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AUGUST, 2010
VOLUME 7, ISSUE 8

THE VALLEY PATRIOT

"Congress shall make no law..."

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2010

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

HE'S BACK!

Exclusive! An Interview with Chief Solomon



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

The Mass. Civil Service Commission has ruled against Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi's firing of Police Chief Joe Solomon and has ordered him to reinstate Solomon as the Chief of Police.

OUR EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW....

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INSIDE THIS EDITION



Michelle The Intern does her first report this month on UMASS Lowell's Design Camp

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The Doc. is *IN*
Dr. Rami Rustum
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Kate Whitney
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Live the WOW!
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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Joe Costa - Desert Storm

Gary Mannion

VALLEY PATRIOT HERO COLUMNIST

"No Shore Too Distant, Alone and Unafraid" the motto of the USS Shreveport, LPD-12 this was the slogan for the seamen that served aboard her, in her over 30 years of commission.

The ship was commissioned in the early 1970's and since has been the home to many sailors in the U.S. Navy, Joseph Costa was one of them. Born and raised in Lawrence

MA, Joe served his country in the United States Navy from February of 1988 to April of 1992.



Joe attended St. Mary's grammar school and graduated from Lawrence High School in 1985.

Joe's father Joseph Costa Jr. was a veteran of the U.S. Army in WW II, and although Joe had no initial desire to join the Army, he would soon take a leap of faith that would change his

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EDITORIAL

It's the Money, Stupid!

Late last month Massachusetts education officials decided to discard the MCAS testing requirements and adopt a new federal program called the Common Core State Standards.

In recent years, Massachusetts has ranked at the top or near the top compared to all other states when it comes to the education of our children. We have reached this notable achievement through hard work and striving for high standards.

It all began in 1993 with the Education Reform Act promoted by then Governor Bill Weld and Senate President Tom Birmingham. This legislation pumped billions of dollars into the educational system and subsequently required students to pass a series of MCAS tests to prove that their knowledge of basic subjects would entitle them to earn a high school diploma.

Ever since the beginning, however, teachers' unions have been against MCAS testing of their work product – the children. The teaching profession has always been skittish about being held responsible for education results. Now the unions are jumping on board. The federal tests will be easier, accountability less rigorous and, "oh, boy" think of the money! Money trumps standards when looking at a \$250 million windfall by abandoning MCAS for the federal plan. Especially this year when the state is desperate for revenue.

Both Weld and Birmingham have decried the move to discard MCAS. And gubernatorial candidates Charlie Baker and Tim Cahill have opposed the move to give up our high standards for a proposed federal system.

Jim Stergios, Executive Director of the Pioneer Institute, which is a local think tank specializing in educational issues, has warned that the national standards for some subjects like vocabulary and algebra are weaker than we currently have with MCAS. Pioneer has published a 60-page white paper entitled "Common Core's Standards Still Don't Make the Grade," available on its Web site.

If we adopt the federal standards, what will happen when a state such as Mississippi or Alabama complains that the standards are too tough and should be "scaled back"? After all, "it's not fair to the children." This is and will be politics at its worst.

And do we really want to turn over the best educational system in the country to the federal government? The same government that did such a great job helping people in the Katrina crisis? The same government that has done such a great job cleaning up the oil spill in the Gulf? The same government that has no idea how to fix the economy or balance its budget?

But \$250 million is a lot of money for politicians to ignore...

News tips

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Letters to the editor, columns and op/eds

Can be submitted to valleypatriot@aol.com. The Valley Patriot is not responsible for the opinions expressed in submitted letters or columns. It is the policy of The Valley Patriot not to edit or exclude submitted material based on content.

Corrections; Please contact the editors at 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.

The Valley Patriot is printed by Graphic Development in West Hanover Mass.

Local daily news updates are online at www.valleypatriot.com

The Valley Patriot is published monthly on the first Wednesday of each month by the Valley Patriot, Inc., POB 453, North Andover, MA 01845. Copyright (c) 2009, Valley Patriot, Inc. All rights reserved. Subscriptions are \$50 per year and sent via U.S. Mail.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Valley Patriot, Inc., POB 453, North Andover, MA 01845.

PHONE: (978) 557-5413 **FAX:** (978) 258-1964
www.valleypatriot.com

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Letters

Dear Sir

I read with astonishment your Editorial in July issue of The Valley Patriot titled "Obama's Oil Spill", citing what you term Obama's failure to take control of the situation.

Among other items, you state that he should have taken away the responsibility of investigating the spill away from BP. Were you not aware that several investigations are under way, from the Justice Department to a Congressional investigation?

You also say the Army Corps of Engineers could have been sent by Obama to try to plug the hole, instead of BP. Does the Corps possess the expertise to take over such an operation, thousands of feet below the surface of the sea? Does the Corps possess the materials needed, such as deepwater rigs and tankers? While I am no fan of BP, to suggest someone can come along and replace them at the drop of a hat is ludicrous. The Corps can indeed provide assistance in the project, which a quick check of their website demonstrates they already are providing.

You continue on to say the President "walked on the beach with his pleated pants". Exactly what does his choice of clothing have to do with the situation? Would you be happier if he wore blue jeans?

Perhaps you should assign blame for the

spill where it really belongs: BP, Transocean, lax inspection, etc., rather than this poorly aimed diatribe.

Sincerely,
John Doody, Lowell

Dear Editor:

I recently visited GAR Park in Haverhill with several of my children. The purpose of the visit was to show them the statue of Hannah Dustin, an ancestor of ours. We enjoyed the statue and were glad to see the memorial to America's Korean War Veterans. The only negative aspect of this otherwise beautiful memorial was the flag of the United Nations on display along with the flags of the United States and the Republic of South Korea.

The United Nations was sold to a war weary world as the best hope for peace. Few Americans knew that the man who wrote the U.N. Charter was Alger Hiss—a Soviet agent. One of the UN's first so-called "peace keeping" missions was in Korea. It cost the United States well over 50,000 lives. The war could have been ended with a victory over North Korea if it was fought on U.S. terms. Unfortunately, it was fought on U.N. terms. Victory over North Korea was never the objective. In charge of the overall Korean mission was the U.N.'s Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs.

LETTERS, page 4



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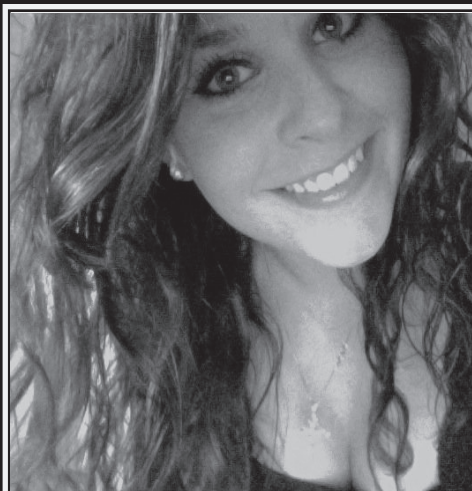


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* "My eyes hurt and I feel so drowsy."

* "I have to lay down."

* "I've had migraines since childhood."

* "Muscle tension in the neck and pain into the shoulders."

"I only wished I had found you sooner"

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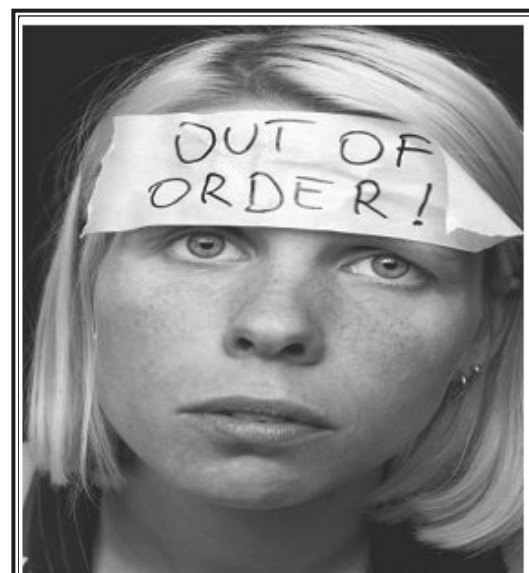
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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

FROM 2: Readers weigh in on September elections, prior stories

fairs who just happened to be a Russian national.

