non-consecutive terms on the Lawrence City Council and has been involved in the community for more than 40 years. He has been an administrator at Northern Essex Community College, a teacher at Lawrence High School, the Greater Lawrence Technical High School, Merrimack College, and more recently in Medford. He is currently teaching at Lawrence High School.

DiMarca does not shy away from controversy but says that he was exonerated by the Massachusetts Ethics Commission last year after a complaint was filed over receiving a free trip to Italy from a business owner he was lobbying for. Recent votes by city councilors to restrict police officers from taking home their undercover vehicles had their origins in proposals DiMarca spearheaded during his time on the council. DiMarca is critical of Mayor Sullivan and his administration, in particular the police department and the budget and finance office in city hall.

He has long advocated a human rights commission in the city and was intimately involved in helping the ACLU two years ago when they came to Lawrence looking for police abuses to exploit. He supports a residency requirement for city workers and wants to have a civilian review committee oversee the Lawrence Police Department.

Dimarca's biggest accomplishment (besides being able to speak more than 8 languages fluently) was his contribution to helping to save the Veteran's Memorial Stadium and secure a bond to rehab the structure. DiMarca is the president of the Son's of Italy, past president of Hispanic Week (Semana Hispana) and has a radio program on local radio.

**Willie Lantigua** – Lantigua is a State Representative who has been active in city politics for at least 15 years. Lantigua started his political career managing Jose Santiago's successful campaigns for city council in the early 90's then successfully managing his campaign for State Representative. But a dispute erupted between Lantigua and Santiago over Representative Santiago's decision to run for mayor in 2001. Lantigua was managing the campaign of Isabel Melendez and was so infuriated by Santiago's betrayal that he came back the following year and defeated Santiago in his reelection for state representative.

If elected mayor Lantigua says he will keep his seat at the state house and serve as both Lawrence's mayor and its state representative.

Lantigua has the strong support of Bill Traynor of Lawrence Community Works, who has held fundraisers for Lantigua's mayoral bid. Lantigua has sought and secured state funding for Community Works and is one of their biggest supporters.

Lantigua has opposed Voter ID in the city, was actively involved in the federal lawsuit against the city of Lawrence which resulted in an out of court settlement that broke up school committee elections from at large voting to district representation on the committee. Lantigua has been a strong advocate for the YWCA's rape crisis center and several other non-profit organizations in the city. He is often seen in city hall attending meetings, in particular licensing board meetings where Lantigua has been actively involved in night club licensing issues. He once accused former Licensing Commissioner (now city councilor) Roger Twomey of being a racist when Twomey inspected a Lantigua political function and cited the bar owner for illegally purchasing alcohol for the event. Twomey was exonerated by the city council which voted not to fire him but not before Lantigua had his wife appointed to the licensing board.

Lantigua brags on his website: "Earlier this year, Rep. Lantigua introduced legislation that would impose a six-month moratorium on foreclosures in Massachusetts, allowing borrowers to work with lenders to readjust the terms of unfair loans. He also sought to strengthen the state's gun control laws by proposing increased penalties for

unlawful possession of a firearm and failure to report the loss or theft of a weapon."

**Pedro Payano** – A long time political activist, Payano has campaigned primarily for Marcos Devers in past elections, supporting his campaigns for council, mayor, and state representative. In this race, however, Payano joins his



former ally Devers in the race to be the next mayor. He has also campaigned for major democrat candidates in state and national elections, most notably playing a large part of Niki Tsongas' successful campaign for congress in 2007.

Payano helped organize the "May Day" rally on the Lawrence Common in favor of granting amnesty to illegal aliens and encouraged students and members of the community to take the day off to attend the rally which he characterized as supporting "immigrants".

Payano teaches social studies at Lawrence High School and is very popular among younger voters who remember him from their days at Lawrence High. He has had a very low profile on the campaign trail and has very little money to spend on campaign material.

He cites as his top priorities if elected: reinforcing a neighborhood watch program in key areas of the city, a "Citizen and Police Advisory Committee" and capitalizing on the "green economy" by recruiting biotech companies to locate in Lawrence and find environmentally friendly ways for the city to save money and energy.

He has long been a critic of Lawrence Superintendent of Schools Wilfredo Laboy and periodically writes an opinion column for Siglo21 the Spanish language weekly newspaper.

**Israel Reyes** – Reyes served one (two year) term on the Lawrence City Council being elected city wide. He ran for state representative unsuccessfully and has been



involved in dozens of campaigns behind the scenes. He has been a mortgage broker, a developer, worked for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and is involved as an investor and former board member of the now defunct Veritas Bank. He served on the Lawrence Planning Board and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. Reyes says he has raised more than \$80,000 for his mayoral campaign and was the very first candidate to declare for the mayor's office. For at least two years Reyes has been knocking on doors throughout the city, putting up signs, making phone calls and raising money.

He was the first to call for Superintendent Wilfredo Laboy's resignation but has since been reported to be under investigation in the school department scandal that has resulted in an investigation by the Attorney General's Office and the Essex County District Attorney.

Reyes says he has done nothing wrong but has been ordered to testify before a grand jury looking into improprieties in the school department. For his part, Reyes main campaign issue is jobs for city residents and using the power of the mayor's office to help increase the number of jobs for Lawrence residents. Oddly enough Reyes says he does not and did not support the city's residency requirement but also stated at the Oiste debate that he would enforce the law if residents put it on the ballot and it was passed by the voters.

As a city councilor Reyes was one of three councilors who voted to fire Licensing Commissioner Roger Twomey amid charges of racism by State Rep. Willie Lantigua. Reyes at the time was the can-

didate Lantigua was supporting at that fundraiser where Twomey found illegally purchased alcohol and alcohol illegally being consumed outside (in violation of the proprietor's liquor license).

Reyes says that he wants to expand the effectiveness of the city's workforce investment board and use city services to help train and educate residents for the job market. He also stresses the city's need for a centrally located public safety building in the city merging police and fire management in one facility.

**Julia Silverio** – Silverio was first elected into office when she defeated an incumbent Pauline Brown as the District B city councilor. It was a racially charged campaign that left bitter feelings on both sides but once Silverio took office she quickly became acclimated to the environment of city politics. She often sparred with fellow councilor Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez but was relentless in pushing her agenda for the city.



One of her biggest votes as a city councilor was on Northern Essex Community College's bid to purchase the Intown Mall on Common Street to build a \$26 million dollar Health and Technology Center. Silverio opposed the college bid in favor of a lower bidder Benny Espailatt who proposed moving his giant shoe store to the site. Silverio did play the race card accusing NECC of being racist college but has toned down her rhetoric on race issues since then. She was a strong supporter of putting the new Lawrence High School Campus in South Lawrence in order to save churches and private property on Haverhill Street (the other proposed site).

Silverio is a business owner and homeowner in the city, she runs her own travel agency on Essex Street and has been active in several community organizations in the city including: Central Catholic High School Board of Trustees, Founder of the Latino Scholarship Fund, St. Mary's School Board of Trustees, Lawrence Public Schools, Partners in Education, Lawrence Main Streets, Merrimack Valley Community Foundation, New England Hispanic Commission for Civil Rights, Founding Member of the Lawrence Youth Commission, Founding Member of Los Trinitarios Club, Former Ladies Guild President, Hispanic Week Committee, Founding Member and Treasurer MASS Rehabilitation Commission.

Silverio was also the recipient of the YWCA Tribute to Women in Industry Award, 1986 and received the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year Award.

She stresses unity in her campaign saying she is the candidate who can bring together Latino and non-Latino residents of the city. She speaks both English and Spanish fluently and enjoys a large base of support among residents of North and South Lawrence. Silverio says as a small business owner herself, she knows how to use the office of the mayor to help small businesses in the city by focusing on their needs. She says as mayor she will expand workforce training and bringing together small businesses in the city to work together on streamlining city services and the city permitting process. She advocates more affordable housing in the city and supports reinstating the city's residency requirement which would force new city employees to move into Lawrence within two years of being hired.



Tom Duggan is the president of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP, 980AM, every Saturday from 10am-noon. You can email your comments to Tdugjr@aol.com.



# What’s Up with Math?

**Peter Larocque**  
LAWRENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

I would like to focus on something other than politics this month and consider a more meaningful issue which is Math teachers teaching Math to students in Massachusetts. Before going any further I would like to call your attention to an article in the Boston Globe by Globe Staff writer, Mr. James Vaznis, May 19, 2009. Aspiring teachers fall short on math. Below you will find three links, the globe article I mentioned and two other additional links that have offered information for this article. <http://www.ernweb.com/public/1172.cfm>

\* [http://www.wpri.com/dpp/news/local\\_news/local\\_wpri\\_massachusetts\\_aspiring\\_school\\_teachers\\_fail\\_in\\_math20090519](http://www.wpri.com/dpp/news/local_news/local_wpri_massachusetts_aspiring_school_teachers_fail_in_math20090519)  
\* [http://www.boston.com/news/education/k\\_12/articles/2009/05/19/aspiring\\_teachers\\_fall\\_short\\_on\\_math/](http://www.boston.com/news/education/k_12/articles/2009/05/19/aspiring_teachers_fall_short_on_math/)

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education voted in 2007 to require new elementary and special education teachers to pass a test of math proficiency in order to earn their preliminary or initial license. Veteran elementary teachers will not have to take this exam.

Previously, elementary school teachers could receive a state license without answering a single math question correctly on the general curriculum exam. Nearly three quarters of the aspiring elementary school teachers who took the state’s licensing exam this year failed the new math section according to results released that focus on the subject for the first time.

Mitchell Chester, the state’s commissioner of elementary and secondary education said, “The high failure rate was not surprising.” Only 27 percent of the more than 600 teaching candidates, who took the test in March, the first time it was administered, passed the exam. The test included questions on geometry, statistics, and probability.

Chester said, “While we have a lot to be proud of in Massachusetts about student math achievement, not all our students are receiving a strong math education, particularly in elementary school grades and particularly among students with disabilities” Education leaders said the high failure rate reflects what they feared; too many elementary classroom and special education teachers do not have a strong background in math and are in many ways responsible for poor student achievement in the subject, even in middle and high schools.”

These elementary teachers are considered the front line of math instruction, providing the building blocks of computation and mathematical reasoning that students must master before tackling algebra, trigonometry, and calculus later in their academic lives. Commissioner Chester also said, “The new test is designed to ensure our workforce, our teachers, have a strong understanding of math if they are going to teach math.”

“The failure rate isn’t because we have placed some arcane, really hard, high –level math on the test,” said Robert Bickerton, associate commissioner for the Elementary and Secondary Education Department, “What we’ve done is say you need to know this math deeply and you need to be able to answer your students when they ask why.” Some educators, including representatives of teachers unions and school administrator groups, place blame squarely on teacher preparation programs for failing to adequately train elementary school and special education teachers in math instruction, which is often overshadowed by the critical skills of reading and writing.

“The high failure rate puts a shining light on a deficiency in teacher-prep programs,” said Tom Scott, executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. “If you look at transcripts of some applicants for elementary school teaching positions, it’s possible you could see a transcript without anything math related. Someone could have last taken a math class in high school.”

Since the state began developing the new

testing requirement two years ago, teacher colleges across the state have been beefing up math instruction, requiring students to pass not only traditional math courses but also the pedagogy of teaching math. Richard Freeland, commissioner of the state Department of Higher Education, said earlier this year that both public and private colleges are doing the best they can to revamp programs in a short time.

Furthermore, state education leaders enacted the new certification requirement so bay State students can better compete internationally. Massachusetts lags behind parts of China and other Asian countries on international measures, even though the state routinely tops national standardized tests. The American Institutes for Research released a report entitled “Why Massachusetts Students, the Best in the US, Lag Behind Best -in-the -World Students of Hong Kong.”

So how does all this affect the teaching of Math in Lawrence Public Schools? I remember when I was the PTA President of the Lawrence High School back in 2004-2006 and I would routinely have the freshmen and sophomore math teachers come to PTA Meetings to explain to parents how they prepare their students for the Math MCAS Test. I heard back then what I still hear today that LPS needs to attack math and treat math the same way it has for reading and writing English. Also I think we need to provide professional development instruction for our veteran elementary and special education math teachers who are being grandfathered in without taken this new math test. I personally do not want to waste time assigning blame for the high failure of new teachers being tested in math. I do however want the children of Lawrence to receive the best math instruction and I also think the methods of teaching math can and should be discussed. I for one would like to see cooperative learning done away with in math class’s grades 6 through 8. Sitting in classrooms with desks in groups of 4 is not the way math should be taught in my opinion. This encourages some students to just copy the work of others and not do any thinking on their own. But after the students formulate their own thoughts, at that time the students could work cooperatively to compare ideas. Also teachers standing in front of the students all day giving lectures does not help in encouraging learning. I would like to see in our grade 6 through 8 math classrooms institute the following:

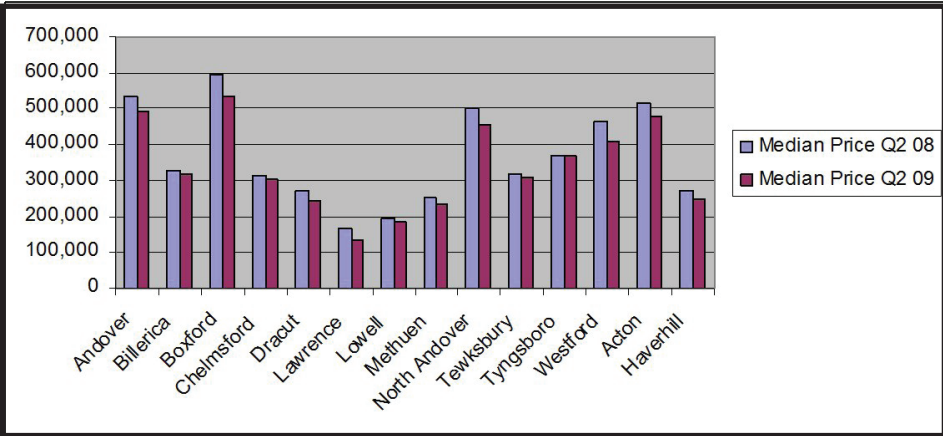
- 1. Same gender classrooms.
- 2. Desks in rows.
- 3. Mixture of teacher instruction/lectures with group work.
- 4. Two math periods per day.
- 5. Mentor program between new and veteran math teachers.
- 6. Parents getting involved with their children’s math instruction by practicing the basics, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing every night for about 20 minutes. Just like reading before bed time, take a little extra time and do some math. Young children should be beginning school already knowing numbers from 0 to 10.

Making these small changes on how we present math to our younger children along with proper professional development for our veteran elementary and special education math teachers joined with parent involvement would in my humbled opinion improve our student achievement in math.

God Bless  
Peter Larocque



*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 call him at 978-682-0900, email him at [peterlarocque@hotmail.com](mailto:peterlarocque@hotmail.com)*



## 2nd quarter housing stats in the Valley

**Crystal Renee Blanchard**  
VALLEY PATRIOT LEGAL COLUMNIST

With many people looking for signs that the economy is starting to rebound, we look to the recently prepared Housing Statistics for the second quarter in 2009. The statistics were released by the Northeast Association of Realtors (NEAR).

The statistics show that there has been a slight change in certain areas of the market. In a year to date comparison, the number of single family homes sold in 08 was 1202 and in 09 1097. The number of Condo’s sold in 08 was 502 and in 09 was 436. The market for the Multi Family has actually increased by 17.2% with the numbers showing for 08 were 320 and in 09 were 375. However, the second quarter has not increased in comparison to the 08 figures. This concludes that the greatest purchases of multi families occurred in the first quarter.

The median, or average price of a home in the second quarter for the 2008 year for a single family home was \$318,000 and in 2009 was \$299,900.

The median price for a condo in 2008 was \$194,250 and in 2009 was \$180,000. The median price for a multi family was \$174,475 and in 2009 were \$159,900.

These statistics show that the second quarter has a slight decrease in the value of housing sales for this region.

However, there are a few towns/cities that have not slowed down and are now showing an increase in houses sold for the second quarter. They are the following: Littleton (11.1%), Lowell (6.3%), North Andover (13.2%), Ayer (58.3%), Groton (35.7%), Pepperell (12.5%) and Burlington were able to sell the same number of homes for each quarter.

An interesting graph will show a comparison of median price change for the Second Quarter of 2008 and 2009.

Note: All Data from this article was prepared from NEAR/ Source MLS/PIN [www.massnear.com](http://www.massnear.com) - [info@massnear.com](mailto:info@massnear.com)



Crystal Renee Blanchard, born Martinsville, Indiana, raised in Lawrence, graduate Lawrence High class of 85, she has an Associates Degree Human Services, and a Bachelor’s Degree in psychology. She was married in 1996, has two children ages 11, & 8. Crystal is currently Living in Grasonville, MD and works as a Family Support Worker for the Department of Social Services in Annapolis, Maryland.

## Websites of Lawrence Mayoral Candidates

**daveabdoo.com**  
**cotnoirformayor.com**  
**deversformayor.com**  
**nunziodimarca.com**

**lantiguaformayor.com**  
**pedropayano.com**  
**reyesformayor.com**  
**juliasilverio.com**

\*Blanchette and Alvarez do not have websites

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NEWBURYPORT

# Tom Rush at the Firehouse

Newburyport MA, August 24, 2009. Tom Rush fans get a lot for their money at the folk singer’s concerts. Besides good music and poetic songwriting that can make you laugh one minute and cry the next, there’s also plenty of intelligent wit and humor. Must be it’s that Harvard education Tom got when the then English-Lit major first began performing back in 1961. In a recent newsletter on his website he noted “The longest day of the year is also Father’s Day. Coincidence? I think not.”

You can make your recession entertainment-dollars go further on Sunday, September 13, when the Firehouse Center for the Arts will give fans two opportunities, at 3pm and 7pm, to see Tom and hear him sing tunes from the newly-released What I Know, his first studio recording in 35 years. Tickets are \$32 for Members and \$35 for Non-Members and may be purchased at the Box Office (978/462-7336) or online at [www.firehouse.org](http://www.firehouse.org)

“What I Know” includes 15 tunes, five of them Rush originals. Some are foot-tapping like the winsome Silly Little Diddle (Rush), while others are as mournful as the image conjured up by “... the rain clouds washing you away ...” in You’re Not Here with Me (Rush) or the plaintive request for “...one more night of us...” in the bittersweet What an Old Lover Knows (Dyer & Day). Besides the new material, there are also a few old favorites covered by Tom in his own imitable style, including the familiar Drift Away (Mentor Williams).

Long a staple of the folk music scene,

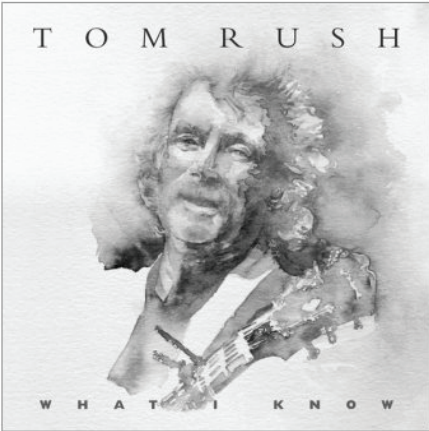
Rush has been touring almost non-stop for the past four decades and is credited by Rolling Stone magazine with ushering in the era of the singer/songwriter. In addition to performing his own compositions, he covered songs by Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne, James Taylor and Murray McLaughlin, and helped them to gain recognition early in their careers. “Tom was not only one of my early heroes, but also one of my main influences,” states James Taylor.

For a small sampling of the musician’s wry humor and musical talents check out his web site at [www.tomrush.com](http://www.tomrush.com)

or revisit the immensely popular “The Remember Song” on YouTube. Of the latter Tom said: “I’ve been waiting 45 years to be an overnight sensation, and it’s finally happened! A video clip of my performance of “The Remember Song” has ‘gone viral.’ I felt terrible at first, thinking I was being accused of being a musical equivalent of Ebola, but my children explained to me that this was a good thing.”

Concert goers will get all of the above... plus change to jingle in their pocket: Tom will put a smile on your face that is guaranteed to remain with you long after you’ve left the theater.

About The Firehouse Center for the Arts- The Firehouse Center for the Arts is member-based organization located on the waterfront in Newburyport, with a 195 seat theater. The Firehouse offers “arts inspired experiences” including film, dance, theatre, concerts, children’s programming, a new works festival, and an art gallery which exhibits works by local and international artists. The Firehouse is handicap accessible.



HAVERHILL

# Mayor inspects upgrades at Haverhill Veterans Memorial Skating Rink

HAVERHILL- Mayor James J. Fiorentini visited the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink to see first-hand the new boards and glass that ring the ice surface. This \$91,000 project, funded by a City bond, was completed on Friday, August 21.

“It’s great to see another significant capital improvement completed,” noted Mayor Fiorentini. “These improvements will add to the safety of the facility, and increase the rink’s attractiveness as a destination for skaters, hockey leagues and other users. The increased usage fees will help pay off the bonds,” added the Mayor.

Skaters, hockey players, parents, Haverhill High Hockey boosters and others had long sought the replacement of the boards and glass, which were the original boards installed in the rink in 1972.

In addition, the City is using federal Stimulus funds to install energy efficient

lighting around the facility, which will improve lighting and reduce energy costs.

Haverhill Rink superintendent Daniel Archambault, hockey booster Don Wilson, Vice President of Haverhill-Pentucket Youth Hockey John O’Neil, Hunking

student and Haverhill-Pentucket Youth Hockey player Conor O’Neil, Mayor James J. Fiorentini, Brandon Crowther of the New England Predators hockey team, Haverhill

Public Schools Superintendent Raleigh Buchanan and New England Predators President Scott Crowther.

The Mayor was joined by hockey boosters, youth hockey league officials and by representatives of the largest rink customer, the New England Predators youth hockey team, all of whom were anxious to get a first look at the recently-renovated facility.



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BOXFORD

# Take Care of Business

John McCormack  
VALLEY PATRIOT BOXFORD COLUMNIST

Members of various committees have noted at Town Meeting that the Town of Boxford doesn’t take care of its buildings. Things haven’t changed with the newly refurbished Lincoln Hall in West Boxford village. Citizens voted to spend \$720,000 to rehabilitate one of our few historic public buildings. Now, in the first growing season since the project was completed, grass and bushes are uncut; a newly planted tree seems to be dying; and weeds infest the gaps between the rear walkway pavers. The front steps are peeling. None of this bodes well for the future. At least this didn’t “raise” our taxes; it just extended the CPA surcharge for a few years.

Dangerous roads linger forever. Local resident Joseph Sheridan was killed near 16 Georgetown Road in 2006. The 2003 Town Meeting appropriated \$8,500 for the construction of a walking path along Georgetown Road from the First Church to Herrick Road. I see no evidence of a path in this area. Was it ever built? Was it maintained?

Sheffield Road at Main Street has long been a concern. Someone once petitioned for a 25 mph speed limit sign but none seems to have been installed.

Spofford Road at Willow Road (Route 133) is another dangerous intersection.

Essex Street at Washington Street (Route 133) keeps road crews busy replacing “Keep Right” signs on the lane divider which is continually run over by motorists.

Herrick Road at Ipswich was the scene of an accident in which a bicyclist T-boned a car and crashed through the rear window. A \$40,000 study proposal for this intersection was floated but thankfully never adopted. A lower speed limit on Ipswich Road and an intersection warning sign on Ipswich Road eastbound were installed.

Boxford has “rural” roads. Often these are narrow or twisty. This is OK as people can adapt to these conditions. These four intersections all feature a right hand turn (a switchback on Essex Street) leading to a STOP sign. The sign is revealed with little time to react and some may be obscured by trees or utility poles. It is possible to fail to realize you are entering a busy intersection until it is too late.

I’m no traffic engineer but I have formed some opinions about these intersections. First, sight lines are important. Trees, poles, and earth berms obscuring intersections need removal. Second, speed limits are regulatory and don’t convey the needed warning of unexpected conditions in these situations. A yellow switchback and intersection sign plus clear centerline and edge lines might prevent the Essex Street sign losses. Third, for \$40,000 we should be able to get a survey and recom-

mendations for these and other dangerous situations in Boxford. Yellow warning signs should not be numerous and are certainly compatible with rural roads, if not the Garden of Eden.

Bicycle route graffiti, however, is not compatible with rural roads. Cycling clubs have taken to painting these road runes to guide their expensively outfitted members on treks. What if another club wants to use part of that route and then take a different turn? The Selectmen, thankfully, ordered them to remove their markings. Use GPS, maps or other orienteering tools and build navigation skills. Thoughtless pedaling can be done at a health club.

What do our local officials do if they’re not dealing with mundane problems such as those above?

Government at all levels today, unfortunately, seeks to channel the vast river of tax revenue into the provision of “services” which crowd out private activity and leave us dependent on the largesse of a growing bureaucratic army. Meanwhile, government shirks its vital responsibilities.

Locally, acceptance of the Community Preservation Act and the “Commonwealth Capital” grant process add to office holders the appeal of remaking town-level society along trendy egalitarian and ecological lines. People with a “progressive” agenda, “pragmatic” but never “ideological”, can now join the fifth column of non-profits and Non-Governmental Organizations working to change society with other peoples’ money and possibly gain a pension.

Spending CPA money on conservation land has been an easy sell (“It won’t raise your taxes”) to the bootlegger-and-Baptist alliance of progressives and local citizens. Now, pressure is growing to fulfill the rest of this Faustian bargain (subsidized housing) regardless of need or economic, social, or environmental costs.

Nationally, I wondered if Massachusetts citizens would be less concerned about ObamaCare than the rest of the country but a thirteen minute YouTube video of a Niki Tsongas “Town Hall” in Chelmsford (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wml0vrIwG8>) shows that freedom lives in this “blue” state.

We are often reminded by our elected and appointed local officials that they are volunteers, implying their donation of unpaid time makes them immune to criticism. I suggest our local officials stick to public safety and property maintenance. Free help, I think, can otherwise be too expensive.



John is a Boxford resident and was vice president of Lattice Trading and Batterymarch Financial Management. You can email him at [jmacprime@yahoo.com](mailto:jmacprime@yahoo.com)

ELECT

MARK GRAY

Lawrence School Committee, District “E”

A Vote for Mark Gray is a vote to fire the Laboy/Larocque duet, it’s the easiest voting choice you may ever get to make.

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## TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK!

**METHUEN – Three... make that two candidates for mayor.** In Methuen there are three candidates for mayor; Mayor Bill Manzi, newcomer Al DiNuccio and some another guy who's so irrelevant he's not even worth mentioning. In fact, if Greg Hyatt came back to town he would have a better chance of winning a primary than the third guy in this race (who makes Ellen Bahan look like a genius). So, with the mayoral primary pretty much over before it even starts, and very little excitement in the council races, it looks like it will be a very low turnout on September 15th, which almost always benefits incumbents. And, as I say every year, when it's a low turnout that means your vote is even more valuable to whomever you support! So, don't let other people decide your fate on Election Day, September 15th. Get out and vote in Methuen.

**LAWRENCE - Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley** is looking for volunteers to be companions, shoppers, or medical advocates to drive elders in the Greater Lawrence area to medical appointments. Volunteers receive a two hour training course, ongoing support and mileage reimbursement. Trainings will be held at the Elder Services offices, 360 Merrimack Street, Building 5, Lawrence, MA. For more information about dates and times of the trainings, please call Gerry Proulx of Elder Services at 978-946-1445. Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley is celebrating its 35th anniversary. As they continue serving elders, families and caregivers the need for volunteers grows. The programs and services, offered by Elder Services, provide education and in-home resources to elder residents of the Merrimack Valley's 23 cities and towns.

**HAVERHILL – Valley Patriot Columnist and former Haverhill City Council President John Michitson** is running against Jim Fiorentini for mayor this year and has agreed to debate the mayor on the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP, but Fiorentini has yet to make such a commitment. When asked last month if he would debate Michitson he said "we'll see!" What is there to see? Well, primary election numbers of course. If Fiorentini blows away John Michitson in the primary this month there's almost no chance you will see Fiorentini in the WCAP studios for a debate. But, if Michitson is on his heels and places close enough to Fiorentini in the primary to make this a horse race in

November ... then you know Mayor Jim will SEE himself into the WCAP studios and answer the tough questions. In the mean time, Jim "Eagle~Tribune" Fiorentini has agreed to a debate sponsored by his buddies up at the Trib on Wednesday, September 9th at Northern Essex Community College.

**SALEM, NH:** The First Congregational Church of Salem will hold their annual **Rummage Sale** on September 18th and September 19th. The event will take place in the church hall from 10 am – 4 pm on Friday and 9 am – 1 pm on Saturday. All proceeds will benefit the church's Philathea Women's Fellowship Group in their efforts to raise funds for upcoming church projects, upgrades and events. "Come early for the best selection," said Sue Friend of Philathea. "This is a great opportunity to get some gently-used items at bargain prices. Given these challenging times, we expect a record turnout this year." The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is located at 15 Lawrence Road in Salem, NH. For additional information about this event or providing a donation call 603-893-3421.

**NORTH ANDOVER - The Friends of the North Andover Senior Center Inc.** cordially invite you to attend the 5th Annual "A Matter of Taste" event to be held on Wednesday evening September 16, 2009 from 6:30 pm-9:00 pm at the Stevens Estate on Osgood Street in North

Andover. This year along with the Food and Wine Tasting they will be hosting a "Back to Broadway Music and Entertainment Production" featuring the Acting Out Theater Company. Tickets are available at the North Andover Senior Center; all proceeds to be used to help defray the utility, transportation and emergency costs for elders in North Andover. Adults ~

\$40.00, Seniors ~ \$25.00, Senior Couples ~\$40.00, Special Rate.

**LAWRENCE - Oiste endorses Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez** - Every election season there is at least one surprise on Election Day that catches the political insiders off guard. Two years ago, the political pundits and experts were predicting that Lawrence City Councilor Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez would, at best, place third (out of six) in the at-large city council race. But Nilka surprised them all (even me), when she topped the ticket securing herself a seat on the council for two more years. With ten candidates running for mayor this year, the pundits are now

predicting that Alvarez-Rodriguez will lose and finish in the bottom four (two candidates are nominated and go on to the November final election). But Alvarez-Rodriguez is not deterred by the insider's predictions and says she plans on proving them wrong again. Now, according to Notilatino.com the ten year city councilor has a little help from the racially charged group Oiste. After sponsoring a two and a half hour debate at Casa Dominicana on Garden Street last month Oiste has officially endorsed Alvarez-Rodriguez. Notilatino.com reports that: "Oiste's board supports Ms. Alvarez-Rodriguez's agenda of protecting local jobs and benefits, safeguarding homes, ensuring quality childhood education and affordable post-secondary education, and addressing violence and crime in the community in innovative ways."

**LAWRENCE – Kudos for Oiste and Siglo 21** – While I am offended by the racist views of the group "Oiste" and their efforts to stop voter ID in Lawrence, as well as their lawsuit which resulted in the Lawrence School Committee being elected by district instead of city wide (by the way, how's that working out for ya?), I do want to praise them for the following: #1) Oiste may not have done a great job in making sure there was enough air in the room when they held a mayoral debate, but they do deserve praise for putting on the debate in the first place. #2) This is the first time I have attended a debate by a Latino group in the city of Lawrence where the questions and answers were in English. What better way to demonstrate to non-Latinos in Lawrence that Oiste is not exclusionary in their attempts to disseminate information about the municipal elections than to hold the debate in English? I was very impressed by this! #3) The questions posed to candidates did not have the usual flavor of anti-white, anti-American, us - vs. them overtones displayed by other Latino groups in previous years. Overall the debate was well conducted, extremely educational and devoid of divisive language. If this is the kind of contribution Oiste (and Siglo 21) want to make in the city of Lawrence I welcome it! They did a great job!

**LAWRENCE - An apology to Sammy Reyes** - Two years ago Omaira Mejia ran for reelection to the school committee against Sammy Reyes, the brother of former city councilor Israel Reyes. Given the extensive number of stories I have researched and written on Israel Reyes, it was my belief that Sammy Reyes would be a tool for his brother Israel, and would do everything he could to give Israel Reyes more political pull in the school department. It didn't matter that publicly, Sammy Reyes seemed to be an adversary of the Superintendent, or that he had a reputation of not getting along with his brother, Israel. In the world

of local politics, appearances are often contrived to throw people off the trail of what is really going on. And, given that Patricia Sanchez-Reyes, (Israel's wife) had just finished a stint on the school committee (she was not running for reelection) it was easy for people like me to believe that this was an effort by Israel Reyes to replace his wife's influence on the committee ... with his brother's influence. Since then, however, Sammy Reyes has given the appearance to many of his skeptics that we were wrong, not with denials and speeches but with his actions. It certainly looks like Sammy Reyes is nothing like his brother Israel, but I still

have to wonder sometimes if these two are working together. Honestly, this is one guy I just can't figure out! There are times when it seems like Sammy is the white sheep of the Reyes family (and the school committee) but then there are other, very puzzling things that happen behind the scenes which call that theory into question as well. I'm not sure anymore which side of the fence Sammy Reyes sits on when it comes to the political affairs of his brother Israel. But, at the very least he deserves the benefit of the doubt given his actions so far. So, an apology to Sammy Reyes because, at the very least I should not have made assumptions out of the gate that he would be a tool for his brother. Only time will tell but I have to tell you this one has even me puzzled!

**HEALTH - TAKE CONTROL OF EARLY MEMORY LOSS - The Alzheimer's Association Massachusetts Chapter** will present a four-part educational series for people

with early memory problems and their care-partners. The series, entitled Taking Control of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders, will be offered on Wednesdays, September 23rd and 30th and October 7th and 14th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM in North Andover. The series will enhance the understanding of dementia and how people with early-stage dementia can deal with its symptoms, maintain their abilities as long as possible, and participate in decision-making. The series is free of charge, but pre-registration is required. Early-stage persons and their care-partners must attend together. For more information or to register, please call Nicole McGurin at (617) 393-2005.

**LAWRENCE - Date Night at Salvatore's Restaurant & Imagine That** -Imagine That and Salvatore's Restaurant have partnered to offer a fun and affordable date night! Drop your children off at Imagine That for two hours of play time and dinner, and enjoy a nice relaxing evening of delicious food at Salvatore's Restaurant! When: Thursday, Friday & Saturday nights beginning May?? 1st 2009. Time: Your choice of a two hour time block between 5 & 8 PM. Where:



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Corey  
Rahme

Methuen

**Councilor at Large**

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PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT KATHLEEN COREY RAHME - JANE SHAWCROSS, TREASURER

### Re-elect

**Jeanne Pappalardo**

**West District Councilor**

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- \* Continued Transparency and Accountability in City Government
- \* An Honest and Hard Working Councilor for Fiscal Responsibility

Accomplished Legislation:

- \* First Annual Safety Inspection Report for all City Owned Buildings
- \* First Veterans preference for City Employment
- \* Outside Audit Firm to review City's Finances every other fiscal year.



**Primary Day, Tuesday, September 15, 2009**

Paid for by the committee to elect Jeanne Pappalardo



Imagine That & Salvatore's Restaurant – Riverwalk Mill Buildings Entrance A \* 354 Merrimack St., Lawrence, MA 01843. How: Call Imagine That at 978-682-5338 to book your reservation 24 hours in advance of dropping off your children and we'll take care of the rest! Spaces are very limited and will be booked on a first call first serve basis. Who: Children who are walking - 9 years old. Exceptions will be made on a per child basis. Price: \$12.95 per child – 10% off each additional sibling. Includes pizza and juice for each child! Parental dinner price will vary upon selection. Imagine That \* 354 Merrimack St Lawrence, MA 01843, 978-682-5338 \* Imaginethat.com

**LAWRENCE - SURPRISE! Mary Claire was lying again! Cedar Crest to become a Burger King!** - Last April the Valley Patriot reported that the Cedar Crest Restaurant in Lawrence was closing and would be replaced by a Burger King. Within days of our report former Mayor Mary Claire Kennedy (who now owns the restaurant) told the Eagle Tribune that "it's just not true", in essence calling the Valley Patriot report wrong. And when patrons of the Cedar Crest Restaurant saw our report (or heard our radio report on WCAP) and asked Mary Claire Kennedy about Burger King replacing Cedar Crest she told many of them "Tommy Duggan's just Lying!". Well, well, well ... that was back in April and it looks like the lying was not on the part of the Valley Patriot, WCAP or "Tommy Duggan" but on the part of Mary Claire Kennedy as it has now been reported in the Trib that Burger King is indeed going to replace the Cedar Crest Restaurant. PERFECT! She left the city in shambles when she lost her reelection back in 1997 and now she leaves the iconic restaurant in the same condition when she closes it on Broadway. You know, sometimes it takes a while but the truth always comes out!

**HAVERHILL - 2009 Charity Golf Tournament** - supporting our scholarship program. This is one of those programs where we ask our members to show support. We fund our scholarship program through this fundraising activity - can you help? The event takes place September 28th, registration is at 11:15 a.m. at the Haverhill Country Club. Price is \$175 for golf and dinner, Dinner only is \$45. It's a great make-up opportunity! If you don't golf - ask a friend who does! Ads showing support are also needed! If you can't help, please ask someone else. Raffle items are very welcomed to enhance the value of the tournament. For more information visit: <http://www.lawrencerotary.org/2009.cfm>

**METHUEN VILLAGE - A Grandparent's Day Workshop** - Preserving our Memories through Scrapbooking. Scrapbooks record, celebrate, and connect to the



NEWS ITEM: Valley Patriot reports Burger King to replace Cedar Crest Restaurant in Lawrence (April, '09), Owner Mary Claire Kennedy calls report "false" (April '09), Burger King announces it will build at Cedar Crest Restaurant (August

events and people of our past and present and help us to carry those memories into the future. At Methuen Village, residents are eager to begin taking part in a series of workshops dedicated to organizing memorabilia, and transforming it all into beautiful memory books. On Sunday, September 13th, in celebration of Grandparent's Day, Methuen Village welcomes the public to join them for a reminiscence and scrapbooking workshop! Amanda LaFlamme, a Creative Memories consultant, will guide you as you recall family traditions, and preserve artifacts and photos on a page to take home for your own scrapbook. This is a great workshop for grandparents and their children, and grandchildren, to attend. Materials will

be included, just arrive with your happy memories and any photos, newspaper clippings, certificates, postcards, and other artifacts you have in your home! Please note that MV is also seeking donations to help build our scrapbooking supplies- these would include rubber stamps, old greeting cards, stickers, postcards, etc.



**ANDOVER - 6th Interfaith Prayer Shawl Tea** - Communities Together, Inc., formerly The Greater Lawrence Council of Churches, will sponsor the 6th Annual Interfaith Prayer Shawl Tea at St. Augustine's Parish, Center for Education and Ministry, 35 Essex Street, Andover on Tuesday, September 15, 2009 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Attend for tea and pastry as we celebrate the Prayer Shawl Ministry in this area, offer shawls for a blessing by clergy, honor knitting groups, and share stories of how the shawls have touched lives. Knitters, crocheters, clergy, shawl recipients, supporters, and those interested in learning more are all welcome. This event is free and open to the public. RSVP by Friday morning, September 11 to Barbara at the Communities Together office: (978) 686-4012 or [ctstaff@conversent.net](mailto:ctstaff@conversent.net).

**LAWRENCE - The next Lawrence Chess Club** meeting will be Thursday, September 10, 2009 from 6-8pm in the Children's Room at the Lawrence Public Library at the corner of Lawrence and Haverhill streets. All ages, all abilities, all languages and all levels are welcome to play, learn and help teach. As always, it is

free. If possible, please bring a chess set and a friend. Remember, you really do not know how to play chess until you have lost 500 games.

**LOWELL - Devils Set Audition Dates for Ice Girls Squad** - The Lowell Devils are looking for energetic, talented and personable individuals with skating or dancing skills to try-out for the 2009-10 Lowell Devils Ice Girls, presented by Molson. Both skaters and dancers may audition on Tuesday, September 8 at 6:00PM. An additional day for dance auditions is set for Wednesday, September 9 at 6:00 PM. All try-outs will take place at the Tsongas Arena in Lowell, MA. Dance candidates will learn a brief routine to be performed in front of judges from the Lowell Devils staff. Skating candidates will be asked to perform several on-ice drills that will mimic tasks performed during stoppages and intermissions of Devils games. For more information, go to [www.lowelldevils-hockey.com/icegirlauditions.php](http://www.lowelldevils-hockey.com/icegirlauditions.php). Lowell Devils season ticket packages are on sale now for 2009-10. Contact

**NOTEBOOK, page 27**

**ELECT**

**GARY MANION**

**DISTRICT "B" LAWRENCE CITY COUNCIL**

**"Let's bring maturity and professionalism back to the Lawrence City Council"**

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT GARY MANION

re-elect



Debbie

**Quinn**  
West District Councilor

Paid for by the committee to elect Debbie Quinn



## Local mortgage company proves that bigger isn't always better

First Integrity Mortgage, located in Sal's Riverwalk, has become a local favorite among those purchasing or refinancing their homes. In fact, they were voted Methuen, Lawrence, and the Andover's "Best Mortgage Company" for 2008 by Market Surveys of America.