In the early 1960s, the U.N. waged acts of aggression against Katanga—a province of what was once called the Belgian Congo. These so-called “peace-keepers” bombed hospitals and killed civilians. Their objective was to restore Katanga to the hands of the pro-Soviet leadership in the Congo in direct violation of the U.N. Charter.

While the U.S. pays the lion’s share of the U.N.’s budget, U.N. delegates routinely vote against our interests. A few years ago, the U.N. hosted a conference on racism in Zimbabwe in which it denounced the U.S. What was happening in the host country while this was going on? White farmers and their families were being murdered by the government. A U.N. forum on womens rights was held in Communist China but not one statement against its host country forced abortion policies were made at this conference.

The U.N. has long been a supporter of terrorist organizations like the PLO and ANC, and it supports nations that sponsor terrorism like Syria and Libya. The U.N. wants a standing world army, and the power to tax us directly. It already has a world court which the U.N. claims are binding upon every living person on the planet. The U.N. is the leading supporter of the fraud called global warming. It is the leading promoter of abortion particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Its general secretaries have been a rogue’s gallery of Leninist and Socialists and in one case, a Nazi-Kurt Waldheim.

I recommend that readers who want to learn more about the U.N. read “Inside the U.N.” by Steve Bonta, “The Fearful Master” by G. Edward Griffin and “Global Gun Grab” by William Grigg. I would be happy to send any reader info. I can be reached at shurtleffhal@aol.com or by phone (857) 498-1309

Finally, I hope that the good people that maintain the Korean War Memorial take the U.N. flag down. It doesn’t belong in a place of honor.

Harold Shurtleff, West Roxbury

To the Editor:

I read Dr. Ormsby’s article in the July edition of the Valley Patriot (“If Paul Revere stopped by your house ... would you join the fight for freedom?”) and I want to personally thank him and the Valley Patriot for putting out a call for the American people to engage in the political process.

We get the government we elect; and recently it has not been good. The entrenched political class, the professional careered politicians of both the Republican and Democratic parties, has been willfully ignoring us. They have impoverished our generation and they are bankrupting our children and our grandchildren. Their reckless spending, that continues year after year, is ruining our country. They have regulated and

taxed us, the working families, to death. I believe that small business owners and working families deserve better!

I refuse to believe that America is just like any other country in the world. I believe America is an exceptional country. We have done so much for humanity in such a short period of time; more than any other country in the history of the world. I believe in the exceptional spirit of the American people, but I am afraid that our current leadership does not share the same perspective.

Once again, thank you for the great article.

Sam S. Meas, Republican Candidate for US Congress, Haverhill

To the Editor,

I recently started to reflect on the many years I have spent advocating for education in our community. A constant in most of these memories is Debbie Silberstein, now a candidate for state senate.

I have watched through the years as Silberstein has become an active and committed leader in the community. Her service as a whole has been extensive with her work on the SHED Board, the Council on Aging, the Essex County Community Foundation, the Andover Youth Foundation, member of the Finance Committee and Chairwoman of the School Committee. As a member of the Finance Committee, she was a balanced voice for responsible spending as well as a visionary leader. She always kept in mind the town of Andover’s obligation to the students as well as to the community at large.

During her six years on the School Committee, she showed passion and determination while she steered the board through difficult financial times. She worked diligently to find creative solutions with the school administration, never once forgetting that the decisions that had to be made would impact the educational landscape for the students. She was tenacious and not afraid to ask the community when it was necessary for more financial support for the schools and was responsible enough to know when tough choices had to be made. She sought always to be collaborative and balanced in the decision-making process, never forgetting that Andover is a community of diverse citizens and that the town needs to take care of each and every one of them.

It is for all of these reasons, along with countless others that I have not mentioned, that I ask people to support Debbie Silberstein for state senate on Sept. 14.

Diane Costagliola, Andover

To the Editor:

A recent spate of letters-of-support for Barry Finegold, from recent former town employees of Tewksbury has prompted me to get off my duff in response.

No one should be shocked that town

employees or those connected with public unions would throw their support behind Barry Finegold. He is all about continuing the trend of out-of-control salaries and pensions for town and state workers, as well as supporting the best healthcare with little copays all at the expense of the taxpayers of this town and state. Try getting these benefits out in the real world! There is an old saying in politics when you want to find the truth or real meaning behind something someone says or writes —“follow the money”, but since we are talking about taxes, we will now say “follow YOUR money”.

Ask Barry specific questions on where he stands? You will receive no coherent answer. He is a lawyer after all. What is his biggest contribution to Tewksbury?? Many who aren’t public workers will tell you, the Glorification of Andover Center, paid for by your tax dollars. At the center of this Glorification lies his wife’s storefront located within a building partly owned by Barry. So again, follow YOUR money.

Those previous editorial letters-of-support for Barry were filled with empty characterization with no basis in reality. “Barry Finegold’s campaigning over the last few months has proven him to be the best candidate...” Sure, watching a campaign through the eyes of public-funded pensions would surely cloud your judgement. No one can get a straight answer out of him.

So the question to the readers, taxpayers, and voters is this. Do you want the same old same old tax hikes for the sake of pensions and dwindling services, or do you want someone who knows the real issues which are out of control spending, waste, and corruption which we read about everyday? Remember, it was Barry who gave us the 6.25% sales tax.

Bob Ferrari, Webmaster of Tewksbury-Issues.org

To the Editor:

I am pleased to write this letter on behalf of Debbie Silberstein, candidate for the Massachusetts Senate to succeed Sen. Sue Tucker. Our State is facing the most serious challenges in our lifetime; a national economic climate that has caused loss of jobs, business failures, family strife and mounting pressures upon schools, social service systems, and all of the support networks that strengthen our communities.

Deb Silberstein is a person with the compassion, intelligence, vision and track record of accomplishment necessary to represent us at this time of crisis. I first met Deb in 1993 on the Bancroft Elementary School parent advisory council. I could immediately appreciate her amazing work ethic and her dedication to improving Andover schools, which she went on to do for years on the School Committee and in many other endeavors in town. She combined the perspective of a woman and a mother raising a family, with a unique skill at gaining consensus among conflicting factions, and does this with humor and a spirit of good faith toward all around her.

Besides Andover, the Senate district includes all of Lawrence, Dracut and Tewksbury. Each of the towns has its own distinct local issues, but all of them deserve a new, strong voice on Beacon

Hill. The Massachusetts legislature has been much maligned in recent years, often with good justification. Long-term incumbents have too often become at best complacent in their positions, and at worst incompetent to grasp the complexity of today’s challenges and develop creative solutions. Staying in power has become an end in itself.

Deb Silberstein is more than just a fresh new voice. She is someone who at midcareer decided to embark upon a Ph.D. in social policy from Brandeis University, in order to increase her understanding of the technically complex issues facing the state and the nation. She is the voice of a mother who can understand family struggles in all of the communities in the district. She is the voice of someone who herself was a child of immigrants, who learned the feeling of being an “outsider” first hand. She is the voice of a tireless advocate of education, who produced not just speeches but results.

I urge you to join me in sending a truly worthy successor to the Senate to succeed Senator Sue Tucker. Please support Debbie Silberstein for Massachusetts Senate on September 14th.

Ronald Sanfield
Andover

To the Editor,

Jack Kimball is running for Governor of New Hampshire and he supports school vouchers. Some children do better within the discipline of a private school and others thrive in a home school environment. With a voucher parents would be in a control their child’s education.

Jack Kimball was impressed by the positive results of the change that took place in New Zealand about a decade ago when they decided money for education should be controlled by the parents rather than by the teacher’s union.

This change took place because a new minister of education was disturbed to find that students in New Zealand had test scores 15% below those of their peer countries, which included Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, and Australia.

The new policy put the disbursement of education dollars raised by taxes in the hands of parents. This major change put parents in charge. Having control of the funds the parent could send their child to any public school, any private school or they could home school their child. It was their choice.

School administrators and teachers scrambled to demonstrate that their school produced the best education. And the school administrators realized that providing a good education reacted by improving the quality of their product.

After 5 years with parents in charge of the money, New Zealand students had scores 15% higher than their peer countries. Schools whether public or private, that have a mediocre teaching staff, poor discipline, and poor administration lost students and funding. Competition works and parents were pleased with the results.


As governor Jack Kimball will endorse legislation that gives parents the ability to choose the education path they believe is best for their children.

David Scott 220 Back Road Dover, NH


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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

What is Your Unemployment Rate?

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"It's a recession when your neighbor loses his job; it's a depression when you lose yours." - Harry S. Truman

Dr. Charles Ormsby

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Based on Truman's analysis, the most important unemployment statistic is our own; it is either 0% or 100%.

Of course, that is not what is meant when unemployment statistics are quoted. Unemployment rates represent averages across the population and they are tracked and reported because they serve as a barometer of our nation's economic well being. They also provide a simplistic scorecard for our government's economic policies and our personal risk of being unemployed.

Unemployment statistics, along with numerous other measures, are also computed and reported for individual states and municipalities. Our ears always perk up when unemployment statistics are quoted that are directly relevant to the locality where we work (or did work).

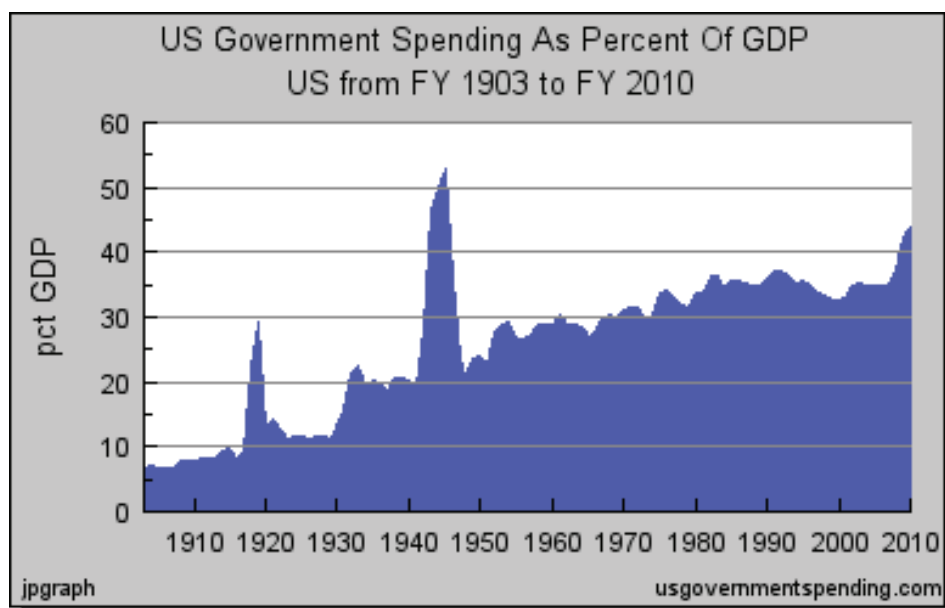
Why? Because we are most concerned with how economic swings will affect us

ment rate.

When we read news stories about the economy, we are told that the national unemployment rate is hovering just below 10% (9.6% in the latest report). Often this statistic is qualified by explaining that it only reflects those actively seeking employment. That is because the standard unemployment rate figures do not include millions of discouraged individuals who would like to be employed, but have given up searching for a job. If these individuals were included in the rate, the unemployment percentage would be substantially greater than 9.6%.

Also, the standard unemployment rate does not include other willing workers who may be working part time (8.6 million at latest count), or are otherwise "marginally attached" to the labor force because they cannot find full employment.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks six unemployment rate estimates, imaginatively named U-1 through U-6 (Aren't



U.S. has grown from 4.6% in 2006 to 9.7% in the year ending in the first quarter of 2010 (the latest available annual figure). The more realistic U-6 unemployment rate has soared from 8.2% in 2006 to 16.7% for the year ending in the first quarter of 2010.

The nearby plot compares the U-6 unemployment rates for the U.S., Massachusetts and New Hampshire. As you can see, one in six workers in the U.S. is unemployed and one in seven in Massachusetts. Interestingly, especially to readers living in the Merrimack Valley, is that the latest unemployment rate in Massachusetts is one sixth higher than in New Hampshire (two percentage points above New Hampshire's 12.5% rate). Could this be because our businesses must carry a 6.25% sales tax on top of a 5.3% income tax?

Now we have a good estimate of the real unemployment rate. But is that the end of the story? NO! And here is the secret factor you must consider: **Are you a government worker?**

The answer to that question is the real key to your unemployment risk. That is the KEY to the vulnerability of your family to the nation's economic swings.

Because most government jobs are union jobs and because the government disproportionately uses tax dollars to protect and grow both government employment and union jobs, government workers have the special privilege of being nearly immune to the nation's economic fortunes.

I have not found an official figure for the current number of government jobs, but adding up the Bureau of Labor Statistics figures for major categories of government workers indicates that the approximate number of government employees at all levels totals around 20 million.

It is not clear whether employees of our intelligence community (CIA or NSA) or such pseudo-government entities as Freddie Mac or Fanny Mae are included in this approximate total.

But it is not just government jobs (jobs that receive government paychecks directly) that are protected. Jobs that reside outside the government but which are directly and routinely supported by tax dollars are also nearly immune to economic fluctuations.

Over a period of years, government support for one project or another will come and go, but the long term funding for public works projects steadily grows (in fact, such funding has historically grown faster during recessions as the government attempts to stimulate the economy). And don't forget to add in the newly socialized companies like GM, Chrysler, and AIG,

which are "too big to fail."

When President Obama and Treasury Secretary Geithner say that the trillions of stimulus dollars being spent have "saved or created" millions of jobs, just what jobs do you think they are referring to? Not small business jobs, that's for sure!

So what does this all add up to? What is the impact on your unemployment risk? The answer lies in the totality of government spending as compared to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The nearby chart shows government spending as a percent of Gross Domestic Product from 1903 to the present time. The current percentage is nearly 45%, but is rapidly closing in on 50%. If you eliminate the surges in government spending during the world wars, the government is commandeering an extra 4/10 of one percent of the economy every year. Even Reagan wasn't able to slow the onslaught.

If you use the current government percentage of the economy (45%) as a rough estimate of the percent of jobs that are protected and the remaining percentage of the jobs (55%) as representing those that are unprotected – in other words the jobs that absorb ALL of the swings in unemployment due to economic fluctuations – you can calculate the effective unemployment rates for each group.

When you do this, you get a government unemployment rate near ZERO PERCENT and a non-government unemployment rate of (16.7%) divided by (0.55) = 32.2%. Let's be generous and give a 1% unemployment rate to government jobs and 31% to real private sector jobs.

So what is your unemployment risk? One percent OR over thirty percent?

Are you flying high or going through a depression?

Is it fair to forcibly (via government tax and spend policies) transfer nearly all of the risk of economic swings to half the population, while giving a taxpayer-funded safe harbor to the other half?