Owners Anne Marie Concemi and Steven Sirmaian, both life-long residents of the Merrimack Valley, credit this to one thing – exemplary customer service – which, according to Sirmaian, has been no easy task given the recent mortgage foreclosure crisis and it's negative publicity for banks and mortgage companies.

"We have had to work 10 times harder for 10 times less business. Borrowers are frightened of dishonest banks and mortgage companies. Our reputation, however, both individually and as a company, has kept us going. Our clients just keep on referring their friends and family because they know we will treat them with the honesty and respect they deserve."

Both Concemi and Sirmaian began their banking careers right out of college in 1987. They have written thousands of loans and pride themselves with having an almost non-existent foreclosure rate.

Anne Marie Concemi, First Integrity's Chief Mortgage Planner, attributes this to years of conscientious origination techniques, as well as careful explanation of loan programs.

"I never mislead a borrower into thinking a bad loan program was good for them. As much as the Banks wanted to push certain deals by offering higher commissions to loan officers, I could never, in good conscience, subject my borrowers to something that could only hurt them in the end. If a

borrower insisted that they wanted the program, then I made darn sure they understood every aspect of it."

Concemi admits that this wasn't always easy, as borrowers would sometimes do anything to purchase the home of their dreams. And there was plenty of competition willing to give borrowers what they wanted.

"I knew so many mortgage people in 2003, most with a fraction of my experience, making money faster than they could spend it by pushing bad loan programs.

Kind of made you think twice about just jumping on that band wagon to make a killing. But having survived the crashes of the 80's and early 90's, I knew that their careers were short lived because they would never build up a trusted client base like I had. So I just kept on doing business the way I always had and it paid off."

And pay off it has. Loan originations are still down, however, there are significantly less banks and mortgage companies competing for the business. And all mortgage loan officers must now be individually licensed – something Sirmaian feels has been a long time coming. "The licensing process is very strict. Each year our personal credit is analyzed and we are required to undergo a CORI (criminal background) check. Any credit lates better have a good explanation, and any criminal activity is not tolerated. The good news is that the number of loan officers has dropped drastically and, unless someone is experienced in the mortgage field, they will be hard pressed to get licensed. This has eliminated the "part-timers" and "good-time Charlies" who jump into the business when the market is good."

By comparison to some other mortgage companies, First Integrity is considered rela-



tively small. This is just fine for Concemi and Sirmaian. States Concemi, "We are always thinking about customer satisfaction. We don't spend tons of money on radio ads, catchy jingles, or telemarketing. Instead, we concentrate on personal relationships and the referrals they bring. This allows us to spend more time with our customers whose referrals keep our phones ringing even during the toughest of times."

Concemi and Sirmaian have carefully hand-picked their individual mortgage consultants. "With all of the banks and mortgage companies shutting down in the past few years, we have seen a slew of mortgage originators seeking out companies to work for," comments Sirmaian. "Once again, bigger isn't better. I would rather have 10 solid, honest, and experienced loan officers than 100 people that I can't trust to represent our company properly."

Notable veteran First Integrity mortgage consultants include Bill Englehardt

of Bradford as well as Judy Maselli, Alan Rosen and Donna Weinberg, all of Andover. Bob Irving of Lawrence and Bob Sharpe of Salem, NH head up the Reverse Mortgage team. Concemi and Sirmaian often joke that most of their loan consultants started in the business before fax machines were even invented. Processors include Florence Toto and Louisa Bailey, each with over 10 years of mortgage processing experience.

First Integrity is licensed in Mass. NH, and Maine with plans to open a satellite office in Southern NH by spring, 2010. "It's now time to do some expansion," states Sirmaian. "We proved that we can withstand some really tough market conditions and that makes us feel pretty darn good about what we have accomplished."

First Integrity Mortgage is located in Sal's Riverwalk, 354 Merrimack St., Lawrence, Ma. (978) 685-9700. [www.firstinteg.com](http://www.firstinteg.com)

## Solving the small business owner's retirement dilemma

Greg Loosigian

NEW YORK LIFE FINANCIAL COLUMNIST

There's a fatal flaw in the retirement of many small business owners: After pouring a lifetime of sweat, time and capital into building the business, their rough-sketch strategy is to sell out someday for a ton of money... then settle back and enjoy a financially secure retirement. Many business owners are so sure this will happen that they don't bother to make any other retirement plans.

Who is this person who, at just the right moment, is going to show up with cash in hand to buy the company... and pay a fair price? For thousands of small business owners each year, no one steps forward. Perhaps the business is too specialized or is tied too closely to the owner's unique personality and skills. Or perhaps possible buyers equate retirement sale with distress sale and make only low-ball offers. Whatever the reason, many owners find that their company has suddenly become a white elephant that nobody wants.

### One Possible Solution

Groom your own replacement, someone who will buy your company when you're

ready to retire. Maybe this person is a current co-owner (but be careful if he or she is about the same age as you, who will be counting on retiring around the same time.) Or it could be a son or daughter active in the business, or a younger key employee.

Business Owners Who Successfully Groom Their Own Replacements Leave Nothing to Chance

They realize that there is no room for error at the point of retirement. Here are some examples of steps they might take:

- \* They are cautious. They make sure their heir apparent is the right person in terms of temperament, personality, competence and personal goals.

- \* They set up a probation period so they can terminate the relationship if they find this person simply will not work out. During that period, they keep everything informal, strictly verbal. At the same time, even when they go to a formal agreement, they make sure it contains a termination provision.

- \* They fashion golden handcuffs and incentives to ensure that their replacement stays until the baton is passed. An

ambitious successor needs and deserves gradually increasing authority and benefits. Options include deferred compensation or the opportunity to acquire partial ownership prior to their retirement. This provides both parties with something to win by sticking to the agreement... and something to lose if it falls apart.

- \* They put it in writing, along with the help of their attorney—locking in who does and gets what, and spelling out all details and caveats, including how to establish the final valuation of the business. This formal buy/sell agreement protects everybody.

- \* They build in a funding mechanism. This is crucial. No matter how good the terms of the buy/sell agreement, it will be worthless if the money is not there when needed to carry out the plan. Under one option, the successor may be able to purchase the company from ongoing profits. Other options include setting up a sinking fund or allowing the successor to simply borrow the money. These options may work but they leave much to chance. Instead, consider a funding vehicle that protects your family in the event of your

disability or premature death, such as life and disability income insurance.\*

- \* They have a back-up plan. As a business owner, you know that very few things go exactly as planned. What if your business hits tough times or your successor dies, becomes disabled, or—all too common—leaves because of a personality conflict? Or what if there simply is no heir apparent waiting in the wings? Sometimes, it's simply best to dismantle the business.

Whether or not you have a possible successor for your company, you should begin mapping out your retirement strategy today. Your insurance professional or your independent professional advisors can help you develop this kind of business strategy.

For additional information on the information or topics discussed, please contact Gregory J. Loosigian at 978-273-8377 \*Products available through one or more carriers not affiliated with New York Life; dependent on carrier authorization and product availability in your state or locality. Gregory J. Loosigian Agent - MA. Lic #183059 - New York Life Insurance Company



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# Mind, Body & Soul: Health in The Valley

## Long-term use of acid-suppressing drugs may pose significant health risks

**Dr. Rallie McAllister**  
SYNDICATED MEDICAL COLUMNIST

If you're one of the millions of Americans suffering from heartburn or gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), you may be taking an acid-suppressing medication known as a proton pump inhibitor. While there's no doubt these drugs can be beneficial in the short run, recent research has uncovered a number of potential pitfalls associated with long-term use, including a higher risk of pneumonia, bone fractures and bacterial infections of the gastrointestinal tract.

Proton pump inhibitors, including Prilosec, Prevacid, Protonix and the like, work by blocking the production of hydrochloric acid in the stomach. As advertised, these medications are extremely effective, reducing acid secretion by as much as 99 percent.

Drastically reducing acid production for short periods of time can be therapeutic for many GERD sufferers. Low levels of

acid in the stomach promote healing of ulcers and can ease the pain associated with heartburn and indigestion.

For most folks, however, continuous suppression of acid production for months or years isn't necessarily a good idea. In the stomach, hydrochloric acid plays a number of critical roles, including the destruction of Salmonella bacteria and other microorganisms responsible for food-borne illnesses.

Hydrochloric acid also helps prevent infection with Clostridium difficile, a type of bacterium responsible for ailments ranging from mild diarrhea to life-threatening inflammation of the colon.



The results of a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association demonstrated that use of proton pump inhibitors is associated with a significant increase in the risk of acquiring infection with Clostridium difficile bacteria.

In recent years, illnesses caused by Clostridium difficile increased in frequency in hospitals and communities. They've also become increasingly severe and more difficult to treat.

Individuals who use proton pump inhibitors appear to be at a greater risk of developing other types of infections, including those involving the respiratory tract. The results of a recent study showed that the use of acid-suppressing drugs

was associated with a 27 percent increase in the risk of developing community-acquired pneumonia.

In addition to protecting us from disease-causing germs, hydrochloric acid in the stomach is also essential for the digestion of protein and for the proper absorption of nutrients, especially vitamin B12 and calcium.

Over time, insufficient absorption of calcium and vitamin B12 can lead to bone fragility in men and women.

Last year, Canadian researchers reported their findings that long-term use of proton pump inhibitors can dramatically increase the risk of bone fractures. The longer the drugs are used, the greater the risk of sustaining a fracture.

In a study of 135,000 people aged 50 or older, those taking the drugs at relatively high doses for more than a year were found to be 2.6 times more likely to break a hip compared to adults not taking the medications. In a study of nearly 16,000

McAllister, page 20

## NOW OPEN AND AWAITING YOUR ARRIVAL.

**Methuen Village** is now open! This brand new Assisted Living and Alzheimer's Care community is nestled in a peaceful, natural setting in the heart of downtown Methuen. Our programs combine research-based services with personalized support. Because we fervently adhere to our "Four Pillars" - Resident Quality of Life, Valued Associates, Integrity and Innovation - families and healthcare professionals alike know that *Methuen Village* delivers the very best of care. And with reasonable rates, spacious accommodations and outstanding amenities, our "Right Values" equal your best value.

*Apartment are leasing quickly, so visit us soon.  
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& Memory Support Neighborhood

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[www.MethuenVillage.com](http://www.MethuenVillage.com)

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## Home Medical Equipment

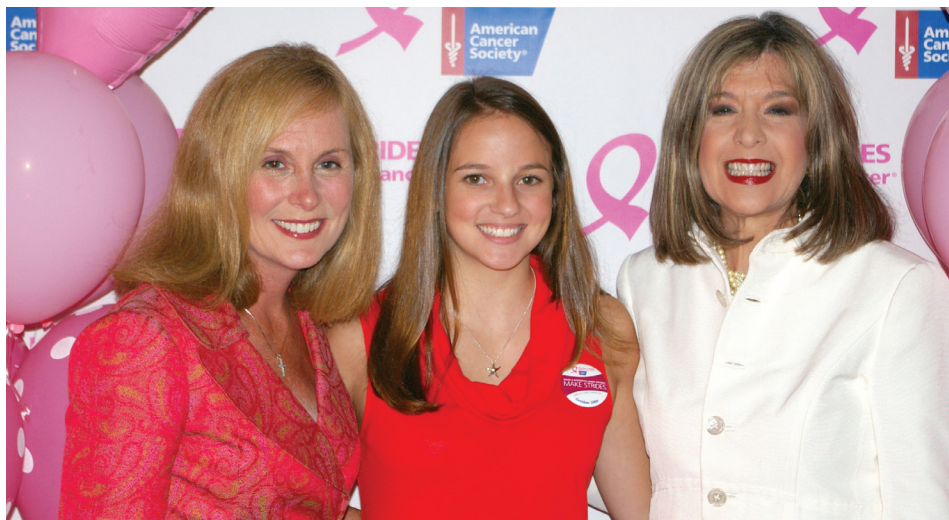


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**603-898-1011**

**No Monthly Fee**

**Next to: T Bones / Pearls Candy**





## Methuen resident makes strides against breast cancer

(Methuen, MA) -- Laura Beth Solomon (center) of Methuen attended the American Cancer Society's recent kickoff breakfast to prepare for the 17th annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk with emcees Hank Phillippi Ryan of 7News on 7NBC/CW56 (right) and Candy O'Terry of MAGIC 106.7FM (left).

Making Strides is a five-mile walk set for Sunday, October 4 on Boston's Charles River Esplanade. Solomon will be one of nearly 40,000 walkers at Making Strides, which is the nation's oldest and largest one-day walk of its kind, expecting to raise more than \$3 million for the

fight against breast cancer. Funds raised benefit the Society in saving lives by helping people stay well and get well, by finding cures, and by fighting back against breast cancer. 7News on 7NBC/CW56 and MAGIC 106.7FM are media partners for the event. 2009 Flagship Sponsors are all fresco All Natural, AstraZeneca, Aurora Imaging Technology Inc., BJ's Wholesale Club, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Boston Teachers Union, The Cumberland Gulf Group of Companies, and WeGotSoccer. For more information on Making Strides in Boston, call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit cancer.org/stridesonline.

## Elder Services wins award in 2009 National Mature Media Awards Program

Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley was a winner in the 18th annual National Mature Media Awards Program.

The program, presented by the Mature Market Resource Center, a national clearinghouse for the senior market, recognizes the nation's finest advertising, marketing and educational materials designed and produced for older adults.

Two TV ads – one for the Brown Bag Food Program and the other for Medical Advocacy Volunteer Recruitment received a Merit Award in the Community Organization division.

In a collaborative effort, those involved with the design and production of the TV Ads were Eileen Giordano, Volunteer Manager and Mark Provost, a volunteer for Jericho Road.

"We were delighted to take part in the Mature Media Awards Program this year,

and were honored to be selected as a winner," says Eileen Giordano, Volunteer Manager.

Nearly 900 entries were judged by a distinguished panel of mature market experts from across the United States for overall excellence of design, content, creativity and relevance to the senior market.

Elder Services is celebrate 35 years of providing elders, those with disabilities, their families, caregivers and professionals with the best possible choices in elder care.

Elder Services is a private non-profit agency supported by state and federal contracts, foundations, corporations and private donations that help provide choices for older adults that allow them to remain safe, active and independent at home.



PHOTO: COURTESY

## Andover Surgery Center brings a new anesthesia technology to The Valley

Andover Surgery Center is the first in the Merrimack Valley to use a new state-of-the-art anesthesia system, a compact ultrasound tool that safely streamlines the anesthesia process for orthopedic surgery. This new technology creates a safer procedure for the patient because a nerve block – the injection of local anesthetic onto or near nerves for temporary control of pain – is easily pinpointed with the utmost accuracy. Using less sedation allows for a more comfortable experience for the patient.

The LOGIQ e by GE Healthcare can display both the image of a needle as well as the anatomy of a patient in one brilliantly clear image – without compro-

missing the image quality of either. This allows for the doctor to insert the needle in a precise spot, delivering the anesthetics quickly and efficiently to the patient. Its crystal-clear images and easy-to-use tools allow for a safer and better pain controlled experience for the patient; for the doctor a greater confidence in delivering the anesthesia to the point of care.

"The new technology demonstrates the center's leadership in adopting the newest and best treatment for its patients," says Dr. Robert Beechinor, Medical Director at Andover Surgery Center.

## McALLISTER: FROM PAGE 19

patients, researchers found that individuals who had used proton pump inhibitors for at least seven years had almost double the risk of sustaining an osteoporosis-related bone fracture.

Long-term use of proton pump inhibitors has come under fire recently for another reason. Discontinuation of the drugs may produce an acid rebound phenomenon in which stomach acid secretion is even greater following treatment than it was before the therapy was initiated.

Earlier this month, the results of a study published in Gastroenterology, the official journal of the American Gastroenterological Association Institute, demonstrated that use of proton pump inhibitors could potentially lead to long-term dependency on the drugs. For the study, researchers gave healthy adult volunteers daily doses of proton pump inhibitors for eight weeks.

Although they had no history of GERD at the beginning of the study, 44 percent of the volunteers developed symptoms of heartburn or indigestion when they stopped taking the medication. In the four weeks following discontinuation of the drug, these individuals reported experiencing at least one significant acid-related symptom.

Based on their findings, the research-

ers speculated that proton pump dependency could help explain the rapidly and continuously increasing use of these drugs worldwide. Previous research revealed that nearly a third of patients who begin treatment with proton pump inhibitors continue taking the drugs without any obvious medical need for maintenance therapy.

If you've been taking proton pump inhibitors for months or years on end, it may be time to schedule an appointment with your physician to reassess your treatment plan. Together, you can decide whether the benefits of using acid-suppressing drugs outweigh the potential risks of long-term use.

Rallie McAllister is a board-certified family physician, speaker, and the author of several books, including "Fitness and Healthy Lunchbox: The Working Mom's Guide to Keeping You and Your Kids Trim." Her website is [www.rallieonhealth.com](http://www.rallieonhealth.com). To find out more about Rallie McAllister, M.D., and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

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# Live the WOW!

**Learn this one thing. KNOWLEDGE is Power! It's One of the Greatest Potential Forces to Change Your Life. It Gives You the Tools You Need to Make Better Decisions. And those Decisions ... Put to Good Use ... Allow You to Fully Live the WOW!**

**Thomas Connors**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

## Brain Power.

It can open up your world in ways you won't believe. It can ignite an imagination that will introduce you to new and wildly positive opportunities out there in our vast universe. It will give you valuable information on which decisions can be made that are in your best interest and the ones you love.

It can change your view of the world and how the world looks at you.

**Educating yourself is vital to your well-being. It's as necessary as breathing oxygen and eating nutritious food.**

When was the last time you read a book? When was the last time you took a course? When was the last time you listened to a CD or watched a video to learn something new?

You know how the vast majority of people answer those questions? They say, "I can't remember the last time I read a book or listened to a CD or did much of anything to actually learn something new." Sad, isn't it?

Here is something even sadder. Not only are they NOT Living the WOW! They have no chance of living it any time soon.

**Everywhere we go and everywhere we look. Life calls on us to make Decisions. Some are huge. Some minor. Both effect how we ultimately choose to live our lives.**

Life Challenges you every day. Wheth-

er it's dealing with technology changing at blazing speed or moral dilemmas thrown your way, your ability to meet these challenges helps determine the direction you ultimately go in. In order for you to keep growing and be alert to the opportunities around you, you have to know what to look for and where to put your knowledge to use.

If you choose to do nothing and let life drag you along, those challenges will become debilitating. They will paralyze you.

On the other hand, if you make the effort and force yourself to study, to read and to listen to subject matter that will inform you intellectually and even leisurely, you will feel a burst of Brain Power. And that feeling will encourage and motivate you to become all you can be. Your Purpose in Life will no longer be some abstract thing out there. It will be a prized meaning you add to your life.

**Learning isn't just for Harvard graduates or an MIT genius. ANY active effort to increase your knowledge in Any area will generate an explosion of options to successfully meet life's challenges head on.**

Your mind doesn't care what you learn. That's what is so nice about it. The very effort of getting that brain going will yield mind-boggling results if you let it. Just make sure what you are pouring into that head of yours is positive and worthwhile.

Look what happens when you make up your mind to absorb as much knowledge as possible. At our LARE Training

Center, six (6) months can make or break a life. Think of that. Six (6) short months can increase your knowledge to such a degree that you can become a Certified Nursing Assistant or a Quality Inspector/Electronic Assembler. It can give you the ability to master Microsoft Office and even perfect interviewing and job search skills.

From sitting at home watching Jerry Springer or the People's Court every day to experiencing the reward of an acknowledged career, LARE's graduates are making their mark, finding jobs even in this economy and well on their way to Living the WOW!

**When it comes to making Decisions, the more information you have the better those decision can be. Educating yourself is the first step.**

Options. THAT is what I personally teach my son and daughters when it comes to making the best decisions. Decisions that will lead them to Living the WOW! And in order to put yourself in that position you need to know what you are talking about. At least enough to form an opinion or consider alternatives.

From grade school to adulthood I always encouraged my children to look at life as a series of options. Gaining knowledge at various degrees in math, English or the sciences will help them form career decisions. Seeking out and building a knowledge base in the area of hobbies or other leisure activities gives them more options to enjoy their spare time. The result is a more fulfilled and meaningful life.

**The same process can enhance your**

**spiritual life as well. Think about it. How can you KNOW for certain what support the Good Lord can give you and what riches are available to you if you have never taken the time to explore!**

That's what the Bible is for! It is a recorded history of God's influence here on earth. It is also a revelation of what He has in store for all of us IF we take the time to learn.