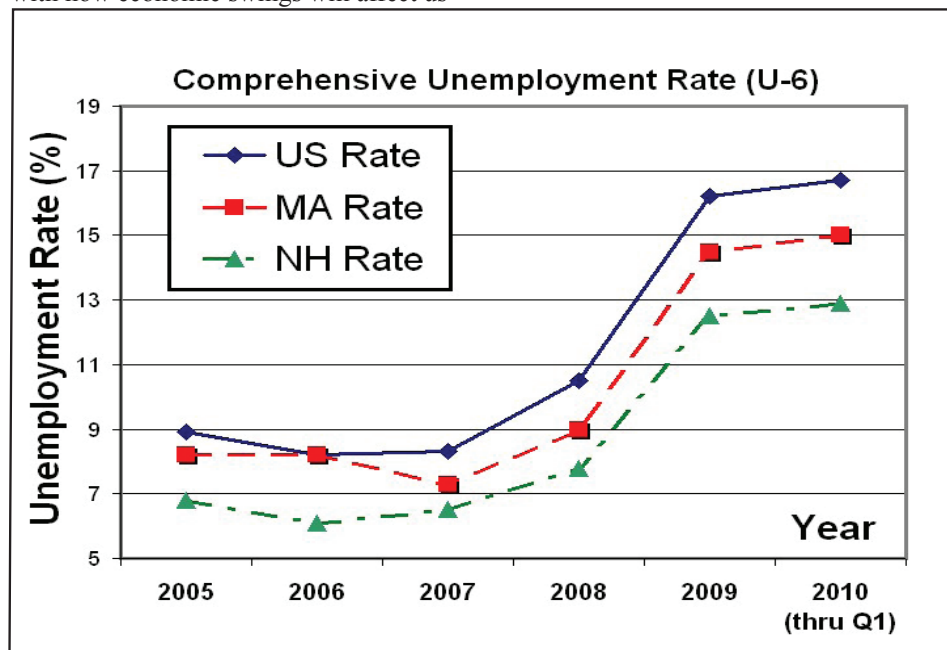
We have a chance to fix this on November 2nd.

This is YOUR chance, and maybe your last chance, to change history and bring about some long-needed balance between government and the private sector.



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 a Professor of Mathematics at UMASS, Lowell.

You can email him at: ccormsby@comcast.net



and our families.

But if you are interested in gauging your unemployment risk, slicing and dicing national statistics to look at Massachusetts or the Merrimack Valley does not capture THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR in your risk. THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR, the factor that changes your risk from almost none to 30%, is rarely if ever discussed.

Before revealing the secret key to your unemployment risk, let's get a true measurement on the real national unemploy-

those bureaucrats clever?). The one you hear on the news every night is U-3. (If you quote the U-3 rate, say you learned about it in The Valley Patriot!)

A more accurate measure of unemployment is U-6, which includes discouraged workers and those marginally attached. If you were employed as an engineer or a bank manager, and you think working six hours a day at Burger King is an acceptable state of affairs, use U-3. If not, you should pay attention to U-6.

The routinely quoted U-3 rate for the

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Christine Morabito
MERRIMACK VALLEY TEA PARTY

I normally recommend that the Tea Party ignore the ridiculous charges of racism leveled by our opponents. However, while watching the Sunday talk shows, it occurred to me that we may be the only ones ignoring them.

The hullabaloo comes on the heels of the NAACP's resolution to deem the Tea Party "racist." Here we have a left-wing political organization—which maintains its relevancy by perpetually dividing people by race and promoting class warfare--accusing patriotic, freedom-loving Americans of being racist.

The proper role of government is to protect equal rights, not to provide equal things. This notion, along with a strong belief in free speech, free markets, individual liberty and personal responsibility form the backbone of the Tea Party movement. What does any of this have to do with racism? In America, calling someone a racist is a serious charge. Apparently, it's also a charge for which you need no evidence.

Liberals have done a horrendous job of elevating the status of minorities and have in effect institutionalized racism. In the name of compassion, they have enslaved minorities with dead-end entitlement programs that pay people not to work. Conservatives, by encouraging individual free-

dom and personal responsibility, promote the dignity of work and inspire people to reach their full potential. That's a concept that unites everybody, regardless of race. Contrast that with the liberal dogma that convinces people of their victimhood and that the government should provide for them. These unsuspecting "victims" sell their votes and their souls for everlasting dependency. I ask you, which is more compassionate?

The concerted effort to destroy the Tea Party has played out for well over a year now. This latest act of transparent desperation is evidence that the Tea Party is having a powerful effect on politics. This grass-roots phenomenon has become kryptonite to the radical left-wing. Not long ago they were attempting to portray us as violent. But that would have actually required some evidence. They were practically tripping over themselves to catch us in some violent act, which of course never happened. As if following Saul Alinsky's playbook, the next logical step was to play the race card. This, of course, requires no evidence because it presumes to know what people are "thinking." After all, how do you prove you're NOT a racist?

While we were embroiled in the health care debate, two black congressmen, one of them a legendary civil rights leader, claimed they were spat upon and called the "N-word" while they intentionally

walked through a crowd of Tea Party protesters. Dozens of videos surfaced, but upon close inspection the claims were unsubstantiated. Journalist Andrew Breitbart offered \$100,000 to anyone who could provide evidence that these racial slurs and bodily fluids had been hurled. Despite enormous incentive to do so, no one has come forward, yet Democrats continue to cite this alleged attack as evidence of racism. In his book, "That's No Angry Mob, That's My Mom," Michael Graham says: "In the upside down world of the Obama Nation, people who spend a lifetime following Reverend Wright aren't racist. But the people who show up at a rally to oppose single-payer health care are."

Another example of alleged racism stems from the fact that only a small percentage of Tea Party activists are minorities. Does not the word "minority" imply that there will be fewer of them? A recent Gallup Poll shows that the numbers are not far off from the country as a whole. Blacks constitute about 11% of the U.S. population and approximately 6% of the Tea Party. Also, consider this: If you think the left is hard on white Tea Partiers--it's even harder on blacks. Black Conservatives are excoriated, mostly by black Democrats who call them "Oreos," "traitors" and "Uncle Toms" for having the audacity to oppose the policies of a black president.

I strongly disagree with Eric Holder's decision not to investigate the New Black Panther Party, who menacingly stood outside a Philadelphia polling place dressed in paramilitary gear, intimidating white voters lest they not vote for Obama. Voter intimidation is illegal, yet no charges will be filed against these men, one of whom has spoken of his desire to kill "cracker babies" and "cracker police." I believe racism should be condemned wherever it occurs. Doesn't this double standard further the race divide? According to Glenn Beck, "If you don't believe all men are created equal, then you will treat certain people differently."

I hear opponents say that Tea Party leaders should denounce their racist members. I can assure you we have no problem approaching individuals who display



Brandon from Grand Prairie, Texas is a member of the Tea Party and not real happy about the red-herring racism allegations against all Tea Party Members by the press.

offensive signs. We have done so ad nauseum with Lyndon LaRouche supporters carrying "Obama as Hitler" signs. They know their provocative signs will be the ones photographed, not the middle-aged grandmother clutching her pocket Constitution. But racist signs? I must say, I've never seen one at any of our rallies. Short of reading peoples' minds, I have no idea whether or not they harbor racist views--and frankly--neither does the NAACP.

I applaud Morgan Freeman for his recent statements on "60 Minutes." Freeman said he doesn't want a "Black History Month" because "black history is American history." He said the best way to get beyond race is to, "stop talking about it." I couldn't agree more.

Now, if you're tired of watching your freedom flash before your eyes, please join us at our upcoming events.

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Christine Morabito is a resident of Haverhill and a member of the Merrimack Valley Tea Party. You can email her at christine.morabito@hotmail.com

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New site provides primary care for residents in The Valley

PMAI opens new North Andover Wellness Center

Preventive Medicine Associates, Inc. (PMAI) has now opened a new primary care facility staffed with a doctor and two nurse practitioners.

The center will serve the communities of Andover, North Andover, Lawrence, Lowell, Haverhill, Middleton, Danvers, North Reading and Beverly.