**Whether it is formulating your Values, discovering your Purpose or making the best Decisions the KEY is being able to rely on the bank of knowledge you have built.**

Yes, Brain Power gives you the Knowledge you need to Live the WOW! It will also help you determine more accurately how to put that Knowledge to good use. And you just might find yourself an expert in a career choice, a hobby or an interest. When that happens and people look up to you for advice in that particular area, you will realize your potential to dramatically affect how the world looks at you. And how you look at the world.

Now, that's a WOW!



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

part of your personal, spiritual and working life. You can reach Tom at Tom@American-TrainingInc.com or by writing to him at Tom Connors, American Training, 102 Glenn Street, Lawrence, MA 01843 © 2009

## SIMPLE WISDOM WITH GAIL VAN KLECK

### The eagles nest trail

**Gail Van Kleek**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

In summertime, when I was young, our family traded the comfort of our suburban home for a medium sized camping trailer.

I remember the state park near Lake Michigan and the little boat we brought with us, in which I learned to row. I remember long, idyllic days: reading, swimming and collecting wood for our nightly campfires. I remember the morning smells of bacon and coffee, carrying sloshing pails of water and washing dishes on the picnic table. I remember too the trail we took each year, the one that led to the eagle's nest.

I remember the big, old black baby carriage we used for our littlest sister and brother and how my father packed it for our journey. I remember him placing our picnic lunch inside then hanging the rest in bags along its outer frame. He brought band aids, toilet paper, paper cups for picking blueberries, wet wash cloths, binoculars, a thermos of lemonade, sweaters, sun tan lotion and containers for collecting both the trash and the treasures we might find along the way.

I remember the way he attached two ropes with looped ends to the front of the baby carriage, so my next oldest sister and I could slip them around our waists and pull, as he maneuvered it along the sandy, tree rutted path. I remember our grand mother, mother and middle sister bringing up the rear.

I remember rainy days and sunshine, picking berries, poison ivy and the family

of deer who grazed in the valley below us while we ate our picnic lunch. I remember watching for trail markers and picking up the bits of paper other campers had left behind, because our parents thought we needed to leave the trail a little better than we found it. I remember sand in my shoes, the sleeping face of my baby brother and the sound of wind above us in the pines. I remember laughter, tired legs and the huge piece of driftwood I once dragged back to our campsite.

Yet in the midst of all of that, I can never remember if we ever reached the eagle's nest.

Sometimes as I am pushing myself to reach yet another of my arbitrary deadlines, I think about the trail to the eagle's nest and notice how my narrow focus on those future deadlines diminishes my relationships and robs me of the bits of pleasure I might find in the present.

What if we saw the goals we set and the things we do to achieve them as simply a part of our continuing journey? What if we thought less about the path ahead and more about the part of that path on which our feet are presently standing? What if the memories we are perpetually creating for both ourselves and others are what this journey we call life is really about?

WHAT WE FOCUS ON IS TRULY WHAT WE SEE



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



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PHOTO: COURTESY

# Can you name these five former Lawrence Mayors?



PHOTO: COURTESY

Cafe Madrid celebrates the Grand Opening of their second Chelmsford location in July. See their ad on page 24.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Left to Right, Team Stronger: Beth Anastopoulos, Kim Salem, Katie Giglio, Suzan Beauregard, Alyssa Silva. Seated Veronica Calixto, with daughters Mikhayla and Ava Calixto who came to cheer on Team Stronger.

## Local breast cancer survivor walks 60 miles for a cure

July 26th, Boston. Veronica Calixto, Branch Manager at RiverBank in Methuen and breast cancer survivor recently completed the 60-mile Breast Cancer 3-Day benefiting the Susan Komen Foundation. She, along with five friends, TEAM STRONGER, walked 60 miles in Boston July 24th through July 26 and raised over \$16,000.00 for the cause. Teammates included Beth Anastopoulos of Methuen, who also participated in the 60-mile walk last year and Methuen natives, Kim Sa-

lem, Suzan Beauregard and Kate Giglio.

“They are so close to finding a cure for breast cancer, it was a grueling and amazing experience...Team Stronger has already signed up for the walk in 2010”, noted Veronica Calixto. The team raised money by reaching out to friends, family, and local businesses. They also hosted a wine tasting event. For more information about the Breast Cancer 3-Day, visit [www.the3day.org](http://www.the3day.org).



# Teddy Kennedy's 2006 visit to Lawrence



# Ted Kennedy's 2007 visit to Manzi Gardens in Methuen





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All Photos by Tom Duggan (C) Copyright Valley Patriot Inc. (Lawrence photos (c) 2006, Methuen Photos (c) 2007)



# Lowell Humane Society bursting at the seams

As the summer winds down, the amount of animals being surrendered to The Lowell Humane Society continues to rise. The surge of homeless animals this year, especially adult dogs, has kept the shelter at its capacity consistently through the summer months. The reasons for animals coming in varies, from families losing their homes due to the rough economy to stray cats being picked up off the streets by animal control or good Samaritans.

Executive Director Jill O'Connell says "The shelter is bursting at its seams and the staff has had to be creative in making space to house the influx of animals."

O'Connell notes that the shelter is also in desperate need of volunteers, "Our staff is incredibly dedicated to the animals here, but without the extra help that volunteers provide I am afraid they will reach the point of exhaustion."

The Lowell Humane Society is currently housing over 150 animals at the shelter, with another 75 in foster homes awaiting space to open up on the adoption floor. "There really is a pet for everyone here, from puppies and kittens to adult dogs and cats, rabbits, small animals and birds of all ages. They are all here awaiting the perfect family" says Lisa Forbes, Animal Care Manager at the shelter, "...and there

are more coming in each day."

Unable to adopt or volunteer right now? Show your support by making a donation! Monetary donations can be sent to Lowell Humane Society, 951 Broadway St, Lowell, MA 01854 or stop by the shelter with a few items from the shelter wish list, which can be viewed at [www.lowellhumanesociety.org](http://www.lowellhumanesociety.org).

Top 5 Wish List Items

Bleach

Clay Cat Litter

Laundry Detergent

Paper Towels

Walmart & Home Depot Gift Cards

The Lowell Humane Society is a

501(c)3 non-profit organization which relies completely on donations and receives no local, state or federal funding. Those interested in adding a new furry or feathered friend to their family can view animals available for adoption at The Lowell Humane Society's website, [www.lowellhumanesociety.org](http://www.lowellhumanesociety.org) or stop by the shelter during business hours Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday noon-4pm or Thursdays 11:30am-6pm. To find out more about volunteering at The Lowell Humane Society, contact Chris Arnott at [chris@lowellhumanesociety.org](mailto:chris@lowellhumanesociety.org) or at the shelter during business hours 978-452-7781.

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## CTI Senior Corps Volunteer Programs begin new osteoporosis prevention program

LOWELL – Community Teamwork Inc.'s (CTI) Senior Corps RSVP program, a volunteer program for people 55 and older, will soon be bringing the "Bone Builders" curriculum to the Greater Lowell area. Jane Benfey, Senior Corps Director, announced that CTI has received a grant from Tufts Health Plan Foundation to offer this nationally recognized volunteer-led program, beginning this autumn, and is seeking volunteer group leaders. Joan Aseltine, CTI RSVP Bone Builders Coordinator, notes that, "Falls among seniors are often the cause of serious long-term injuries. With the increasing number of falls among older adults in our area, this program is badly needed."

Volunteering as a group leader allows people 55 and over to make a very significant contribution to the community they live in, helping elders to increase their strength and reduce their risk of injury. They will work in pairs, with up to 15 seniors, using an established curriculum.

Volunteer leaders receive training, curriculum materials and ongoing support.

A required all day training for volunteer group leaders will take place on Tuesday, September 15 from 9 to 5 at the Lowell Senior Center. Attendance is limited, and pre-registration is required.

They are asked to commit to three to four hours per week for a minimum of three to six months. If you are 55 and older and would like to be a volunteer leader for this program, please contact Joan Aseltine at 978-654-5080 ext. 14 or [jaseltine@com-team.org](mailto:jaseltine@com-team.org). According to Ms. Benfey, "Bone Builders provides seniors with twice-weekly group sessions that focus on exercises to improve balance and increase the strength of both bones and muscles. Because it is run by volunteers at community sites, we can offer it to participants for free."

Program participants must be 60 or older and have their physician's approval to attend. Classes and supplies are free, and several sites are being planned to help make the sessions more accessible. If you are interested in joining a group as a participant, please call Joan Aseltine for more information.

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We are open from 6am until 1pm Tuesday-Saturday and we will be serving freshly ground coffee with fresh baked muffins. Blueberry, cranberry, banana walnut, corn, bran and chocolate chip! We also have breakfast croissants with bacon, egg and cheese and lunchtime croissants with ham and cheese as well as spinach and cheese. Our all time favorite CHOCOLATE CROISSANT!

We have pies, cakes, danish, hermits, lemon squares as well as soft drinks, coffee and tea to sit, relax, watch the news, use your laptop on our free WiFi or just read the paper which is supplied daily along with our wonderful wait staff whose aim is to please!

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## FARMTOWN LOWDOWN

# A Preview of Dracut Events for the Month of September

George Papoulias

VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT REPORTER

### Barbeque Ball

Dracut American Legion, post 315, will be presenting their annual chicken barbeque on Sunday, September 13 from 1:00pm-4:00pm. The barbeque will include corn, salad, beans and dessert. Tickets for the event are \$11 and available by mail or in the downstairs member's lounge, located on 574 Broadway Road (also the location of the barbeque.)

Also, if you're looking to gather a large crowd for an event, the Legion offers the following space and rates:

The main hall fits 120 people for \$200.00.

The lower hall fits 50 people for \$50.00.

For more information on the barbeque and hall reservations log onto: <http://www.dracutamericanlegionpost315.com/>.

### F-O-R-E!

The Dracut Fire Fighters Local 2586 will be hosting a charity golf tournament to benefit the Dracut Food Pantry. The pantry is a non-profit organization which provides non-perishable food items and hygiene products to Dracut residents encountering financial difficulty. The tournament takes place at the Meadow Creek Golf Club on Monday, September 21st with a 9:00am shotgun start. The fees are \$125 per golfer and \$500 per foursome. Included in the charge are green fees, a cart and dinner. Meadow Creek Golf Club is located off of Broadway Road on rte. 113. For more information contact Andrew Powell at [apowell@comcast.net](mailto:apowell@comcast.net) or Mark Morowski at [mmoro06@yahoo.com](mailto:mmoro06@yahoo.com)

For more information on the Dracut Food Pantry, log onto [www.dracutfoodpantry.com](http://www.dracutfoodpantry.com)

### Nice to Knit

A group called Knitwise Connection meets the 2nd and 4th Monday every month at the Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library. The meetings take place at 6:45pm until 8:15pm and members collaborate and share their knitting interests and work. For more information on the group contact Cathy at [cathyroy@verizon.net](mailto:cathyroy@verizon.net)

### The Perfect Pass

Speaking of the Parker Memorial Library, they currently have the perfect offer for local museum visits. The library

is currently offering passes to the Boston Children's Museum, Museum of Science, Museum of Fine Arts and State Parks Pass among others. Admission rates vary from no charge to \$5.00. Admission group sizes vary from two to a carload.

For more information, contact the library at (978) 454-5474 or log onto [www.dracutlibrary.org](http://www.dracutlibrary.org). The library is located on 28 Arlington St.

### Rock the Boat House

If you're looking for some Dracut nighttime fun, then check out the Boat House on 294 Tyngsboro Road. Some of the best, local rock bands perform at the lounge every Friday and Saturday, beginning at 9:30pm. As football season begins, patrons are invited to view Monday Night Football weekly at 8:00pm on one of the lounge's ten flat screen HDTV TV's. Other weekly enjoyment includes local, DJ Blacky every Wednesday at 9:00pm and live acoustic performances Thursday at 8:30pm. The Boat House also offers weekly pool and dart leagues Mondays-Thursdays.

Some of the upcoming local band shows include:

Fri., 9/11-Bottoms Up

Sat., 9/12-Radio Edit

Fri. 9/18-Over 6

Sat. 9/19-Last Laugh

Fri. 9/25-Diezel

Fri-10/2-R.I.P.T.

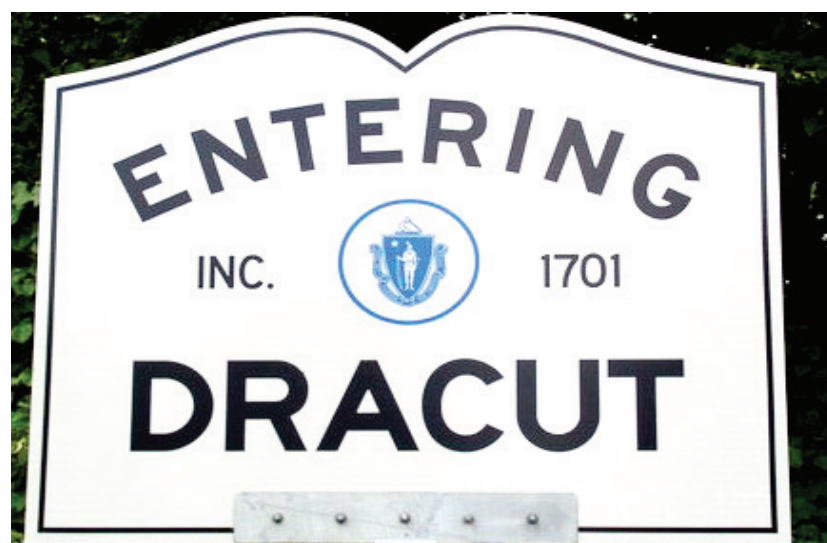
Sat.10/3-Cocaine Tongue (Guns 'N' Roses tribute band.)

There will also be a benefit on Saturday, September 25th. There are 10 bands scheduled as well as food and raffles from 1:00pm until close.

For more information call the Boat House at (978)957-7251 or log onto [http://www.backtotheboathouse.com/contact\\_us](http://www.backtotheboathouse.com/contact_us) Look No Further than Lo-Kai.

In the mood for some take out? Looking for a beautiful restaurant with tasty cuisine to eat dinner with your family? Then, look no further than the Lo-Kai. The Lo-Kai is one of the finer eating establishments throughout the entire Merrimack Valley. They offer some of the best in Cantonese, Mandarin, Polynesian and Szechuan. There is also a bar, flat screen TVs' and lottery & keno is also provided.

The Lo-Kai offers specials guaranteed to cure your hunger. There is a daily lunch buffet every Monday-Saturday from 11:30am - 2:00pm for \$6.75. There is also



a daily dinner buffet every Monday-Saturday from 5:00pm - 9:00pm for \$9.75. The dinner buffet is also available on Sundays and Holidays from 12:00pm - 9:00pm.

Some of the lunch buffet delicacies include chicken wings & fingers, boneless spare ribs, beef broccoli and general tso's chicken. These are among 20 items offered. During the dinner buffet, you can dabble in some lo mien noodles, crab Rangoon and ravioli among 40 items offered.

The Lo-Kai also provides a large function room for wedding, banquet, and corporate meeting and birthday party reservations. The room fits up to 250 people. To reserve the function room, log onto <http://www.lokaiweb.com/8book.html> to fill out a booking form.

You can also contact the Lo-Kai at (978) 957-2302)

### Grandparent Giving

Community Teamwork, Inc. has developed an extremely rewarding volunteer program entitled Foster Grandparents Program. It is federally funded and offered to people ages 55 and older. Any interested party must be income eligible to join. The "foster grandparents" are elders who work closely with teachers in providing assistance to children encountering challenges at elementary schools and day-cares. These can be derived from difficulty with

speaking English to facing family issues to requiring extra attention. Last year, there were 13 foster grandparents which were placed in four Dracut elementary schools. These included the Greenmont Avenue, Brookside Elementary, Parker Avenue, and Joseph A. Campbell schools.

Dracut provides transportation to any volunteers needing transportation. Volunteers typically provide 20 hours/week and traditionally work with children between kindergarten to second grade. The grandparents are assigned one class and will be returning to aforementioned Dracut elementary schools upon September opening. For anyone interested in joining the program or obtaining more information, call placement specialist Joan Aseltine at (978) 654-5080, ext.14. You can also log onto [www.comteam.org/senior\\_program.htm](http://www.comteam.org/senior_program.htm).



George Papoulias is a Dracut resident and graduate of Rivier College with a B.A. in Communications. He is a former producer at WCAP 980 AM in Lowell, for Merrimack Valley Afternoons, Paying Attention with Tom Duggan, Lowell Devils Hockey, the J-Team with John Molari and Riverhawk Radio with Bob Ellis.



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## THE VALLEY VIBE!

### Lovemionline.com Presents: The Glorious Sex Showcases

Dairon Sky

VALLEY PATRIOT ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Can anyone explain the difference between 'making love' and 'having sex'? Have you ever really thought about it? Do you really care...that's the real question? How about sitting in a room and describing your perception of the act with complete strangers? One must admit that the word "SEX" has so much power and yet is so misunderstood! Sex has become a tool to sell products and has lost its connection with the bond that consists of love.

Let me introduce to you Sujeiry Gonzalez – the mistress behind the vision of the enlightenment of what "a true sexual experience should be like". She has composed an unscripted four-piece receipt for the evening of September 26, 2009 at Tatiana's Restaurant in Lynn, MA. "A tantalizing evening that should leave viewers satisfied in a sense of entertainment and education as the talent is from their local area, recognizable faces speaking on the Taboo topic of sex!"

The event is filled with poets, dancers, comedians and musical acts whom are all exposing themselves to each themed topic; foreplay, act of sex, climax and the aftermath of sex. Each piece will be strategically place to go along with each section of the night as the audience dines on the custom designed menu for evening and those of age can devour the ever-famous "Love Mi A Lot" martinis and/or "Love Mi A Little" shots.

The showcase originated from New York City over the summer and after be-

ing quite successful - it is making its debut here in Massachusetts. "I grew up in MA! I went to high school in Andover, attending college at UMass Amherst and even grew up in Lawrence before returning back to New York. I always knew that I wanted to bring something back here that would be worthwhile and why not start with educating the youth with sex awareness. I truly feel that many young people do not understand the concept of what sex can and should be – passionate. I decided not the bring the showcase to Boston because that would have been so cliché to do so...I wanted to bring this artistry to more of a challenging community."

After the lights dim on the evening's events, the audience can anticipate on raffle giveaways and prizes as Sujeiry, the hostess, will offer her final words of responsibility of the topic.

"I want my audience to feel the need to be responsible and be comfortable to talk about sex. We offer condoms at every event and plan on joining with an organization to educate the youth in the future. As the production grows, I would like to host three showcases annually and create several outreach groups."

Lights...Camera...Sex!

Date of Production: September 26, 2009

Time: 8:00 PM

Age: 18+

Location: Tatiana's Restaurant

70 Market St.

Lynn, MA 01901

For those who want to get involved, please visit: [www.lovemionline.com](http://www.lovemionline.com)

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NOTEBOOK: FROM PAGE 17

the Devils at (978) 458-PUCK (7825) for more information or log on to [www.lowelldevilshockey.com](http://www.lowelldevilshockey.com) for details on benefits for season ticket holders.

**LAWRENCE - Can Silva Survive?**  
This year Lawrence City Councilor Grisel Silva (District B) may be in for the fight of her political life with Ruth Rojas of Lawrence Community Works close on her heels and another former rival Gary Manion ramping up his political campaign in the North Common Area of the city. Silva has been so controversial over the last two years that insiders are saying she is ripe for defeat in November. But don't count Silva out just yet. Her screaming fits at council meetings and her call to lay off police and firefighters have waned as the election draws near and now she is a lot calmer at meetings, even advocating NOT laying off public safety officials. The voters have very short memories when the rhetoric of campaign season heats up so this one will be interesting to watch! The pundits say she wins the primary but loses on Election Day but I say this one is way too close to call.