"Preventive Medicine Associates is happy to be serving the local communities," said Trish Wilson, Office Manager of the North Andover Wellness Center.

"We are seeing a need for our healthcare services in the area. We have a brand new facility, excellent care providers and a genuine interest in helping our community."

The new 2,300 square foot site has state-of-the-art equipment for the practitioners. Physicians will treat patients for their basic health, wellness and primary care needs. If a specific need arises, beyond the doctor's on-site capabilities, patients will be referred to specialists. All insurance plans are accepted at this site.

The practice also specializes in addiction medicine, as do all PMAI centers. Patients at established PMAI practices respond well to care givers as primary care practitioners and addiction treatment specialists. PMAI is a proven industry leader in primary care, addiction treatment and health and wellness maintenance.

PMAI offers counseling services to patients as a part of the recovery process.

"The sessions will be conducted either individually or in a group-setting. We believe that patients should be given the option to be counseled with family members, as they are a support system for the patient," said Wilson.

The North Andover Wellness Center is easily accessible and conveniently located right on Route 114, which branches off to Routes 125 and 495.

The North Andover Wellness Center is located at 451 Andover Street, Suite 195 in North Andover. For more information please contact Trish Wilson at 978-258-7191.

About Preventive Medicine Associates, Inc.

Preventive Medicine Associates, Inc. is a group of family practices located through Massachusetts, focused on bringing the best care to their patients and community. Their doctors and staff are trained in the diagnosis and treatment of numerous diseases and conditions, and manage both common and complex problems. They are also trained to prevent, diagnose and treat a wide variety of ailments affecting patients of all ages. Preventive Medicine Associates doctors work in the science of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles and research for disease and injury prevention. For more information visit preventivemedicineassociates.net

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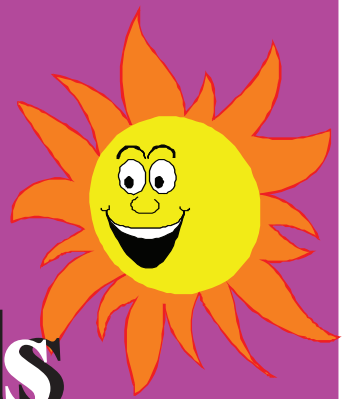
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3. Parthum Ed. Complex	255 E. Haverhill St.	B 7:30 - 8:30	L 11:30 - 12:30
4. No. Common Complex	233 Haverhill St.	B 7:30 - 8:30	L 11:30 - 1:00
5. Leahy School	100 Erving Ave	B 7:30 - 8:30	L 11:30 - 12:30
6. Wetherbee School	75 Newton St.	B 7:30 - 8:30	L 11:30 - 12:30
7. Guilmette Ed. Complex	80 Bodwell St.	B 7:30-8:30	L 11:30 - 12:30
8. LHS Campus	70 N. Parish Road	B 7:30-8:00	L 11:30 - 12:30

Dates of Operation - July 6th through August 27th

9. Beacon Courts	71 Duckett Ave	L 11:00 - 12:00
10. Merrimack Courts	56 Melvin St.	L 1:00 - 2:00
11. Giesler Pool	High St.	L 11:30 - 12:30
12. Higgins Pool	Crawford St.	L 11:30-12:30
13. Community Boating	7 Eaton Pl.	L 12:15 - 1:15
14. Stadium Courts	179 Osgood St.	L 12:45 - 1:45
15. Hancock Courts	61 Hancock St.	L. 1-2pm

Dates of Operation - July 12th through August 18th

16. No. Common Park	Haverhill St.	S. 1:30 - 1:45pm
17. Howard Park	Lawrence St.	S. 1:30 - 1:45pm
18. Bruce Park	Providence St.	S. 1:30 - 1:45pm
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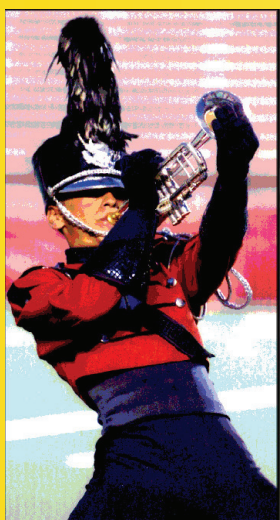
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Lawrence finances take center stage in state senate race

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

The race to replace State Senator Sue Tucker in the Second Essex District of Massachusetts has found the failed finances and financial mismanagement of the City of Lawrence at the center of this contentious campaign among both Democrat and Republican candidates.

The Second Essex district is comprised of Andover, Dracut, Lawrence, and Tewksbury.

There are three candidates running for the Democrat nomination, all of whom live in Andover: newcomer Jack Wilson, Andover School Committee Chairman Debra Silberstein and State Rep. Barry Finegold. In the Republican primary, two newcomers have joined the race: Andover's Jamison Tomasek and Tewksbury's Patrick Rahilly.

Only two of the five candidates, (Finegold a Democrat, and Tomasek a Republican) oppose a state appointed finance control board being imposed on the cash strapped city of Lawrence.

Newcomers Debra Silberstein, Jack Wilson (both Democrats) and Pat Rahilly (a Republican) favor either a finance control board or a more stringent plan to take over the city's finances and restore stability to the city's budget. More than 70% of Lawrence's city budget is subsidized by state taxpayers.

Last February the State Legislature voted to allow Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua to borrow \$35 million with no financial controls and no guarantee in the legislation that the money would be spent on public safety and providing essential services.

State Representative Barry Finegold not only voted for the \$35 Million bailout

On Implimenting A Finance Board and/or Management Controls in Lawrence

In Favor			Opposed	
				
Debra Silberstein (D) Andover	Patrick Rahilly (R) Tewksbury	Jack Wilson (D) Andover	Jamison Tomasek (R) Andover	Barry Finegold (D) Andover

with no oversight and no fiscal controls, he testified before the legislature that Lawrence needed the borrowing measure to avoid layoffs in public safety. He also strongly opposed an amendment in the bill that would have imposed financial and management controls on the city's ability to spend the money.

When the measure passed and Mayor Lantigua took receipt of the first \$24 million, he gave raises to workers in city hall, increased the city payroll by more than \$500,000 and laid off 25 police officers, 24 firefighters and demoted superior officers anyway.

Those questionable management decisions are now at the forefront of the Senate race as Finegold has found himself the brunt of criticism for blindly supporting Governor Patrick's \$35 million legislation for Lawrence with no fiscal oversight.

LAWRENCE SPENDING MEASURES HARM PUBLIC SAFETY IN OTHER TOWNS

"Massive public safety cuts are forcing Merrimack Valley communities to subsidize Lawrence public safety operations," says Democrat Jack Wilson.

"Under the current legislation, three of the five members of the control board would be appointed by the Governor's Secretary of Administration & Finance. He should use that authority to appoint members who possess the skills necessary to first restore and maintain public safety in the city and then move to a long-term solution for financial stability and continued economic growth.

"For all the talk of creating jobs, improving public education, and economic development, none of it matters if the city and the region are unsafe."

Wilson says that the system of 'mutual aid,' "whereby communities agree to provide assistance to each other for larger scale emergencies is turning into a one-way street in Lawrence. With the recent massive cuts in the public safety budget, including twenty three firefighter layoffs, the city is now incapable of providing adequate public safety protection for its own residents and businesses."

Wilson says that communities surrounding Lawrence are seeing more of their own resources being diverted to help the city fight fires in "what now amounts to a subsidy of the city of Lawrence's public safety department."

He sites as an example, that Andover has already answered more mutual aid calls to Lawrence than it did in all of 2009. "Clearly, this is no way to manage public safety and it is a trend that must not continue."

"By any objective standard, the staffing levels of the police and fire departments are far below what is required for a city of Lawrence's size, density, and population. The overseer that has been in place in the city since the stabilization law was enacted, has been working under a deeply flawed piece of legislation. No law should be enacted that is blind to public safety."