**LAWRENCE – Is Marie Gosselin Back?** – Well, I have to be honest with you all, I really thought we had seen the last of former councilor Marilda Gosselin on the campaign trail when she was beaten two years ago by Michael Fielding. But she's back! Gosselin is running for city council at-large (city wide) and appears to be even more popular with the voters now than she was two years ago. Signs for Gosselin are popping up all over the city and not just in the district she once represented (South Lawrence East). A quick trip to Tower Hill, Prospect Hill and even Mount Vernon revealed a strong base of support for the dethroned councilor, which could spell trouble for incumbent Councilor Roger Twomey. Gosselin was even seen knocking on doors at Salisbury

beach over the summer, targeting cottages with Lawrence political signs on their property. For his part, Roger Twomey has a lot more base support among Latino voters and is campaigning just as hard as he did two years ago. In the at-large race, the top three candidates are elected. Incumbent Frank Moran and challenger Dan Rivera are expected by insiders to take the top two spots with Gosselin and Twomey fighting for third place. Two years ago Twomey barely edged out incumbent councilor Joe Parolisi placing third (the top three out of six are elected). With two years on the council under his belt Twomey ought to surprise the insiders by placing in the top two but that will depend on voter turnout. A low voter turnout will certainly benefit Twomey, a high voter turnout will favor the challengers. It could be a Twomey vs. Gosselin race after the primary for that third spot unless something out of the ordinary happens ... just remember this is Lawrence!

**LAWRENCE - Can Stokes do it again?** – Two years ago, Jim Stokes defeated incumbent Gregory Morris in the South Lawrence East School Committee race. But Stokes resigned after being arrested for faking his ballot credentials and claiming he was a Vietnam Veteran with a Purple Heart. This propelled Morris back to his school committee seat where he has been serving for the last two years. But now, having weathered the controversy and being found guilty, Stokes wants another chance at the seat he had to give up. To his credit, Stokes rightfully points out that he has made numerous contributions to the community, raising money and items for the Toys for Tots program and serving on various boards. He says putting "veteran" next to his name on the ballot was a "mistake" and "I paid for my mistake". And that he did. But will the voters forgive Stokes



PHOTO: COURTESY

Arthur Hutton and Brad Jones, Brad is the new president of Methuen Exchange Club 2009 / 2010 and Arthur is the outgoing president.

at the ballot box on Election Day? I can say personally, as someone who has the highest respect for our military heroes who put their lives in harms way, I was certainly ready to forgive Mr. Stokes as I wish him no ill will. He has asked for forgiveness and at first he did seem sincere. But part of seeking forgiveness and asking for a second chance is having the willingness to be humble and display forgiveness and understanding towards those whom you believe wronged you. Unfortunately, Stokes has taken to blistering rants in public. He has personally and politically attacked anyone and everyone who criticized him when it was discovered that he faked his military service. Stokes was so out of control that at one school committee meeting he started naming people whom he perceived to have wronged him, showing no humility, mercy or forgiveness for their perceived indiscretions. This is a classic case of do as I say (forgive me) not as I do (refuse to forgive anyone else) and I think we have had enough of that from our local politicians... don't you?



**NORTH ANDOVER - Annual Rummage Sale in October** – Communities Together is holding its Annual Rummage Sale (our annual delegates' fundraiser) on Saturday, October 3, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at First-Calvary Baptist Church, 586 Massachusetts Avenue, North Andover. Come and browse for household items, clothes, jewelry, books, and special treasures. If you have items to donate, you may bring them to the church for storage in the church garage beginning September 14. If you need help getting items to the church or can volunteer for Friday set-up and/or Saturday during the sale, contact the CT office. Drinks and a light lunch will be available for a small charge on Saturday.


**LAWRENCE - Mr. Maali** – He may not have a great chance of winning the South Lawrence West School Committee seat but Mr. Maali is working hard on name recognition in the Mount Vernon area of the city. Every day Mr. Maali can be seen holding signs on South Broadway. He has also been attending every school committee and city council meeting as well as the sham "Yes We Will!" events put on by Lawrence Community Works. Armenian by descent, Maali has made a tremendous effort to learn the political process and is taking his candidacy very seriously. He has quite the uphill battle as he faces Mark Gray (whom he is taking advice from), incumbent Peter Larocque, and Yoed Cameron-Santos. Whatever the outcome of this race, if Mr. Maali

stays involved he very well could make a meaningful contribution to the city but he shouldn't get discouraged and should certainly stay involved after the election if he doesn't win. Lawrence needs hard workers!

**LAWRENCE - MMMM CRISPELLIS!** – Is there anything more delicious than a crispetti? Seriously? Ok you don't know what a crispetti is? It's fried dough (in the shape of an egg roll) either plain or filled with ricotta cheese or anchovy. The only place you can get them locally is at the Italian Kitchen on Common Street in Lawrence. While most people think you can only get crispettis during the Labor Day weekend Italian Feast (which is well worth attending) but that's not true! The Italian Kitchen is open year round and as someone who gets crispettis there all year I can tell you it's worth the trip even if you don't live in Lawrence! MMMM crispettis! Just writing about it is making my mouth water ... guess it's off to Common Street.

**LOWELL – The race for Kennedy's seat** - Former 5th District Congressman Marty Meehan and his successor Niki Tsongas both told WCAP radio that they are not interested in running for Ted Kennedy's Senate seat in a special election to be held next January. But wait, in true Marty fashion, after telling WCAP that he would NOT run for Kennedy's seat, he told the Boston press that he was, in fact considering a run. If this sounds familiar it should. When Meehan was a Congressman The Valley Patriot reported that Meehan was leaving his post as congressman to take the top post at UMASS Lowell. An aide for Meehan called to ask us to remove the story saying it wasn't true, but within a few short days it turned to be exactly true, meaning the denial was .... a lie! Sorry Marty, but as much as I like you, (and I really do) your record of truth telling when it comes to your own political ambitions are a little spotty! Remember when Marty said he would only run for two terms to Congress because he believes in term limits and then ran for a third term anyway? Don't get me wrong if he does decide to run he will be a contender as long as there is no Kennedy in the race.

**LAWRENCE - Election is Sept. 22nd METHUEN Election is September 15th**

 Tom Duggan is the president of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP, 980AM, every Saturday from 10am-noon. You can email your comments to [Tdugjr@aol.com](mailto:Tdugjr@aol.com).

American Cancer Society's Look Good . . . Feel Better® Hosted by Caritas Holy Family Hospital

METHUEN – Caritas Holy Family Hospital will host the American Cancer Society's Look Good . . . Feel Better, on Monday, September 21, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 70 East Street in Methuen. Look Good . . . Feel Better is a free program that teaches cancer patients hands-on cosmetic techniques to help them cope with appearance-related side effects from chemotherapy and/or radiation treatments. Wig care, scarf and hat use, skin care, and nail care will all be discussed, and all participants will receive a free makeup kit. Registration is required, please call Gail Palermo at 978-687-0156 x2021. Cosmetologists certified and trained by the American Cancer Society will

conduct the sessions, which are non-medical and do not promote any product line. Look Good . . . Feel Better is a free, supportive, informative, and enjoyable first step toward renewed self-esteem, self-confidence, and emotional recovery for cancer patients undergoing radiation or chemotherapy. Look Good . . . Feel Better is offered through a partnership of the American Cancer Society; the Personal Care Products Council Foundation; and the National Cosmetology Association. For more information about Look Good . . . Feel Better or for cancer information anytime contact your American Cancer Society 1-800-227-2345 or visit [cancer.org](http://cancer.org).

**2009 Seasonal Flu Clinic Schedule for The City of Lawrence & Methuen**

Mayor Michael J. Sullivan and Mayor William Manzi III, in conjunction with the Lawrence and Methuen Health Departments, are pleased to announce the 2009 Seasonal Flu Clinic Schedule for The City of Lawrence & Methuen

**Tuesday October 13th** at the Lawrence Senior Center, from 9:00am-11:30am  
155 Hampshire St., Lawrence

**Friday October 16th** at the Methuen Senior Center, from 9:00am-11:30am  
77 Lowell St., Methuen

**Tuesday October 20th** at St Lucy's Church Hall, from 9:00am-11:30am  
254 Merrimack St., Methuen

**Thursday October 22nd** at Sanborn Hall in the Quinn Building, from 5:00pm-7:00pm - 90 Hampshire St., Methuen

**Tuesday November 3rd** at the South Lawrence East School, from 9:00am-11:30am  
165 Crawford St., Lawrence

**These clinics are open to any individual age 18 or over. For more information please call The Lawrence Health Department at 978-620-3260 or The Methuen Health Department at 978-983-8655**



## A COUCH WITH A VIEW

## Fall Premier Month!

Ray Shackett

VALLEY PATRIOT ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Oh how I dread this time of the television year. All the new summer shows have either been canceled or have dried up to old, stale raisin status. All that's left is the rotting stench of aged reality TV cheese. And not the kind of cheese that is supposed to be aged for culinary purposes but the cheese that goes unforgotten in the bottom drawer of the refrigerator that blew its motor last spring.

Wow... something I ate recently must not be agreeing with me. My apologies.

There is a bright side to this disaster in the kitchen...or, umm...the TV room. I have been catching up with old friends via Netflix.

I missed seasons of The Big Bang Theory, Smallville and Dexter. And new finds like the BBC

comedy Spaced from the Shaun of The Dead team... very funny.

The other positive is that we don't have to wait too long for the fall season to arrive. Traditionally it's the first couple weeks of September but extends throughout the whole month in some cases.

Now, a bit of history for all you kids out there. Believe it or not there was a time when there were only three networks, not including the only two cable station you could get with the right antennae... channels 38 and 56.

No original programming, just cartoons, old movies and Creature Double Feature. Anyone? So with three networks, ABC, NBC and CBS, programming was limited, which meant that the cream didn't necessarily rise to the top. We had what we had and it's all we had until the fall. The season was long and the rerun season was longer.

These days if shows can't bring in the numbers by episode two they are replaced

with one of the many waiting in the wings.

While the fall season is still the most famous and much anticipated, we are also blessed with mid-season replacements, basic cable original programming and cable original programming. Fall shows that are so important they start four months later in January, summer, spring and whatever other season I missed. (Hey! there's a lot of programming out there!)

But nothing compares to the sweet smell of fresh television programming. The countdown, the promotional teasers, the talk around the water cooler, the anticipation that causes sleepless nights awaiting these Heavenly gifts from the

television Gods. But beware, a note of warning... love them now, for programming, she is a fickle beast.

With every love comes a chance for pain. And, recent history has taught me that what seems too good to be true is just that. So take with a grain of salt my suggestions for the shows to watch out for this fall.

Although they may be winners in my book the masses will ultimately decide their fates.

In no particular order, from my crystal television screen, I give you the winners of the upcoming fall season for new programming.

Community (NBC) – Thursday September 17 at 9:30pm

Despite relying on the past-his-prime Chevy Chase to sell this comedy it seems to already have enough charm helmed by the entertainingly amusing Joel McHale from The Soup. The story revolves around the staff of a community college and their exploits.

Watch for an appearance by the new go-to funnyman Ken Jeong from The Goods,

**SHACKETT, page 35**



## The Shift

*The shift began that fine summer's day  
He arrived on time not a moments delay.  
Tactics on his brain and was considered the best  
Of all of the men who wore the same badge on their chest.*

*He labored and trained with all their support  
Loving his friends as his family, their station their fort.  
The fire, the battle, of which all of them waited  
Rely on your buddy, independence they hated.*

*The alarm was their warning  
For which they waited and sprang  
Sirens, bugles and bells  
That echoed as they rang.  
He was the one they respected and admired the most  
Legendary blazes he battled, they called him the ghost.*

*That day was not long - So clear and so crisp  
As the alarm rang they sprung into action, some pumping  
their fist...*

*The engine was clean and shined in the sun  
His crew on the ready, second to none...  
Arriving on scene the building ablaze  
His crew rushed through the door for all to amaze.  
He led them to rescue young children, woman and men  
Twenty then fifty, perhaps one hundred and ten...*

*All was thought to be rescued as the building weakened and  
He cleared the building of his crew, and suddenly he stayed.  
For he heard a faint voice from the end of the hall  
Where did it come from? He thought they rescued them all.*

*The fire it rose and deafened his senses  
His father appeared and they mended their fences  
Walking along a cool stream where they sat and they sipped  
Discussed his final walk and the end of his trip...*

*He was asking his maker for one final call  
Allowing him one more rescue of the girl down the hall.  
Her prayer it was answered and outside she arrived  
Coughing and hacking, not dead...yes alive.*

*At the end of the fire, the scene, yes his grave  
At half mast the flag would soon wave.  
All they found of him, his helmet, some hose and a boot.  
Most of it found, by his stations new recruit...*

*The firehouse in black, his locker the altar, his bench the pew  
All that prayed, so many he knew.  
The bagpipes they played, the parade, the procession  
All that took notice they learned a hard lesson.*

*It was they that he told, you should never turn back  
For in a flash of an eye you may slip through the cracks.  
Answers they seek, for their brother they sift  
Wishing that day, he came home from his shift.*

J. MacDonald

## Classical Music Series returns to Lawrence this fall



Classical music will return to Lawrence and the Merrimack Valley in September when the fall music series, now celebrating its fourth year, continues at the Lawrence Public Library. The

first in the series of three free concerts will be held on Sunday afternoon, September 13 and will feature mezzo soprano Krista Rivera—who has been praised by the New York Times for her “shimmering voice... with the virtuosity of a violinist and the expressivity of an actress”—accompanied by pianist Brett Hodgdon.

An eclectic selection of music representing four centuries, the program will include music by Henry Purcell (17th century English composer), Robert Schumann (19th century German composer), Noel Coward (20th century composer and playwright) and Scott Wheeler (contemporary Boston composer).

Presented by the Friends of the Lawrence Public Library and funded by The Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust Fund, the concert is free and open to the public and will begin at 2 p.m. in Sargent Auditorium at Lawrence Public Library, 51 Lawrence St.

A resident of Boston, Rivera performs in operas, in solo recitals and with symphony orchestras around the country including a solo recital at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall where she performed the world premiere of Scott Wheeler's “Turning Back”.

A winner of the 2004 Concert Artists Guild International Competition and a 2007 grant from the Sullivan Foundation, she is a regular soloist with Emmanuel Music's renowned Bach Cantata Series.

An avid recitalist, also from the Boston area, Hodgdon has performed both song and instrumental recitals at venues throughout the U.S., including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Jordan Hall at the New England Conservatory. Most recently, he has appeared with the New England Conservatory's Contemporary Ensemble for the Boston premiere of John Harbison's “Milosz Songs” for soprano and piano. He is the vocal director and music advisor for Guerrilla Opera, a Boston-based contemporary chamber opera company. This summer he attended the Tanglewood Music Festival as a piano-vocal fellow and he is currently a doctoral candidate at the New England Conservatory of Music.

Terri Kelley, artistic director of the series, encourages people of all ages and levels of musical sophistication to attend. “We're featuring performers with international reputations who have performed at some of the most prestigious concert halls in the world,” said Kelley. “But our goal is to enlighten and entertain.” Kelley added that the music will be complemented by amusing anecdotes and informative commentary about the performers and pieces being played. Each concert will be one hour long and followed by a reception with refreshments.

The series will continue with a Sunday, October 18 concert featuring pianist Stephen Porter and cellist Katherine Kayaian and a November 15 concert featuring pianists Wanda Paik and David Hagan. All concerts in the series begin at 2 p.m. and are held at Lawrence Public Library.

“When we launched this series three years ago, we weren't sure whether there would be an audience for classical music in the city,” said Kelley. “Our concerts always attract a full house, proving classical music is alive and well in Lawrence.”

Because of the success of the fall series, a fourth event has been added this year. On Saturday, February 7 at 4 p.m., the New England Classical Singers and the Lawrence High School Girls Ensemble will perform a Cantata (The Seven Last Words of Christ) by Theodore Dubois at The Corpus Christi (Holy Rosary) Church in Lawrence. Featured soloists will include Barbara Kilduff, Jason McStoots, and Thomas Jones.

For more information on this exciting series or to receive free concert mailings, contact the Lawrence Public Library, 978 794-5786 or [www.lawrencefreelibrary.org](http://www.lawrencefreelibrary.org).

The Friends of the Lawrence Public Library is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that supports the Lawrence Public Library. This support makes it possible for the library to improve its public service programs for adult and children, as well as to provide museum passes, computers, and furniture for the library. Membership is open to anyone who is interested in improving the growth of the Lawrence Public Library.

The Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust Fund was established in 1987 through the generosity of M. Josephine, Helen and John J. McCarthy, the children of Catherine Sheehan McCarthy. Mrs. McCarthy was proprietress of the Post Office Square Hotel in Lawrence for many years. The Trustees of the Fund are pleased to support the Friends of the Lawrence Public Library in bringing to Lawrence this music series.



# Lowell Spinners sit atop the Stedler Division

**Shawn Hansen**  
VALLEY PATRIOT SPORTS WRITER

The Lowell Spinners held a record of 15-8 in August by Aug. 26. With an overall record of 37-27, the Spinners sit atop the Stedler Division in the playoff race 3.5 games ahead of the 33-30 Oneonta Tigers.

This past month interesting things happened as Glen “Big Baby” Davis visited LeLacheur Park Aug. 30 as Jim (Hall of Fame) Rice made his appearance the following day to have his number 14 retired at LeLacheur. Celtics and Red Sox stars aside, the Spinners demolished Hudson Valley, Auburn and Oneonta.

On Aug. 4, the Spinners lent the Hudson Valley Renegades a run demolishing the Class-A affiliate of the Tampa Bay Rays 10-1.

The Spinners hopped on the wagon first as Wilfred Pichardo laid down a bunt for an infield single. Pichardo then stole second, and advanced to third on a single off the bat of Derrik Gibson. With Ryan Westmoreland at the plate, Pichardo took off for home stealing his 14th base of the season.

The next two innings framed a seven run cushion as the Class-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox took a 7-0 lead after three.

Joantoni Garcia clubbed his second homerun of the season over the left field wall for a three-run shot. Chris McGuinness followed par the next inning belting a three run shot of his own over the right field wall. With sloppy play, the Renegades gave two runs to the Spinners over the coarse of the fifth and sixth innings. Pichardo then singled in Alex Hassan with Lowell’s tenth run.

The Renegades were lent their lone run in the seventh inning as Spinners relief

pitcher Anatanaer Batista left a runner 90-feet away from home plate in scoring position after sailing away two wild pitches. Brett Nommensen then smacked an RBI single to center field scoring Mark Thomas.

Spinners starting pitcher Alex Wilson was on a strict pitch count as he faced nine Renegades in three innings of work. In his start, he struck out one and walked one lowering his ERA to a dusty - low 0.43. Over the course of Wilson’s last 21 innings pitched, he surrendered one run.

Tom Ebert struck out four in his relief appearance working a solid two innings. Batista struck out three, and Dennis Neuman finished the game giving up one hit.

Every Spinner had a hit in the game as Lowell pounced on Renegade pitching for 15 hits.

On Aug. 21 the Auburn Doubledays (Class-A affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays) looked like they were going to wash away the Spinners pounding Yeiper Castillo for seven runs in the first two innings.

For the Spinners, in the bottom of the first Westmoreland tied the game with a two-run homerun, tying a franchise record with homeruns by a left-handed batter with seven. Sean Killeen singled to left in the bottom of the second scoring moments later on Joantoni Garcia’s double to left center field.

Following a few singles and a wild pitch, Garcia trotted home from third scoring Lowell’s fifth run (7-5) Doubledays at the end of two.



PHOTO: COURTESY SPINNERS

The next three innings were slightly quiet as the Spinners scored a run in the bottom of the fifth to make it (7-6). In the bottom of the sixth inning lightning struck LeLacheur Park as the Spinners scored eight runs sending 12 men to the plate.

Working 1 2/3 innings starting pitcher Yeiper Castillo (who didn’t pitch in nine days) walked two, hit a batter, and gave up seven runs on seven hits. Relief pitchers Jeremiah Bayer, Michael Burgary, and Neuman combined for 7 2/3 scoreless innings.

On Aug. 23, the Spinners caged Oneonta in a short two game sweep taming the Tigers 12-2.

Lowell picked up their bats early as Pichardo led off the game with a walk, stole second, and scored on Westmoreland’s single to right field. Michael Almanzar then pelted an RBI double to left field as Drew Hedman followed with a walk to load the bases. Dan Butler’s sacrifice fly, and Garcia’s single to center field brought home two runs to make the score 4-0 after one.

The cage was locked for the Tigers in the second as the Spinners toyed with Oneonta. The first three batters reached base as Almanzar came through with an RBI single to right field. A wild pitch mixed in with a Hedman groundout increased the lead to seven after two innings of play.

After Oneonta’s outfielder Michael Rockett and batting coach Luis Quinones left the game with ejection cards for arguing balls and strikes, the Spinners scored two more runs in the third for a (9-0) lead.

The Tigers then loosened the cage as they scored a solo run in the fifth off Spinners Jose Alvarez. After plunking Wade Gaynor in the back, Tigers short stop Carmelo Jaime legged out a triple smacking the baseball over centerfielder Ronald Ber-

mudez’s head. Alvarez however ended the comeback threat striking out John Murrian stranding Jaime at third.