Wilson's outspokenness on the public safety aspect of the issue has earned him the support of many Lawrence Firefighters including Pat Driscoll the president of the Lawrence Firefighters Union.

SILBERSTEIN SAYS CONTROL BOARD NOT ENOUGH

Andover School Committee Chairman Debra Silberstein agrees with Wilson that public safety must be taken into consideration as part of the solution of fixing the entitlement city. But, she says, a fiscal oversight board "is a band-aide approach" and is calling for even more stringent measures to take over the city's out of control spending.

"Advocating for a fiscal control board in Lawrence is a solution of the past, it's like kicking the can down the road which is what has been happening for far too long. It doesn't solve the problem," Silberstein told the Valley Patriot. "I think the situation in Lawrence is a much deeper problem requiring a much more comprehensive solution than just throwing a control board at it."

"What I want is a full blown plan for recovery. We need to put all the pieces in place needed to strengthen that city. That's not going to happen overnight and it is complex. But, we need a full blown

recovery plan that includes managing he city's finances and spending. Lawrence doesn't need a control board it needs a fiscal recovery plan."

Silberstein says that the solution to Lawrence's spending problems must include a plan for economic development. "What really needs to happen is the implementation of a comprehensive economic plan that links financial oversight to small business development. We have to involve all the stakeholders in trying to solve Lawrence's financial crisis."

"The roll out of the \$35 million borrowing measure was flawed form start. Was there anyone who felt that this was going to solve the problem? We wasted a lot of time between then and now when we could have had the framework for a recovery plan in place and we could be on our way to making things better. The taxpayers would have had more confidence in moving that city forward but instead we're just putting a band aide on the problem.

Silberstein says that her plan would include three key parts: "The first is the economic piece. We need to develop an economic development plan to help small businesses stay in Lawrence and bring more small businesses to the city. What's happening now is scaring small businesses away. The business community is a primary stakeholder in the future of the city and with state taxpayers paying the bill it's only right that the state have a hand in how this money is spent. The second is financial oversight to make sure the city is spending the taxpayers money effectively and make sure that maintaining public safety is part of that plan. The third is long term, and that is strengthening the city schools."

"I believe the plan would be more of a restructuring and go beyond the financial piece and involve labor in the plan. They need to be part of solution. You have to look beyond immediacy of the crises and be able to have long term recovery plan. This isn't going to be easy."

REPUBLICANS DISAGREE TOO!

With two of the three Democrats calling for stronger fiscal and management controls on Lawrence's budget, and State Representative Barry Finegold defending his vote to let Lawrence borrow \$35 million with no spending controls, the Republicans are also at odds over what to do about the spending problems in Lawrence.

Andover's Jamison Tomasek opposes a finance control board and imposing management restrictions on Lawrence's spending.

Tomasek initially said he favored a finance control board for the city but changed his position last month saying that he believes Mayor Lantigua and his new administration are doing all they can and ought to be given a chance to fix the problem.

"He didn't create this problem, he inherited this problem," Tomasek said. He also says that he has seen "no evidence" of financial mismanagement, adding "if I see evidence of financial mismanagement in the future, of course, I am willing to

Four state candidates take Taxpayers money to fund their campaigns

BOSTON - Three candidates for state auditor and one candidate for state treasurer have qualified for matching public funds for their primary election campaigns, according to the Office of Campaign and Political Finance. What that means is each candidate will be using the taxpayer's money to run for political office at a time when police, firefighters and other municipal workers are losing their jobs, putting the public safety at risk.

Auditor candidates Suzanne Bump and Mike Lake (who are Democrats, and Mary Connaughton (a Republican), have submitted the necessary qualifying contributions and were certified by OCPF to receive funding.

Treasurer candidate Stephen Murphy also qualified and was certified for public funds for the Democratic primary.

Each candidate's campaign account received public financing based on the amount of qualifying contributions they submitted.

THIS IS HOW MUCH OF YOUR TAX MONEY EACH CANDIDATE IS USING TO RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE!!

Suzanne Bump (D): \$100,560
Mary Connaughton (R): \$87,968
Stephen Murphy (D): \$79,378
Mike Lake (D): \$58,484

According to the State's Office of Campaign and Political Finance:

Under the public financing law, M.G.L. Chapter 55C, a statewide candidate who is opposed, has agreed to observe a statutory spending limit and submits the minimum amount of qualifying contributions is eligible to receive public matching funds.

The State Election Campaign Fund, which is funded by a taxpayer check-off on state income tax returns, contained \$1,563,839 as of June 30, according to the state Comptrol-

ler's Office. That amount was split in half, with half available for the primary election and half for the general election. The law calls for candidates for governor to be funded first, with any remaining funds to be distributed to candidates for the other five statewide offices who are eligible to receive public financing. No candidates for governor are eligible to receive public funds for the primary election because Charles Baker and Gov. Deval Patrick are unopposed in their respective primaries and did not agree to spending limits.

Candidates must agree to abide by statutory spending limits for both the primary and general elections in order to be eligible to receive matching funds.

The four candidates receiving public financing originally agreed to the statutory limit of \$375,000 for the primary, but that figure was increased for all relevant races because their opponents, who are not participating in the public financing program, set higher spending limits.

Democratic auditor candidates Bump and Lake can spend up to \$1.3 million, the amount set by their primary opponent, Guy Glodis.

In the Democratic primary for treasurer, Stephen Murphy's primary opponent, Steven Grossman, set the limit at \$3.5 million. In the Republican primary for auditor, Connaughton's limit is \$26.9 billion, the limit set by her opponent, Kamal Jain.

The declared limits cover only the primary campaign period: June 2 to Sept. 14.

After the primary, all candidates who have not agreed to limit spending and who are opposed in the general election by candidates who have agreed to limit spending will have to declare their self-imposed limit for the final seven-week general election campaign.

Original Intent Part I

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I would like to begin a series of short articles dealing with topics that pertain to the Constitution of the United States and how decisions concerning it have affected today's society. When one speaks or writes concerning the Constitution of the United States of America, we must now ask the question, which one? Are they referring to the "Founder's Constitution of 1787" or the "21st century constitution" or the "living constitution", as the liberals and progressives call it? The Framers' Consti-

tution has guided this nation for centuries and rendered it the freest, most prosperous and most creative nation in the history of the world. This Constitution of the United States is the heritage and responsibility of every citizen of the United States of America! The advocates for the 21st century constitution aim to transform our nation's supreme law beyond recognition and doing so with little public attention or debate. Dr. Charles Ormsby said it correctly in his May 2010 Valley Patriot article entitled, "Our Federal Government Needs to be Reshuffled ... by the Constitution." He wrote

that their modus operandi was to "first try to twist it, but if you can't twist it, ignore it." Simply ignoring the Framers' Constitution seems to be working well for judges who seek to change our form of government. Their goal is the diminishment of the democratic and representative processes of American government and the replacement of a system of republican government, in which the constitution is largely focused upon the architecture of government in order to minimize the likelihood of abuse of power, with a system of judicial government, in which substantive policy

outcomes are increasingly determined by federal judges. Rather than merely defining broad rules of the game for the legislative and executive branches of government, the new constitution would compel specific outcomes. Sure a small form of the Founders Constitution would remain, but the important decisions would increasingly be undertaken by courts, especially the federal courts. Decisions by millions of voters on matters of racial quotas, social services funding and immigration policy, will be routinely overturned by single judges act-

LAROCQUE, page 28

Former award winning LHS teacher: "no snitch rule" practiced by Teachers Union

Al Sunskis

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

As I am no longer a high school teacher employed by the Lawrence Public Schools I am now able to verify the existence of the "no snitch rule" and furthermore to tell you and the taxpayers, first-hand, how the no snitch rule is honored, enforced, and implemented all to the detriment of the employees and students of the Lawrence Public Schools. Furthermore I can now tell you about the racketeering that LTU President Francis McLaughlin engages in as part of his control of the teachers within the Lawrence school system.