Lowell rallied again in the fifth scoring three runs advancing the lead to an eggshied dozen (11).

In the game, Alvarez pitched a sensational six innings earning his seventh win of the season (7-3) tying a franchise record with wins. Over the coarse of his outing, Alvarez gave up one run on two hits with eight strikeouts lowering his ERA to 1.54. Making his Spinners debut, Cesare Aneglioni pitched two innings thereafter allowing one run on one hit. Neuman then came in securing the win pitching a flawless 1-2-3 ninth.

At the end of the trading deadline (July 31) Justin Masterson, Nick Hagadone, and Bryan Price have been with the Cleveland Indians organization.

Pitching in the starting rotation for Cleveland, Masterson has a record of 1-2 in five games with a 4.37 ERA. He has pitched in 22.2 innings as of Aug. 25 striking out 18 giving up 11 runs, one homerun, hitting one batter all on 22 hits.

Price pitching for the Kinston Indians (Class-A affiliate) has a record of 2-2 with a 5.32 ERA in five games giving up 30 hits, 14 runs, five homeruns, striking out 16, walking seven batters in 23.2 innings pitched.

Hagadone pitching for the Lake County Captains (Class -A affiliate) has a clean record of 0-0 with a 2.51 ERA in four games pitching in 11.2 innings. In his stint with the Captains, Hagadone gave up three runs, walked three batters striking out 18.



Shawn Hansen is currently in his last year at UMass Lowell. He wrote for “The Campus Report,” and was sports editor. Hansen now writes for “The UMass Lowell Connector,” and the “Billerica Minuteman.” To get in touch with sports journalist Shawn Hansen of The Valley Patriot, email him at smharticle@gmail.com

## 2009-10 Lowell Devils Home Schedule

Day	Date	Opponent	Time
Sat	October 10	WORCESTER	7:00p
Sun	October 11	PORTLAND	4:00p
Tue	October 20	BRIDGEPORT	7:00p
Sun	October 25	SPRINGFIELD	4:00p
Wed	November 4	HERSHEY	7:00p
Sat	November 7	PROVIDENCE	7:00p
Fri	November 13	WORCESTER	7:00p
Sat	November 14	PROVIDENCE	7:00p
Fri	November 20	NORFOLK	7:00p
Sat	November 21	MANCHESTER	1:30p
Wed	November 25	HARTFORD	7:00p
Sat	November 28	PORTLAND	7:00p
Wed	December 2	ADIRONDACK	7:00p
Fri	December 4	BRIDGEPORT	7:00p
Sun	December 6	MANCHESTER	4:00p
Tue	December 15	SPRINGFIELD	7:00p
Fri	December 18	ALBANY	7:00p
Sat	December 26	PROVIDENCE	7:00p
Sat	January 2	WORCESTER	7:00p
Sun	January 3	SPRINGFIELD	4:00p
Wed	January 6	HARTFORD	7:00p*
Wed	January 13	SYRACUSE	7:00p
Sat	January 16	PORTLAND	1:30p
Sun	January 24	NORFOLK	4:00p
Wed	February 3	HARTFORD	7:00p*
Sat	February 6	PORTLAND	7:00p
Fri	February 19	MANCHESTER	7:00p
Sat	February 20	WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON	7:00p
Sun	February 28	HARTFORD	4:00p
Wed	March 3	BINGHAMTON	7:00p
Fri	March 19	PROVIDENCE	7:00p
Sat	March 20	PORTLAND	7:00p
Sun	March 21	WORCESTER	4:00p
Wed	March 24	MANCHESTER	7:00p
Fri	March 26	SPRINGFIELD	7:00p
Sun	March 28	BRIDGEPORT	5:00p
Wed	March 31	MANCHESTER	7:00p
Sat	April 3	WORCESTER	7:00p
Fri	April 9	BRIDGEPORT	7:00p
Sun	April 11	PROVIDENCE	4:00p

\* at Prudential Center, Newark, NJ

## Heisman for Hope

**Chris Papoulas**  
VALLEY PATRIOT SPORTS WRITER

Ernie Davis is a great inspiration and example for every young man to follow. In his life, Ernie Davis was not classified as an angry man, even though he had plenty of reason to be. Ernie faced many obstacles, as well as going to college and playing football. Ernie Davis played a big part in changing the way this country looked at African Americans. He also opened opportunities for other African American athletes.

Ernie Davis was the first African American to win the Heisman trophy. It was a tremendous feat and victory for the progression of racial discrimination. This event was influential to the progress of eliminating racial discrimination. Ernie was very passive in the way he handled every day bigotry. Furthermore, while attending Syracuse University, Ernie Davis was part of Sigma Alpha Mu which was a nationally recognized Jewish fraternity. Davis was the first African American member not only in Syracuse but throughout the nation to join the fraternity. White people in America had voted Ernie Davis as the Heisman Trophy winner, which means they took the time to sit down and evaluate the three players nominated. They gave them all a fair chance, there was no discrimination in the decision process

and the most deserving player won.

The country’s eyes were on the 6’2, 212 lbs. running back as he received the Heisman trophy. As people saw Ernie Davis develop as a player, their eyes opened to new opportunities. Colleges and pro sports teams were opening their horizons to the fact that this was the future of sports. Integrated sports would prove to be successful and inspirational. If not for Davis, who’s to say O.J. Simpson or Bo Jackson would have won the Heisman. He let the country see that African Americans were human beings with feelings, thoughts, and talents.

Although Ernie Davis is an inspiring story, his death was anything but. After winning the Heisman trophy, he was the first overall pick in the 1962 NFL draft. Davis was selected by the Cleveland Browns to team up with fellow running back Jim Brown. The two together were going to be the most feared running back duo to ever grace the field. However it was not meant to be. Ernie Davis never saw one second of NFL playing time as he was diagnosed with acute monocytic leukemia. There was no cure and on May 18, 1963 Ernie Davis was pronounced dead at Cleveland Lakeside Hospital. The 23 year old Ernie Davis left behind a legacy and an inspiring story for parents to tell their children. Ernie died prematurely and left behind a tremendously bright future. Ernie Davis lived a life of pain, struggle, achievement, and greatness. Ernie Davis lived a life of inspiration.





PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

## The Happy Hearts Choral Group of the Methuen Senior Activity Center

The Choral group began 25 years ago as a music and drama group who would put on shows for sheer enjoyment of bringing people together to enjoy laughter and friendship.

What started out with 10 members has grown to 47 to date with elaborate shows. The group is appropriately named for the uplifting joy and happiness their music brings to people of all ages.

This year, the Happy Hearts show is titled "It's A Grand Night For Singing". Come and join us for an afternoon of

musical entertainment Friday, September 25th @ 1:00 pm and Sunday, September 27th @ 2:00 pm at The Methuen Senior Activity Center, 77 Lowell St., Methuen, MA.

This show is sure to get your toes tapping, hands clapping and even singing along with us to songs such as, As Time Goes By, Some Enchanted Evening, Unchained Melody, For Me And My Gal and so many more! Suggested price is \$5.00 donation per person! Get your tickets in advance or at the door! See you at the show

The Lawrence Civil War Memorial Guard, Presents it's 7th Annual

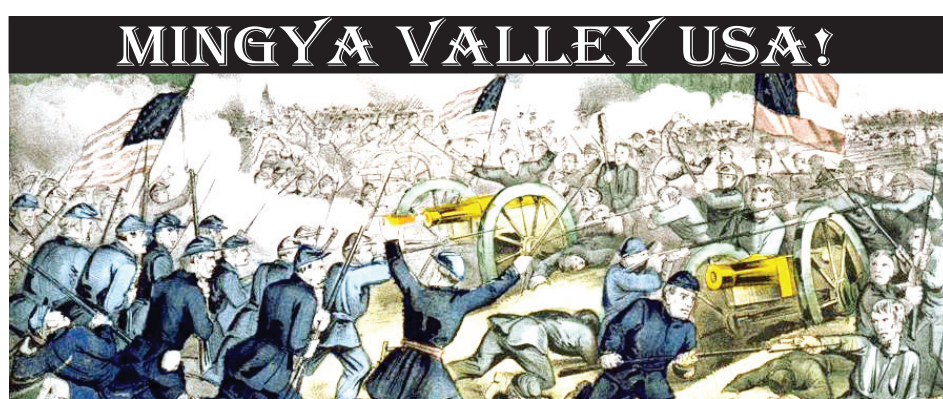
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September 19th & 20th 2009

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From the Civil War to Today:

It is always time to honor those who serve

Andy Kelley

VALLEY PATRIOT MINGYA COLUMNIST

On a hot July day in 1863, a young Union soldier marched into Baltimore, Maryland to search for concealed weapons and to guard confederate prisoners from the Battle of Gettysburg.

This soldier had fought in the battle of Whitehall months earlier and had escaped the ravages of an epidemic of cerebro-spinal meningitis during the winter of 1863. Little did he know, the turning point battle being fought to the west, and the civil war itself would shape more than just his own life; it would impact generations of Americans to come. In the Civil War, there were more than 620,000 soldier deaths and an undetermined number of civilian casualties.

That young soldier was among the bravest to serve America. That young Union soldier, at the time only 21 years old, was my great-grandfather, Thomas H. Kelley. Thomas was a Private in Company D 51st Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry out of Worcester.

After the Civil War, Thomas moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts to begin his life. Lawrence was a shining new city, pivotal in shaping the American Industrial Revolution. Like the many others flocking to the city, Thomas sought opportunity. He was an entrepreneur who started a stationary store on Lowell Street. Later he began a newspaper distribution business for the Boston Post. Thomas married Martha Elizabeth Jordon, a young woman from Maine who had moved to the city to work in the booming mills. Thomas and his new bride lived in a house that was diagonally across from Tripoli's Pizza.

With family military history dating back as far as 1863, I strive to honor everyone who has served this country. Since I personally did not serve, I work hard to remember those that do. My great-grandfather's namesake and my brother, Thomas H. Kelley, has lived up to his name and continued the family tradition of serving our country. He served in the Army Reserves in Vietnam. His son, Thomas H. Kelley II, served in the US Navy during the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian War. He recently re-upped in the Naval Reserves at age 36.

My nephew, Guy F. Kelley III, serves in the U.S. Navy and was in the flag ship of the expeditionary fleet involved in saving

Captain Richard Phillips, the U.S. captain who was captured by Somali pirates in April.

These are the Merrimack Valley people I know, love, and honor for their service. I am not only thankful for their service to our country, but thankful that none of them has been killed while serving. More than 172 Americans have made the ultimate sacrifice this year in Afghanistan, and I am grateful that my family has not been among them.

Merrimack Valley citizens have been sacrificing for our country since before even Thomas Kelley's time. Did you know that the first soldier to shed blood in the American Civil war was from Lawrence? His name was Sumner Henry Needham. He was killed on April 19, 1861 in "The Baltimore Riot of 1861" by Confederate sympathizers.

Who do you want to honor? I invite you to join the discussion on the Mingya Valley Facebook page dedicated to honoring those from the Valley who have served. I want to hear your story.

It could be about a friend or relative that has served, or even about you. Please go to [www.mingyavalley.com](http://www.mingyavalley.com) where you will find a link to the Facebook group. There is a discussion group labeled "Honoring Those Who Served from Mingya Valley." Please share your thoughts and stories with others from the area.

Mingya Valley will honor those who fought in the Civil War on September 19th and 20th at the 7th Annual Civil War Weekend at the Lawrence Common.

The event, which is hosted by the Lawrence Civil War Memorial Guard, starts at 9 AM and gets over at 3PM. Part of the exhibit will be in the Lawrence City Hall, across from The Common.

The exhibition is meant to educate the community and to remember those who fought. It will feature camp life re-enactments, cannon firing every hour, demonstrations, blacksmithing, and military drills. I go every year; it is a great event. I hope to see you there!



Andy Kelley left Lawrence a long time ago, but it turns out, Lawrence never left him. He lives in Andover with his family and owns Effective Student Marketing, Inc. a marketing firm for colleges. He can be reached at

[andy@andykelley.com](mailto:andy@andykelley.com)

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RONNIE’S RANTS

Random Thoughts

**Ronnie Ford**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Term limits and the banning of lobbyists; a move like this would solve much chaos and financial woes in this country. But the people, well, they won't put up with that until it is too late. H. L. Menchen once said something to the effect "Nobody ever lost an election by underestimating the stupidity of the American voting public". Right on the head! The people who hold public office today, and I imagine all throughout history, have always been interested in filling their own pockets. At least the great majority of them do. Republicans and Democrats, both parties care nothing about the guy in the middle. The leadership of our society teaches others to act as they do. Hence, we have the screwed up dizziness of moral and decent activity in our entire society.

Children are brought up today not knowing which foot is left and which is right. They need help for the most simple decisions. Take a look at small school parking lots, when the students are not there. The lots look like a Patriots – Miami game all crowded. It seems as though we need more teachers to achieve lower capabilities and marks in their students. I will tell you why. Kids are brought up to use the f word and many other verbal filthy remarks. Where do they get it? Mom and Dad?

The first president of the United States who doesn't go to church and neither does his wife or children. I am definitely no prude, but I know what is right and wrong and try to live by it. Not that I am successful all the time, but I try. So this is all I can ask of our leadership. Just try to treat people decently. Try to take only what belongs to you. Try to help the people you represent. Try and help others instead of taking from them. Try huh? Please try. Try hard.

Finally, the traffic circus, I mean traffic circle is going to be repaired to the acceptance of the public. No more having your head on a swivel, looking all over to get through the rotary safely. Once through, we offer a silent prayer to the Almighty

for thanks! We will see!

The Sunday hurricane Bill slipped by our coast, making wondrous waves and treacherous rip tides, we took a ride to view the ocean's splendor. When we got there, we put the windows down and the AC on high. The wonderful smell of the ocean filled our noses, it was great. The power of the waves crashing down on the rocks was magnificent! At Rye beach we saw about 20 to 25 surfers all bobbing in the water waiting for that perfect wave. All along the road there was bumper to bumper traffic and cars lined up waiting for parking spots. People stood on the rocks for miles, clicking their cameras. At Jennes's beach there were a few brave souls in the water, not venturing very far. Bicycles and motorcycles weaved in and out of the traffic. The police had a great day putting tickets on cars that were parked illegally. The hot dog and hamburger stands were doing a great business as well as the ice cream stand and restaurants. I am happy that is as close as Bill came to our shores, he sure was splendid. On a tragic note, several people were injured and one little girl died because of a rogue wave knocked them off the rocks at Arcadia Park in Maine. You always have to respect the power of the ocean and lakes.

Well, we lost one of our senators in Ted Kennedy. He did a lot for the people of Massachusetts. Ted also did a lot of other things to help people that we will never know about. To some, he was too liberal, to others not enough. I hope the devil didn't know he passed till he was in heaven a half an hour! It was a "grand Irish Wake and Funeral", as only the Kennedy's could do!

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

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



The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

Burial Grounds

**Jack Doyle, County Sligo**  
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

I love walking through cemeteries, Old cemeteries, I don't know what thrill I get out of it, but burial grounds give me a picture of the past as well as giving me the fact that someday, I too will be under a stone similar to the ones that I was looking at.

The church burial grounds in Fairymont, Roscommon gave me a scare. While looking for my namesake on the tombstones, I wasn't paying attention to the grounds around me, when I stepped back, lo and behold, I fell into a grave. The graveyard was so full of underbrush and shrubs that we weren't aware of any sunk-in graves. We should have had the age of the graveyard in our thoughts, circa, 1700 and 1800's.

Reading gravestones give me a chuckle, most of them are a capsule of what went on when the person was alive. Case in point, a gravestone in Knockbrack graveyard in Keash, Sligo that belonged to John Cullen:

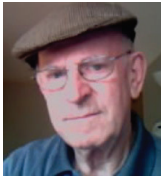
For 35 years and upwards  
I fought King Alcohol  
With heart in hand  
And tongue in a foreign land  
And I won the victory  
I am back in the old Country  
Fighting the same old king  
And so far I am Victorious  
\*John Cullen emigrated from Ireland before 1833 and returned to live here, (Ireland) and died 1878. His large memorial was carved by T. MacDonagh. \*(Keash and Culfadda a local history). A little advice from John Kelly that died in 1878, his tombstone states, "After a life of Labor but with a mind in ease."

Remember man who're thou art  
Not he who acts the greatest part  
But they who act the best will be  
The happiest men eternally

The majority of the graveyards that I meandered through are Early Christian and Medieval Monastic sites. The remains of Ancient church's with walls still standing can be seen throughout the landscape. All are historical sites. Graves inside these sites belong to the most prominent residence of that era. Michael Flatley of "Lord of the Dance" fame erected a "stone" at a relatives grave in Knockbrack Graveyard. His family lived in Culfadda, County Sligo.

Medieval Monasteries: 1200-1500 AD  
\* (The Early Christian monastic sites with their churches, mainly of wood, still continued and in time these were replaced with churches of stone. None of the surviving church buildings in the area of Culfadda and Keash, are earlier then 12th Century. These churches functioned at local level and were served by secular clergy as opposed to those served by Religious Orders such as Franciscan Ballymote, Augustinian Ballisodare, Cistercian Boyle and Dominican Ballindoon and Sligo. Templevanny was a Cistercian out-farm of Boyle in medieval times. The town land names Drunnagranshy, Graniamore and Graniaroe may indicate grainseach or grain-growing out-farms of Boyle Cisterican Abbey on the west side of Keashcorran.) \*Keash - Culfadda a Local History, by John Higgins, Mary B Timoney, Br. Thomas Connolly and John Kieilty.

Support Irish Craic and sponsor this page with an ad in the Valley Patriot.



Jack Doyle is an author and has published two books: Echoes of My Past, and Medjugorge, Heaven on Earth. To sponsor Jack's Irish Craic" in The Valley Patriot contact: Jack5772@comcast.net

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*From the Desk of*  
*Methuen Mayor William Manzi*

## Hard Work- Real Results

As I prepare to announce my candidacy for re-election as Mayor of Methuen it seems fitting to examine the issues that I campaigned upon in the last election and see what results have been achieved. It has been a very busy and productive two terms as Mayor. I hope a look at the record will help to convince you that I have earned your support for another term of office. And just what is that record? Let's take a look.

Economic Development, always important, has never been more critical for communities in this era of declining state aid. Coming from the private sector I recognized the need to streamline our regulatory processes to make good economic development easier to achieve in Methuen. I inherited a system that actually had two department heads in this area, and where that diffusion of responsibility made it just a little bit harder to navigate the bureaucracy.

I submitted a re-organization to Methuen's City Council, with the elimination of one department head position. After all was said and done my re-organization plan has placed all regulatory authority in land use under the umbrella of Methuen's Economic Development

Director. I was fortunate to be able to hire a consummate professional in Karen Sawyer for this new position. When business comes to Methuen they get fast service and a definitive idea of what the regulatory burden will entail. What are the results?

The Target Corporation building a brand new multimillion-dollar facility to Methuen that was permitted in less than sixty days. FW Webb, a major plumbing supply company, building a fourteen million dollar facility here in Methuen. General Mills (Yoplay), in a highly competitive internal market, picking Methuen to expand over sister plants in Tennessee and Michigan and investing millions of dollars in Methuen.

The Fitzgerald Family re-building a newer and larger Mann Orchards while completing a residential subdivision at the same time, with our permitting process creating a smooth transition. Other critical development includes an Enterprise Bank coming to Downtown Methuen, Bank of New England developing a site at Cross and Pelham that had been vacant for years, and the Circle K retail outlet coming to the same neighborhood, the Jean D'Arc Credit Union coming to East



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Methuen at Joseph Pappalardo's brand new building on Merrimack Street, a brand new building housing an Olive Garden at the Loop, and the Methuen Village Assisted Living Facility opening in our downtown area. We will continue to promote responsible economic development that not only provides needed financial resources for Methuen, but jobs for our residents. In the area of economic development Methuen is really on the move.

When I was elected Mayor a top priority was to correct the problems with our High School infrastructure. We have put together a program for improvement at our High School that enabled Methuen to be selected for State funding in the very first year the Commonwealth of Massachusetts lifted its moratorium on school building assistance. Methuen is moving quickly on this project, with the hiring of KBA/Trident as the Owners Project Manager, as well as the recent hiring of Finegold Alexander & Associates as the project architect. On Thursday September 3rd at 3:00 p.m. Methuen's Building Committee will host the project kickoff at Methuen High School, with the Massachusetts School Building Authority in attendance. This project is vital to Methuen and our High School students, and we all owe thanks to our legislative delegation, as well as our building committee chaired by Suzanne Lamoureux for the amazing progress on this vital project.