It is true that some unfortunate employees of the LPS are fully aware of the existence of the Code of Secrecy that pervades the Lawrence Public Schools system.

Most noticeably to the general public, this code of secrecy is typified whenever Superintendent Laboy and members of his senior staff remain sitting silently whenever a member of the public brings an unfavorable issue before the Lawrence School Committee. Although they are frequently addressed directly, they sit there and say nothing. The Code is preserved.

Still, there is much more to the application of the LPS code of secrecy than that. Indeed, the very foundation of the LPS Code of Secrecy is its adoption of the gang related "no snitch rule", a standard of professional misconduct that pervades the school administration, the teachers union, as well as rank and file of Lawrence Public Schools. First however, I intend to charge LTU President Francis McLaughlin with racketeering. Here's

why:

For months on end Frank McLaughlin held me, my disabled wife and my disabled daughter, hostage by forcing me to be his personal spy during the time I was assigned to the Central Office. During that time LTU President Francis McLaughlin threatened me with loss of my teaching position in Lawrence if I ever failed to follow his orders. He threatened, "All I have to do is say you're unfit to teach. And you're gone." was just one of the many threats he made both to me and to my wife. Accordingly, and against my will, I was forced to pass on to LTU President Francis McLaughlin written documents, professional information, and personal information I gathered for him. I believe the forced coercion of an employee in this manner is a direct violation of the Federal RICO statutes and thus I hereby charge LTU President Francis McLaughlin with racketeering (see enclosures). As the actions of the LTU's President appear to be a violation of federal laws, with your help I will be able to bring light upon this corruption, and pass on to federal investigators all the evidence I have that supports this charge.

But there's more to the story:

His coercion, and the unabashed enforcement of the LPS code of secrecy's "No Snitch Rule" forced several teachers to lose their jobs and for two administrators at the high school to avoid an investigation and prosecution by the state DYS for their physical and psychological assaults on male students under their supervision in MST C-303. On May 5, 2009 I was at a "51-a" meeting with Sal Petralia, Francis McLaughlin, and Atty. Katz who was McLaughlin's representative from the parent union in Boston. Mr. Petralia asked me if I had any information to provide him with documenting any such physical and psychological abuse

of male students in MST C-303. I gave Mr. Petralia a report originating from several MST teachers who witnessed Ms. Johnson's stopping, grabbing and pushing a male student up against the wall outside C-303 and holding him there while searching him. Ms. Johnson mistakenly thought the boy had taken a mouse from the computer lab. He did not.

Sal Petralia read the document and then held it up to Francis McLaughlin and Mr. Katz. The LTU President McLaughlin shook his head and told Sal Petralia, "She's a member." Mr. Katz said nothing. Petralia thus tossed the report away. This official reporting of a "51-a" incident simply disappeared. MST History teacher Candace Johnson—recently promoted to vice principal of the International School—was never investigated by DYS. That's how the no snitch rule works to the detriment of the students and teachers of the city.

Beginning in October and continuing for the rest of the academic year a woman first-year-teacher was horribly and repeatedly sexually abused by her male students. This action was repeatedly reported to and witnessed by Principal Dianne Cruz, Vice Principal Steve Sierpina, and MST School Safety Officer Joe Soucy. They continuously failed to do anything to stop the harassment of this young lady teacher. This went on for months. In February I witnessed an incident myself. I wrote it up and gave the report to the LTU President Francis McLaughlin. My fellow teacher Frank Fernandez was present. McLaughlin took the report, asked me a few questions, and then gave it back to me saying, "I don't want this." And thus nothing was done to help this lady teacher.

As I said earlier, there is much, much more to the story. With the power of the free press the code of secrecy and its no snitch rule that governs our school system can be smashed.

Benefit tickets on sale for laid off Police/Fire & Lawrence City Workers

LAWRENCE – Sal Lupoli, President/CEO of Lupoli Companies, the flagship name for the divisions of Sal's Pizza Retail/Wholesale Divisions, Salvatore's Restaurants, Mary's Pasta & Sandwiches and Riverwalk Properties announced that tickets are on sale for the fundraising benefit to raise money in an effort to help all laid off Lawrence City workers which include fire fighters/police/teachers and municipal workers laid off effective July 1st, 2010. The benefit will be held August 28th at 6pm at Salvatore's in Lawrence. Plans include a live band, an all you can eat pizza buffet and more. Salvatore's is reaching out into the community of businesses to see what can be donated for items to be sold at live and silent auctions. Sponsorship opportunities for the event start at \$500. Tickets are available at \$20.00 per ticket for cash or check made payable to

Salvatore's Lawrence. For tickets please call Colleen McManus at 978-291-0267. "I want to host this benefit in an effort to help those who help us when we need it the most!" said Lupoli.

Any business interested in supporting the benefit should contact John MacDonald, VP of corporate strategies and communications at 978-681-7777 ext 24 or jmacdonald@sals-pizza.com.

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PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Lawrence Police Sgt. James Raso and PJ Lopez remove taser wires from criminal, Louis Leonard of Bunkerhill St. Leonard fled police with a 9MM Rugar in his hand and was caught eight blocks later. Only five patrolman were working the streets of Lawrence the night of this incident.

Cops chase man with gun through Lawrence alleys

Only FIVE Patrolman protecting the city on a Thursday Night

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

"Common and Newbury, Common and Newbury!" an out of breath officer Dan Fitzpatrick yelled over the police radio early Friday morning around 12:15am.

Every cruiser patrolling the city rushed to the downtown Lawrence neighborhood, lights and sirens blaring.

"Every available car head that way," the dispatcher said. "He's in the alley, he's in the alley.... headed..... North," another officer yelled into the radio.

Lawrence Police had received a call of three men trying to break into cars at Museum Square on Methuen Street. Witnesses say that when Officer Fitzpatrick pulled up to the scene, he saw one of the men had a gun tucked in his waistband. Fitzpatrick ordered the suspect to stop, but instead he bolted towards Essex Street, initiating the chase by both Fitzpatrick and Sgt. Raso.

"I'm on him... Newbury Street in the alley... Newbury Street!" a hurried Officer Fitzpatrick broadcasted, while chasing the suspect on foot.

Other officers scoured the area cordoned off the neighborhood in every direction as five other police cruisers descended onto the Newbury and Garden Street area, the radio went quiet for less than a minute. Then static interrupted the transmission but when it stopped the only word that came over the radio was "...gun!" Seconds later, Sgt Raso returned to the radio "he threw it on the ground..." trying to catch his breath he alerted his fellow officers, "I got him! Newbury and Garden!"

When our Valley Patriot reporter arrived at the scene on Garden Street, three officers were inspecting a 9 millimeter Rugar pistol that the criminal had thrown on the ground while being tased by Sgt. Raso.

"He could've shot me, he could have killed me," Sgt. Raso told Office Fitzpatrick and other officers who began arriving on the scene.

Officers placed the man in handcuffs and brought him over to Fitzpatrick's cruiser in front of 151 Garden Street.

As Raso began to remove the taser wires from the criminal, one of the officers asked him if he was ok and if it hurt.

"Just a little, not really" the suspect answered with sweat dripping off his forehead.

"He could have turned around at any point and shot me, look at this thing... the clip is full," Raso told his fellow officers as he inspected the Rugar for ammunition. Another officer, PJ Lopez congratulated them for capturing the suspect.

The suspect was taken to the Lawrence Police Station on Lowell Street and booked. Sources at Lawrence District Court this morning said that the suspect eventually did identify himself to police during the booking process as Louis Leonard, 23, of 92 Bunkerhill Street in Lawrence.

Leonard was arraigned at 10am Friday morning. The judge ordered that he be held on \$10,000 cash bail. Leonard had two prior arrests for violent crimes including assault and battery.