When I was elected Mayor Methuen had a poor website with little to offer its citizens. We have produced a brand new website with no outside help from consultants. Methuen's web site is accessible, much easier to navigate, and has up to date information across a wide spectrum of subjects. Methuen has been recognized by the Common Cause Massachusetts Campaign for Open Government for having critical data available on its website, winning the 2009 Common Cause e-government award with distinction. We have unveiled a brand new on-line permitting system, allowing residents and business to apply for permits on-line from their homes or offices. We have also begun to live broadcast all city meetings, including City Council, as well as creating a video archive of those meetings. We will continue to refine and improve our website to help Methuen's citizens interact with our government.

Methuen's Arlington Neighborhood has needed a facility for its after school program as well as its other programs for many years. While it had been talked about for many years my administration, with the help of our State delegation, made a brand new building a reality. Today, at the site of the Tenney Street Park, stands a brand new building that houses the many programs designed to help the kids of Methuen's Arlington Neighborhood.

As I took office in January of 2006 I realized that our Emergency Management System needed attention. With the unpaid assistance of former Senator James Jajuga we totally overhauled our emergency management system. This new system was

in place when the floods of 2006 hit, and proved to be up to the task. When disaster struck again with last year's ice storm that left so many without power our system and people performed flawlessly. Under those challenging weather conditions we evacuated the elderly residents of the Methuen Housing Authority and brought them to the safety of warmth and shelter. Professional management and hard work are vital when disaster strikes. We have both today in Methuen.

Methuen has not had a Master Plan done for over twenty years. As I entered office there was political consensus that we produce a new Master Plan for the community that would modernize land use planning in Methuen. We not only produced Methuen's first Master Plan in over twenty years but we also won approval for the implementation plan that successfully modernized our zoning regulations.

Our negotiations with Verizon to bring cable competition to Methuen were successful, and as a result Methuen has true competition in this area, leading to real choice for Methuen consumers of cable television.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has endured the most difficult economic downturn since the Great Depression, and that has led to tremendous cuts in local aid for cities and towns throughout our state. In Methuen we suffered cuts totaling around three million dollars, and faced difficult choices. On the City side our goal was to protect the services we provide to our citizens, and to do so by making tough but necessary cuts. We slashed municipal side spending while holding our Senior Center harmless and protecting the Nevins Library, and reached agreement with all nine city side unions to take cuts equal to ten percent of wages. These cuts, including to all top staff and the Mayor, allowed us to get through this fiscal cycle without layoffs and with our services intact. That result required strong mayoral leadership and experience to achieve what was best for Methuen.

We have made great progress in the past four years, but there is some real work left to be done, including managing the multimillion dollar renovation of Methuen High School and dealing with additional fiscal pressure from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I believe I have shown the leadership necessary to keep moving Methuen forward in difficult times. Hard work brings real results! Please consider allowing me the privilege of serving as your Mayor for another term. It has been an honor to do so, and I hope you consider me on primary day, September 15th. Please check my blog for news on local, state and national issues at [www.billmanzi.com](http://www.billmanzi.com)



William Manzi is the Mayor of Methuen and is serving his second two-year term. He is seeking a third term in November. You can email Manzi at [billmanzi1@comcast.net](mailto:billmanzi1@comcast.net). Visit his blog at [billmanzi.com](http://billmanzi.com)

## Host families needed for 2 weeks in the Methuen area

September 25-October 9, 2009

Host families are needed for 2 weeks for Italian students

Methuen High School will welcome a group of high school students for 2 weeks from Rome Italy!!! A new opportunity to make a friend from Italy; Carousel Tours representative, Sue Boswell will be working with Ms. Follonier, MHS Italian teacher. This is a great time to be a host family!

We are looking for caring families who enjoy learning about a different culture and making lasting friendships. The students are from Rome Italy and will be participating in various school days and full day activities and trips to area attractions including: Boston, mountains, Harvard Square, Salem and more. Trips will depart and return from the high school. We will keep them busy from start of school day until 5:00pm most days, Monday-Friday. Evenings and weekends are spent with the host family.

If you have weekend plans already we can arrange for a fill-in host family, or better yet, bring your student along! They will have a true immersion into your family and a great experience as well.

We are looking for a total of 35 host families who are able to welcome a student into your lives for 2 weeks! (28 girls and 7 boys in the group)

Any family, large or small, with high

school age children can be a host family.

Home-school families are invited to join the fun! The only requirement is a desire to welcome a foreign student into one's family circle and show him/her the same interest and caring any traveler seeks when in a strange land, as well as to provide transportation to and from Gloucester High School.

It is not as demanding as it seems. The family provides a bed and meals and allows the visitor to participate in its usual activities.

The group arrives on September 24th through October 7th. All students speak English, and have their own spending money. Their ages range from 16-18. They want to come to the US to learn about our country and the most beneficial way is as a member of an American family. All requested transportation is local, to and from the high school.

This can be the start of a lifelong friendship. A connection that can pass to the next generation as it has with so many families, and open doors to a lifetime of travel. So many wonderful stories begin with a family taking a chance and hosting a 2-week Italian student.

We look forward to your call.

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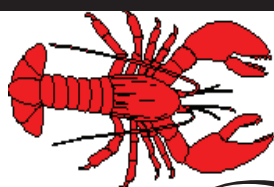


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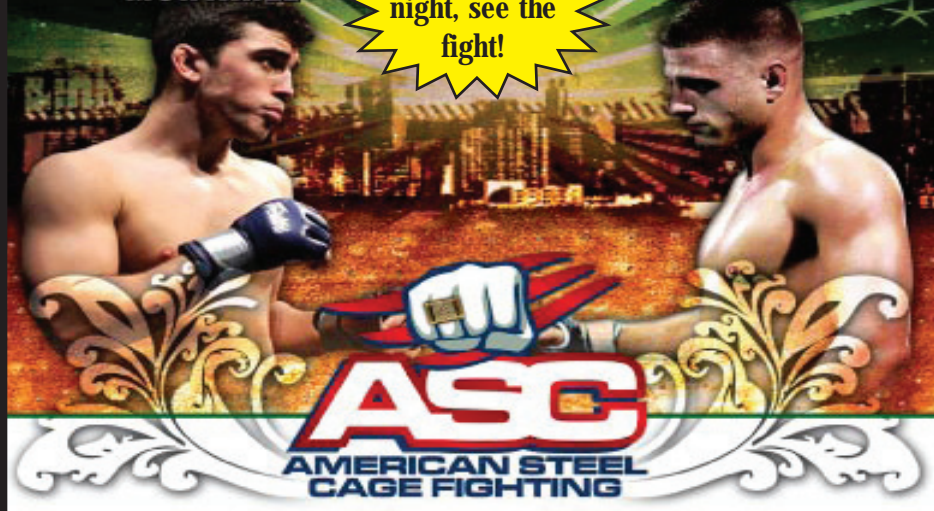
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Barbara Peary

“Stay in the Lines”

I find that my four-year-old daughter can be occupied for hours at a time with coloring books and crayons. Last week my sister, who is a first grade teacher, casually remarked that, “Coloring books are no good for children, they’re too restrictive.” I enjoyed them as a child and now my daughter does, so what’s wrong with that?

Generally, once a child enters school, the teachers try to initiate arts and crafts activities that require more imagination on the part of the child. Nothing is “wrong” with coloring books, but to encourage children to express their own ideas, teachers introduce markers, paints, and other assorted art materials and encourage the children come up with their own projects. You could purchase these types of supplies and put them out along with glue, safety scissors, and paper of different sizes and textures; letting your daughter experiment with all the items. Gather a shoebox of odds and ends-used cards, buttons, pieces of string, etc. and offer it to her for making her own art work. Consider keeping the coloring books for use in the car, while waiting for appointments, etc.

My granddaughter will be staying with me during the end of October. She loves reading with me and I would like to find something special for us to enjoy. I am not interested in books with ghosts and witches. Any suggestions for me? She will be five in November.

A wonderful selection for this time of year would be The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything (Harper Collins, 1986) written by Linda Williams. The plot revolves around a women chased through the woods by clomping shoes, a pumpkin head and a nodding black hat. Not the least bit scary, but it will get both the reader and the listener involved in the dialogue. Appropriate for four-year-olds and up.

We have three children, the older two are six and eight year old girls and our youngest is a four year old

SHACKETT: FROM PAGE 28

The Hangover and Knocked Up.  
FlashForward (ABC) – Thursday September 24 at 8pm  
For a brief moment in time the entire world blacks out. Most of the population experience visions of the future, some experience nothing... oooh. From the folks that brought us Lost, will this be the next... well, Lost? We’ll see. The promos look exciting enough.  
Glee (FOX) – Wednesday September 16 at 9pm  
FOX premiered this a couple months back as a tease of what’s to come. Glee is a dramedy, heavy on the humor and music, about a flailing high school glee club. The music has already been a hit on iTunes leaving it a fall force to be reckoned with.  
Modern Family (FOX) – Wednesday September 23 at 9pm  
We’ve seen the dysfunctional family been done to death. A couple of tricks, gimmicks and Ed O’Neill promise this to be the standout comedy of the new

season. Highlights include a fist bumping Dad who so desperately wants to be friend with his kids that he has learned the entire choreographic routines from High School Musical... much to their displeasure.  
Trauma (NBC) – Monday September 28th at 9pm  
Unfortunately I don’t have much fate in this one lasting too long but the one promo they show looks pretty action packed and exciting. Can they stretch it is the question.  
We’ll catch back up with the hits and misses next month. As always, let me know what’s working for you as you’re watching.  
Happy viewing!



Ray Shackett is the co-host of Mer-rimack Magazine Afternoon Edition and host of Living For The Weekend on AM980 WCAP. For questions, comments or suggestions, email Ray at ray@980wcap.com

boy. I don’t know if it is my age, thirty-four, but his play is wearing me out. His activity level is so much higher than I remember theirs being. They would do some running around, but the girls were also content to do puzzles, read books and play games throughout the day. I’m not saying he never does those things, but he really wants to go, go, go. I’m a stay at home mom, but caring for him is proving to be more exhausting than a full time job!

How about joining a cooperative play group with other parents? Look to see if there are signs posted from groups at your local library or start one yourself. In groups such as these, parents usually take turns meeting at their homes from a few hours a week and letting the children play together. For the sake of your sanity, avoid getting in a group that has more than four or five other children in it. Another idea is to enroll your son in a morning preschool program where there will be activities and outside play

scheduled. Try to schedule some time for outside play in your yard or a park as a regular routine. Bike riding, roller blading, playing ball, etc. will help him use pent up energy.  
It is not unusual for some children in a family to be more active than their siblings. Parents need to accommodate this need for more vigorous play or behavior problems can be the result.  
My infant daughter is four months old and shows no signs of teething yet. Shouldn’t they be appearing soon?  
Usually the first teeth begin to erupt when the child is between four and seven months old.



Please send questions to RAISE ‘EM RIGHT™, P. O. Box 831, Carlisle, MA 01741 or ask online at www.RAISEEM-RIGHT@aol.com you can e-mail Barbara Peary at raisemright@aol.com



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## PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

# The home spa for dogs: how to pamper your puppies

Kate Whitney

VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY COLUMNIST

Last week my best friend, Dana, came home with a little “surprise” for me. She knows how much I love dogs and how much Dash and Honey are the center of my universe. She presented me with a book called “The Home Spa for Dogs.” Once I started reading it, I couldn’t put the book down.

I love books like that; I love learning about fun new activities I can do with my puppies. There’s nothing sweeter than bonding with your pooch while doing something that’s easy and virtually free. Before I write articles about how to spoil your dog with “spa” treatments, I thought I would write about the basic needs of our dogs.

The next few Puppy Love articles will focus on how to pamper your dog. I will cover things like how to provide a spa day for your dog, feng shui for dogs, and exciting, healthy spa recipes for your dog. Stay tuned! But for this article, however, I need to refresh your memory about how dogs should be treated- like dogs.

The saying, “dog is a man’s best friend” will always hold true, especially in today’s society.

That is fine and great, but don’t forget that dogs are dogs, and they need to be treated as such. Sometimes it’s easy to fall in to the trap of “babying” your dog and seriously believing they are your biological, human child. No offense to anyone who feels this way (I admit I feel like Dash and Honey are my kids) but at the same time, don’t lose sight of what your dog really needs from you.

These days you see “Pet Boutiques” and “Pet Spas” everywhere...boy have times changed. Back in the day, dogs were

considered animals, not members of our family. They roamed around in packs on the streets and on farms; they didn’t sleep in our beds. They ate scraps that people would share and they had to work to get their food. Nowadays, our dogs get fed every morning and evening (sometimes they get fed too much).

We spend lots of money every month to make sure that our dog’s stomachs are full, and our pups are satisfied. With all of that said, it is easy to believe that dog’s lives are so much better these days than

they used to be. I thought that too at first, but now I’m not so sure. When they roamed in packs, they were able to be what they are, dogs. They are pack animals and they enjoy being with other dogs. Instead of



lying around on plush, designer beds, they used to run free all day, getting tons of exercise and having fun.

The food that dogs used to eat in nature was better than some of the gross dog “food” that is sold on the market today. With byproducts, artificial ingredients, and bizarre additives, we are actually doing harm to our dogs, not good.

Be aware of what you feed your dogs... go back to the Puppy Love article from a few months back where I talked all about food and how to read the label on the packaging.

The quickest and best advice I can give is to not buy your dog food at the big name grocery stores.

Today, most dogs are inactive and overfed. Many dogs are kept isolated and are banned from parks, buildings, and beaches. Some dogs have no other animal companions, something that most dogs crave. I don’t buy the “my dog doesn’t get along with other dogs” excuse.

Dogs want to be around each other. In-



PHOTO: COURTESY

The Valley Patriot’s Puppy Girl Kate Whitney with Meg, the latest of Kate’s foster puppies to get adopted. She is a 7 month old pointer mix who was picked up as a stray in Virginia. She now resides with her new mommy in North Reading., 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](mailto:onetail@comcast.net)

stead of keeping your dog separated from other dogs, bring it to a trainer or a dog park and work on getting him socialized. Dogs today don’t have a “job” or a “sport” to keep them busy and stimulated. People pay lots of money for dog walkers, great food, yummy treats, cute rhinestone collars and matching leashes. But what our dogs need most from us can be provided to them for free with an understanding of a dog’s true wants and needs.

Today’s lesson is simple. Our dogs are part of the subspecies *Canis lupus familiaris*. The dog is a domesticated subspecies of the Grey Wolf. This fact may be upsetting to some who believe that the dog was part of the Homo Sapien or “Human” species. Please don’t lose sight of this. You can love your dog, pamper your dog, and spoil your dog rotten, but don’t forget that his daily needs are simple; exercise, discipline, affection.

If these three basic needs are met on a daily basis, you will have a happy and

healthy best friend.

And don’t forget... YOU are the pack leader. Exert a calm-assertive energy with your canine at all times. It is not mean to be assertive and in charge, but it is mean and irresponsible if you are not in charge.

Remember that a dog’s love is unconditional. She doesn’t care what you look like, what your financial status is, if you are male or female, what kind of car you drive, or if you tell her “no” to having more cookies.

It is guaranteed that your dog would love you the same and give you the same sloppy kisses if you woke up tomorrow and everything you had was gone.



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](mailto:Kwswingrite@aol.com)

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## Salem Animal Rescue League Annual DogFest & Walk for the Animals

Salem Animal Rescue League will hold its annual DogFest and Walk for the Animals on Sunday, September 27 from noon to 4 p.m. at Windrush Farm, 30 Brookview Road, Boxford, MA. Leashed dogs are welcome, and admission and parking are free. Come visit over 30 pet related vendors, carnival style games, food, pet contests and a blessing of the animals.

There will be demos including flyball, agility and obedience. For information or pledge sheets for the walk, please contact Ray Denis at (603) 893-3117, or email [rksim@comcast.net](mailto:rksim@comcast.net).

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## September is North American Pet Health Insurance Awareness Month

*The North American Pet Health Insurance Association is joining Canada for the 4th year of raising awareness of the value of pet health insurance.*

Pittsburgh, PA – During September, NAPHIA will be sponsoring a nationwide contest to select pet health insurance customers' favorite veterinary practices from over 20,000 across North America. Pet parents can also post pictures of their pet along with a story of hope and recovery due to pet insurance helping to provide needed care.

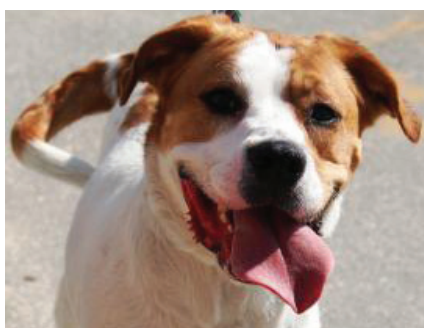
The favorite veterinary practice will receive special recognition plaque, as well as a \$500.00 educational grant for their team. The winning pet and pet parent story will receive a gift certificate valued at \$500.00 to be used for pet purchases. Additionally, a donation of \$250.00 will be provided to the pet shelter of the winner's choice.

Pet Health Insurance Month was established in Canada four years ago by Petsecure. Through promotion of their contest on the Petsecure homepage, ads in their eNewsletter, as well as posters and other collateral each year the program has increased. Last year there were over 10,000 entries. "We continue to see significant annual growth in our industry," states Randy Valpy, President & Chief Operating Officer of Petsecure Pet Health Insurance. "It is our mission to promote, educate and share information about pet health insurance. Pet Health Insurance Month helps spread the importance of pet health insurance as part of responsible pet ownership."

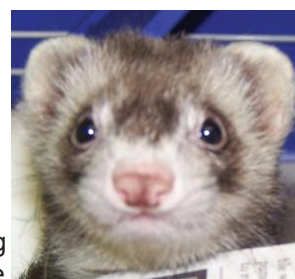
According to NAPHIA Executive Director, Loran Hickton, "Everyday we receive heartwarming stories of pets that were saved due to the support of pet health insurance. This good work that has taken place in Canada over the past several years gives us a great reason to join this ongoing awareness campaign and celebrate. Highlighting the care providers and the great stories of pet parents and pets that were saved as a result of having pet health insurance can help raise aware-

## Come to the Lowell Humane Society and take us HOME!

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>>>Rosalie - Hi, my name is Rosalie, and I am an absolutely adorable 5-month female ferret. I'm super sweet and love to be held. I'm also very curious and playful! If you're looking for a young ferret, adopt me and I can entertain you with my wonderful antics and amazing smile!



<<<Cookie - Hi there! My name is Cookie because I'm as sweet as a cookie! I'm a fun, outgoing guinea pig who would love to go home with you! My friend was already adopted, so if you have a piggie at home who needs a friend, think of me! I'm very curious and with some love, I can become the friendliest, cutest member of your family.



<<<Snarf- Hi there! My name is Snarf, and I'm a handsome male mini-lap bunny whose previous owners had too many animals to care for me properly. I'm a curious guy who loves to hop around and explore. If you're looking

for a more active guy with some spunk, I'm the one for you!

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## 6 inches off the ground

### Visit from the butterfly

Chaucer Tucker  
VALLEY PATRIOT KITTY COLUMNIST

Mom's covering this column.

Eight years have passed since that beautiful morning dawned on September 11, 2001. In 2003 I was posthumously introduced to one of souls on Flight 11 when I visited Woods Hole, Massachusetts where the internationally known oceanographic institute is located.

Visiting Cape Cod with my daughter she wanted to show me, "the prettiest lighthouse on the Cape." After viewing Nobska Light we strolled across the bend in the road to the bluff overlooking Vineyard Sound. This small area is carpeted in mowed rough grass, natural vegetation and short dirt path worn by visitors to glimpse and photograph the island of Martha's Vineyard, sea and sky.

On entering I noticed a large separate rock affixed with a bronze plaque off to my right. On a bench a few feet away sat a middle-aged couple in silent contemplation. I snapped some photos before reading the plaque. "2001" caught my eye but no immediate recall produced significance when suddenly the memory of September 11th washed over me. As I read and did a calculation my eyes were drawn to the black and white prayer card photo and small bouquet of white hydrangeas at the base of the rock.

Neilie (pronounced Nee-ly) would have celebrated her fifth wedding anniversary in 10 more days—September 21. She left behind family, husband Mike and daughter,

Riley, less than a year old. As I read the lady remarked,

"That's her picture...down there by the flowers. That's when I felt a spirit presence.

"It's nice to see someone taking an interest in photographing the tribute." I had not done so. Should I pretend to and leave; maybe offer a kind smile? But I couldn't—the spirit was keeping me here.

She spoke again and turning I asked, "Did you know the young woman?"

"I'm her mother." No words came. I could only hug this stranger.

Neilie was near my daughter's age. We were making memories; her mom was recalling past memories. She shared that Neilie was engaged down on the beach and had wedding photos taken at the lighthouse.

Now I visit Neilie when I visit the Cape. I find comfort and quiet contemplation there in the windswept beauty of that bluff. Physically it's changed—with a studier bench installed, a crushed shell path laid from the bench to the rock and shrubbery planted. There's usually a small American flag, bouquet of flowers, maybe a Red Sox cap. I observe the visitors. Some offer a prayer or comment on her age (32), while some shake their heads at the insanity of it all.

The most touching for me is the butterfly visit. This gentle creature shows up and remains until I leave.

"Hi Neilie, it's nice to see you again."

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### Rub My Belly

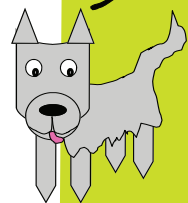
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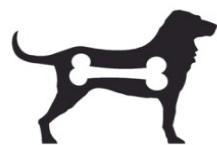


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# This time, it was Scotland's turn to shame the West

Dennis Prager  
SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

Whenever I think that some Western country or institution has reached a low point, shortly thereafter, sometimes the very next week, another Western government or institution proves me too optimistic.

Last week, it was the news that the Yale University Press will not allow any picture of Muhammad to appear in its forthcoming book on the Muhammad cartoons controversy. Not only will Yale not print the cartoons that are the subject of the book, Yale will not print any picture of Muhammad, no matter how respectful, no matter that a believing Muslim drew it, and no matter how long ago it was drawn.

This week, it was Scotland's turn to shame Western civilization. And though it seemed impossible to outdo Yale, Scotland has.

The Scottish government released Abdel Baset al-Megrahi, the one person convicted in the mass murder of 270 people when Pan Am flight 103 was blown up over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988.

As the Chicago Tribune noted in an editorial appropriately titled "Scotland's Shame," at al-Megrahi's 2001 trial, the Scottish prosecutor pointed out that "four hundred parents lost a child, 46 parents lost their only child, 65 women were widowed, 11 men lost their wives, 140 lost a

parent, seven lost both parents."

But all these people and all their loved ones were not the recipients of Scotland's compassion; the murderer was.

What the Scottish government, its Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill, and millions of others in the West do not understand is that, unlike justice, compassion cannot be given to everyone. If you show compassion to person X or group X, you cannot show it to person Y or group Y. Justice, by definition, is universal. Compassion, by definition, is selective.

That is why, generally speaking, governments should be in the business of dispensing justice, not compassion. Individuals can, and often ought to, dispense compassion, not societies.

When governments try to dispense compassion, they usually end up hurting people, as in the case of Scotland.

Allowing al-Megrahi out of prison was compassionate only to al-Megrahi, the individual least deserving of compassion, and it was an act of sheer cruelty to the ones who deserve all our compassion, his victims. The fact that al-Megrahi has terminal cancer is utterly irrelevant. He should have been allowed to die in prison.

Allowing him, his family and his murder-loving supporters in Libya and elsewhere the joy of his last months/years in freedom mocks the dead, trivializes the suffering of the victims and their loved ones, and undermines justice.

The bigger tragedy, however, is that

MacAskill and his government are not aberrations. They are not just a few foolish individuals who happen to have power.

The Scottish government had plenty of support, and not just among terror-loving Libyans who appropriately waved the Scottish flag alongside the Libyan.

The office of the U.K. Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, for example, had no comment. As The Scotsman pointed out, despite intense international pressure, and despite the fact Brown is hardly reticent about commenting on far less significant matters such as the death of a British reality TV star (Jade Goody), he remained silent on the Lockerbie murderer's release.

As The Scotsman further reported, "Last night, the top story on the Downing Street website was a video message from Mr. Brown to Muslims around the world for Ramadan. There was no mention of Lockerbie."

A spokesman for the Church of Scotland, Ian Galloway, said the decision "sent a message to the world about what it is to be Scottish. ... We are defined as a nation by how we treat those who have chosen to hurt us. Do we choose mercy even when they did not choose mercy? ... I would say justice is not lost in acting in mercy."

Galloway's nihilistic and antinomian romanticism helps explain why so many European churches are empty.

Sir Richard Dalton, British ambassador to Libya between 1999 and 2002, also supported Scotland's decision: "Appall-

ing though the atrocity was that led to the deaths of 270 people, there are not good reasons why anybody convicted of that crime should be excepted from normal rules which apply for considering release on compassionate grounds."

One can only wonder whether the morally confused are more likely to enter foreign office work or whether being in a foreign office is more likely to render one morally confused.

The BBC reports that "MacAskill accused the Libyan government of breaking a promise not to extend a hero's welcome to Megrahi on his return."

That MacAskill believed the Libyan government of Mouammar Qaddafi would keep a promise is just one more example of the naivete about evil that has characterized much of Europe since the end of World War I.

Until next week's Western abomination against Western civilization, so long for now.

Dennis Prager hosts a nationally syndicated radio talk show and is a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. He is the author of four books, most recently "Happiness Is a Serious Problem" (HarperCollins). His website is [www.prageradio.com](http://www.prageradio.com).  
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## Are death panels the hysteria of the right?

Paul Murano  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Is all this talk about death panels in a potential national health care plan just the hysterical ranting or scare tactics of the political right – as the president and his foot soldiers now seem to be saying? No sane person would believe that something like that could ever exist, would they?

No sane person with any sense of history would deny it.

Even if the one-thousand page document on proposed Obama-care did not use the words "death panel", that should not defer people from recognizing its inevitability. Why?

National health care or not, euthanasia is around the corner. That is, unless this country has a profound philosophical conversion before it's too late on the meaning of life and the value of suffering. Everyone whose eyes have been open recognizes the trajectory we are on and the direction it is going. The laws of physics would apply to sociology inasmuch as when something is in motion it will remain moving in the same direction until or unless something else deters it.

For the past four decades this society has been moving in the direction of physician-assisted suicide, which is one step away from involuntary euthanasia. Think about it: a generation ago no one would have dreamed that hospitals would routinely screen embryos through amniocentesis for any defects in preborn children, to then strongly suggest abortion to the distraught parents. No one would have dreamed that clinics would routinely create human beings in glass dishes only to destroy them if they are no longer useful or if too many human embryos implanted in a woman's uterus end up surviving. You would have been ridiculed as an "extremist" if you ever suggested that one-third of all human beings created, destined to live for around 80 years, would be intentionally killed by the fiat of physicians and parents by drugs or surgery. Parents like Sarah Palin who bucked the contemporary medical establishment by raising an "imperfect" child have a right to imagine the worst when the president speaks about the "decisions" that will have to be made regarding the (imperfect and unproductive) elderly. In the 1970's schools had full classes of chil-

dren with Down's Syndrome; today we have "taken care" of that problem. Will we look back at the early 21st century and reminisce about nursing homes being full, having "taken care" of that problem too? Only willful blindness to the culture we live in would prompt someone to off-handedly deny the possibility.

It was inevitable that Roe v. Wade would lead to Terry Schiavo, and abortion to euthanasia if the train remained on the same track. And it is probable that a national health care system would speed up the process, for the state will have a strong interest in keeping costs down, and the elderly take up a sizable percentage of resources. Add that to the pressure of a work force that will pay an increasing amount of their weekly paychecks to our growing aging population (thanks to the contraception bomb dropped in the 1960's creating the family of 1.7 children), and the baby-boom generation may reap the fruits of this cycle inaugurated on their watch. Unless, that is, we change this trajectory by accepting the inviolability and sacred value of each individual human being, and the truth that no individual or

state has authority to decide who lives and who dies - regardless of the stage of life one presently is in. This kind of change does not occur by electing a man who has clearly displayed a personal philosophy that has little regard for human life at its most vulnerable stages; and it does not occur by adopting a health care plan that he endorses. We would need real change from this kind of change.

There certainly needs to be much more discussion on the meaning of life, the definition of death, and the difference between ordinary and disproportionate means of keeping a person alive. But in today's climate where human life is expendable by the choice of those who have the power, getting the increasingly amoral government more involved in health care might only exacerbate the problem.

Paul Murano taught theology and philosophy at Assumption College and Northshore Com. College. He is also a co-host of The Paying Attention! radio program on WCAP and Host "Beneath the Surface" on Burlington Cable Access. You can E-mail Paul at [PJDM@aol.com](mailto:PJDM@aol.com)



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# DAV Chapter 2 is in danger of closing!

Susan Piazza

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

This month’s column will be decidedly different.

This is meant as an open letter to the public in general, and disabled veterans specifically. DAV Chapter 2 is in jeopardy of closing. It has endured, as of June 2009, for 79 years, but may not last another. The chapter is in need of members, to take over positions previously held by its officers. Through no fault of anyone, people who held the chapter together are now unable. Age and infirmity have taken their toll on those who so valiantly represented this veteran population. The main officer positions that need filling are Commander, Adjutant, and Treasurer. Other positions are Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, and someone, who can be one of the aforementioned officers, to attend state meetings (held quarterly). This

chapter has been in existence for almost 80 years so it would be a shame for this chapter to loose its charter. If this chapter looses its charter then in order to gain a new charter one would have to have fifty people, people not previous members of DAV, petition the National Organization to issue a new charter.

“Article 6 Charters - Section 6.2; Chapters para. 1: Not less than 50 persons eligible for membership in this Organization who desire to form a chapter shall make application for a chapter to National Headquarters using the form prescribed by the National Executive Committee. . . . No person who has been a member during the prior membership year shall be included in determining the above minimum numerical requirements.” DAV National Constitution Bylaws and Regulations, Las Vegas, Nevada, National Convention August 9-12, 2008

Currently Chapter 2 has over 500 mem-

bers, only a handful attended meetings in the last few years. We need our eligible veterans to once again come to the aid of their community, their country, and volunteer service to those in need.

Before I close I would like to comment on the men and women who served this chapter, Harvey Gibeau our last Commander served valiantly though he is blind and deaf, his wife, Flo Gibeau, often interpreted to him. James Derby, Adjutant, continued despite health issues of his wife who passed August 2009.

Senior Vice Commander, a remarkable woman, who we have missed dearly due to health issues. My good friend Marco D’Errico, who was without a doubt the most honest Treasurer I have ever met. We lost him to the Big Commander on High last year. These men and women were, are, the best representation of the veteran population it has been my honor to know, and to serve with. I shall always

be grateful to each and every one of them for their loyalty, their dedication, and their unselfishness. They made this Chapter a happy, cohesive, and vastly productive unit. Thank you all!

It is my hope that out there in the community there are five, or more, veterans of similar stature. You must be out there! We need your help. Now. Immediately. Too many veterans, older and returning veterans, still need our help. Let us not let them down. Until later I remain,

Susan Piazza, Past Commander DAV, Chapter 2, Queen City



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

# American Legion program helps wounded troops

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

90 Years of Service

The American Legion is officially celebrating its 90th anniversary on September 16, 2009. This will be recognized at national, state and local levels. Many posts will be having some type of celebration. A lot of cities and towns will be issuing proclamations to make this date “American Legion Day”. You should check with your local Legion post to see what they have planned. In the March issue of the Valley Patriot, I outlined the many accomplishments of the American Legion over the years.

The list continues to grow. In the last few months, we have seen the American Legion leadership work with the President on issues like health care and the VA budget. For the first time, the 2010 VA budget has been approved so that they can make plans for the coming year. The Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration are working on a plan to make electronic medical records a seamless transition. All military troop records will be combined.

The American Legion national convention was just completed in Louisville, KY.

Guest speakers included the Secretaries of Homeland Security, Veterans Administration, Chairman of the House Veterans Committee and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. All of them spoke about the respect and partnership they enjoy with the Legion. Of particular note is the new GI bill of which the Legion was a major proponent. The anticipation is that this will do for this generation what the original bill did, create a new group of leaders and help bring the United States back into prosperity.

The Legion Riders, a motorcycle program, again did a run to raise money for the Legacy Scholarship fund. This fund was established after 9/11, to provide scholarships for the children of US troops killed after that date. This year they raised over 600 thousand dollars! Pretty impressive I think.

Of particular note was a presentation about the Mojave Desert Memorial Case.

The Liberty Legal institute notes the following: “The case surrounding the Mojave Desert Veterans Memorial centers around whether or not a privately-erected cross on federal land established to honor fallen soldiers from all wars is unconstitutional on grounds of violation of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

The seven-foot-tall cross was erected in 1934 in the 1.6 million acre Mojave Desert Preserve by a number of World War I veterans to honor the nation’s war dead as other hurting veterans gathered in the desert to heal from the War. Riley Bembry, one of the veterans who erected the memorial, cared for the cross until 1984, when he asked his dear friend, Henry Sandoz, to make sure that someone took care of the memorial after he was gone. Since then, Sandoz has cared for the memorial by repairing it from vandalism and securing it to the rock beneath.

In 2001, Frank Buono, a former National Park Services (NPS) employee who lives in Oregon, joined the ACLU to file suit for removal of the memorial claiming it was an Establishment Clause violation. The District Court sided with the ACLU in July 2002 and ruled that it must be removed.

Later in 2002, Congress passed legislation designating the memorial and surrounding property as a “national memorial commemorating United States participation in World War I and honoring American veterans of that war.” They also passed a bill ordering the NPS to transfer the one acre upon which the memorial sits to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in exchange for five acres elsewhere in the Mojave Desert Preserve, donated by Sandoz.

Upon appeal, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the District Court and ordered the removal of the memorial, which the District Court enforced in 2005. Following the District Court’s enforcement of the injunction against the memorial, the Ninth Circuit ruled that Congress’ motion to transfer the memorial and land would not take away the Establishment Clause violation and that the memorial must be torn down.

As a result of the courts’ ruling, the memorial is now covered with a plywood box. Attempts have been made to hew down the cross, but the memorial’s construction is such that it has not been accomplished yet. However, if the Ninth Circuit’s ruling stands, this veterans’ memorial cross will be destroyed, and hundreds, if not thousands, of monuments built to honor our veterans will be threatened. The precedent set by the Ninth Circuit endangers not only crosses, but also veterans’ memorials with any religious imagery. If even one veterans’ memorial is removed, the impact upon veterans, current service members, and future generations, would be tremendous. Not only would we dishonor our veterans, we would dishonor the families of those who proudly sacrificed themselves to preserve the rights of Americans.

All of the major veteran’s organizations have joined to fight this issue which comes before the US Supreme Court in October 2009. This could cause all religious symbols to be taken out of public cemeteries, including Arlington National Cemetery.” Our voices need to be heard on this. For more information, visit [www.DontTearMeDown.com](http://www.DontTearMeDown.com).

Next month, I will tell you about an updated program, the American Legion Community Covenant. This was signed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mullen; Commander of Central Command, General Petraeus; other military leaders as well as Legion leadership.

God bless American and the troops who defend our freedoms.



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](mailto:JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net)

## Veterans can receive free legal advice Oct. 15

Massachusetts Bar Association’s Veterans Dial-A-Lawyer call-in program  
Thursday, Oct. 15, 5:30-7:30 p.m.  
Phone number: (617) 338-0610

Veterans can receive free legal advice on Thursday, Oct. 15, through the Massachusetts Bar Association’s Veterans Dial-A-Lawyer call-in program. Veterans who have pressing questions concerning benefits, divorce, child support, employment, landlord/tenant and other legal issues can call (617) 338-0610 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. to speak to volunteer MBA lawyers. If a caller gets a busy signal, they are asked to hang up and try again. Normal telephone charges will apply. The MBA’s Veterans Dial-A-Lawyer program is provided as a public service of the MBA with the financial support of the Massachusetts Bar Foundation and through a partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Services.

Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.

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# GEORGE HAYNES, VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH; From Page 1

how much gas we got. I said O.K., we can make it. Keep this course but throw everything out that's not nailed down. Guns, ammunition," he explained.

"If you can't keep up with the group, you're on your own. All the way over I kept taking drift readings on the clouds, which was not good, but I was looking to see if there was any difference in wind direction... and ah, when I thought we were close (to England), I said John (our pilot), go down. He said, if we go down below this cloud level we'll never get back up, because we didn't have the power. He said I'm not going down. I said John, go down, I feel we're five to six miles off the coast. And he went down and right in front of us was an airfield. We lucked out."

"On another mission, we had the hydraulics shot out, and we didn't realize it. So therefore we had no brakes. So when we landed, we headed down the runway. So what happened is when after we hit the emergency brakes, the plane nosed over and the framework joined the runway. Here I have this photo," he said as he referred to his package of photos and handwritten notes. "Four engines in the ground. I grabbed and held onto the largest thing near me. The only thing that saved me from becoming part of the runway was that: the Norden Bombsite. I hugged it for my life," Mr. Derby exclaimed.

"I flew 95% of my raids when I was 19. They sent us in over Berlin. We were the lead of the entire air force coming in at

11,000 feet over Berlin. They (the Germans) were throwing rocks at us, slingshots, peashooters, oh my God. Anyone who was hit headed straight for Russia," Mr. Derby said as he related the altitude and heavy anti-aircraft bursts that his plane experienced during their mission, flying so low "it seemed any gun could hit".

"And if they were close, as George (V.P. of the month, August, 2009) George Haynes will tell you, the 88s they burst black. The 105s they burst white. The 105s they would burst above you and shoot down. The 88s they burst below you and shoot up. Shrapnel. Flack. You could see the red of the 88s, you knew they were close. There were concussions sometimes when they were close."

In another mission which he termed "the worst I was ever on", he read some of his notes and explained that the target was the Zejas-Ichon Works in Leipzig. "They made precision instruments

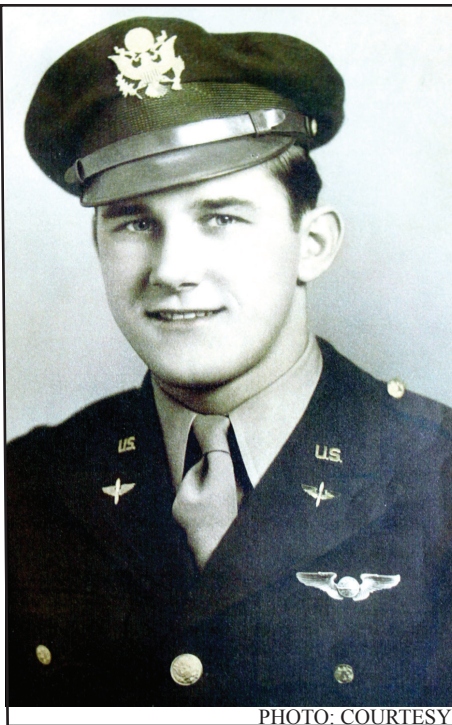


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including radar and pre-coded detonation devices. Our squadron was the false leader of the attacking B17s and our target was the town of Bohlen, a suburb where the anti-aircraft guns were located. We were loaded with bundles of 20 pound anti-personnel bombs," he explained.

As the false leader, Mr. Derby joined a small group of planes which diverted directly towards the flack batteries, in an attempt to consume, confuse, distract, and also destroy the anti-aircraft defenses with their special bombs and numerous anti-personnel bombs. Meanwhile, the main force of B17s went on to direct their heavy bombs on the precision instruments factory.

"We spun off to hit the flack batteries, and the minute they saw what we were doing they zeroed in on us. Twelve of us (planes) went in, four of us got out. We lost 80 men that day. Forty of us survived. I was one of them, that's when I thought I was invincible," Mr. Derby half-chuckled as he related his luck that day.

"Capt. Ten Eyke was the pilot on the lead plane on the last raid of his second tour and an 'observer'... We were flying the #10 position in the 'box' formation... when Ten Eyke took a direct hit in the gas

tank - burst of orange then black smoke. He dropped off on his left wing and John (our pilot) almost stood our plane on its tail to avoid going down with him."

"After the war, we did what was called the Casey Jones project, which was to map the world. The maps were not accurate at all. We did Norway and Sweden, then we moved over to Belgium, we did Europe. We were told to not fly over Russia if we did we would be shot down," he said.

"In 1951 I was asked to go over to Korea. And I spent four days down in New Jersey, I forget the base. They got my shots up to date, and they wanted me to go over," Mr. Derby related, but in the end, his dispatch to another war area was cancelled. "I do not have a discharge to this day. They could legally call me over today. I had a separation," the 84 year old chuckled.

The Valley Patriot is proud to be able to share a bit of the service that Mr. Derby gave to our nation. We ask that you please forward your Valley Patriot of the Month nomination to the editor so that we may honor more of our service men and women.



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](mailto:Lonnie.Brennan@verizon.net).

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