Lawrence Police have been working short handed since Mayor William Lantigua laid off 25 officers and demoted fifteen police officials last month. There were



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

The 9MM Rugar recovered on Garden Street after the fleeing criminal threw it to the ground during a foot chase by Lawrence police.

FIVE police officers patrolling the streets of Lawrence Thursday on the early night shift. Officers unconnected to the case (who did not want to be identified) said this morning at Lawrence District Court that because of short staffing they are now constantly worried about their safety and the safety of their fellow officers.

"We have seen a significant increase

in violence since the layoffs and we're now chasing call after call, back to back, sometimes leaving sections of the city completely unprotected. Those of us left are doing our part, but it's getting hairy out here, especially since the summer isn't even half over."

The City of Lawrence has more than 80,000 residents.

If you have a news tip or would like to advertise in The Valley Patriot, please email valleypatriot@aol.com

An open letter to District Attorney Blodgett Regarding Election Fraud

Chally Ramos

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Dear Honorable District Attorney:

I write to bring to your attention my concern about the apparent emergence of new and troubling pattern by the City of Lawrence election office concerning voter fraud. As a candidate in the special election for the 16th district of the city I had a personal experience during the filing of my nomination paper regarding missing nomination papers after properly filing and meeting the deadline.

The City of Lawrence has many issues that need to be addressed including a corrupt form of government and one major problem is voter fraud among illegal voters. The city election office needs to be investigated for various violations of voter registration and fraud. This includes not following policies and procedures for first time voter registrations in violation of state and federal laws.

In addition, poll workers with criminal backgrounds are working at the precincts, are lacking the training and as well working or supporting certain candidate campaign at the polls. These are issues that create a bias and violate the integrity of the election process. It is unfair to other candidates that are running with the belief that our electoral process is a democracy founded in the principal of our constitu-

tion.

I have personally witnessed at the election department people being register without any identification. These people claim that they forgot their identification at home. These people were followed out of the building and were witnessed getting into a vehicle with out of state license plates. These are examples of my experiences at the election department that are a cause to raise a red flag.

I, and other citizens and residents of Lawrence reasonably believe aliens and individuals with resident status in the United States are being registered to vote. They are unlawfully and falsely representing themselves as United States citizens by voting OR registering to vote violating federal law 18 U.S.C. 611, 1015F. Another problem is the absentee ballots that are being cast for a certain candidate at an alarming rate. Usually a pattern exists where housing complex absentee ballots are being cast address after address making the complex a complete absentee area by a certain group of the Latin community.

I strongly urge the Department of Justice to investigate the election office in Lawrence MA for voter fraud and identity theft in violation of state and federal laws.

Truly yours, Chally Ramos

Youth and seniors working together

The Volunteer Intergenerational Program (VIP), which engages youth and senior volunteers in a six week service-learning program at various locations, has started. This summer program is made up of volunteers from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC), and employees from Merrimack Valley Community Service Corps (MVCSC). The youth volunteers range from 11-18 years old and senior volunteers range from 55 and up. They will be broken up into groups that will target different projects.

Volunteers will work on quilts, reading activities, clean up, and rehabilitate graffiti torn areas. The quilts created will be donated to local shelters.

VIP participants will volunteer at six different schools, Arlington Elementary School, Leahy Elementary School, Wetherbee School, Guilmette Elementary School, Parthum Middle School, and South Lawrence East Elementary School. They will also volunteer at the Lawrence Public Library's, "Go Green Program", on Thursdays, and on a mural at the Lawrence Senior Center. Other activities will be conducted at different sites located in

Lawrence. Fun Friday's will be available to volunteers who participate all week.

These community revitalization projects started on July 6, 2010 and will end on August 13, 2010. The program runs from Monday through Friday from 9am to 1pm. Enrollment for our Fall VIP Program will begin in August, the Fall VIP Program will begin in September.

The purpose of the VIP program is to have youth and senior volunteers working inter-generationally, while servicing community needs. The continuous service these volunteers provide builds a stronger and healthier community. It was proven by a national study Learn and Serve America, that effective service learning programs improve academic grades, increase attendance at school and develops personal and social responsibility.

The VIP volunteers were recruited from various schools and the RSVP and FGP volunteers were recruited from the Lawrence Senior Center. The activities selected were based on community needs and captivated the interest of both youth and senior volunteers.

For more information please contact MVCSC at (978) 686-9407.

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

STATE HOUSE - *Who is not protecting the children?* Well, with our local legislators voting to water down the CORI (criminal records check) process, I would say they are. S.2583 passed this week in the legislature with the full support of Governor Patrick. Local child advocates Laurie Myers of Community Voices and Debbie Savoia worked tirelessly to prevent this terrible legislation from passing, but to no avail. Now they will work tirelessly to remove those elected officials come November. Those legislators who voted for the bill are: Torrisi, L'italien, Devers, Finegold, Dean-Campbell and Dempsey. The bill is a major set-back for the Commonwealth because it makes businesses and the consumer pay a fee to keep the records of criminals (public information) secret--all at the expense and safety of law-abiding, tax paying citizens! Thankfully, Laurie Myers was successful in keeping the records of level 2 and 3 sex offenders not eligible to be sealed. Thankfully, both North Andover Senators Steve Baddour (D), Methuen, and Bruce Tarr (R) Newbury voted against the bill.

NORTH ANDOVER - The Merrimack Valley Tea Party is hosting a "Candidates Night" next Wednesday evening, August 11th, 6:30 pm sharp at the VFW hall on Park St. in North Andover. Come and listen to the candidates and ask questions if you wish. All are welcome!

Confirmed appearances: Charlie Baker - for Governor, Tim Cahill - for Governor, Karyn Polito - for Treasurer, Bill Campbell - for Secretary of State, Mary Connaughton - for Auditor, Kamal Jain - for Auditor, Guy Carbone - write in at the R primary for Attorney General, Jim McKenna - write in at the R primary for Attorney General, Bill Hudak - for Congress, 6th District, and 5th District Congressional candidates: Jon Golnik, Sam Meas, Bob Shapiro, Tom Weaver, and Dale Brown.

LAWRENCE - The financial meltdown on 215 Ferry Street continues as Acting Economic Director Patrick Blanchette and Gloria "This is my girlfriend! This is my girlfriend!" Mercado aka Gloria Omayra Candelaria move closer towards foreclosure on the home they live in. A complaint for authority to foreclose has been filed in Land Court. The Registry of Deeds is filling up with paperwork regarding these two hard working public servants. Blanchette had an IRS tax lien previously filed against him for refusing to pay taxes of over \$8,800.00.

Earlier this year, Mercado had a judgment executed against her for over \$13,700.00 by Atlantic Credit & Finance. Patrick Blanchette makes over \$86,000 working in Mayor Lantigua's office while Gloria takes the taxpayers for over \$50,000 in the School Dept. As we go to

If there was any doubt as to whom Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua is supporting for the State Senate seat being vacated by Sue Tucker, a quick glimps of Lantigua Headquarters might give you a clue...

That's right, Rep. Barry Finegold who testified and voted for the \$35 MIL bailout loan for Lantigua.



print, City Hall has not provided information about the current status of the property tax and water bills for 215 Ferry Street. It will be the height of hypocrisy, as Blanchette leads the charge to layoff police and fire personnel because of a lack of revenue, if the city cannot collect property taxes and water bills from its own employees! You have to wonder here DOR budget specialist Bob "Cadillac" Nunes is on this one. Come on Blanchette! Be a man, pay your bills!!

LAWRENCE - Two months ago the Valley Patriot published front page story about raw sewage billowing into the Shawsheen river in Lawrence behind the South Lawrence East School. The drainage pipe where the raw sewage is coming from is less than 100 feet from the baseball fields where the South Lawrence East Little League plays ball. Back in April, The Environmental Protection Agency ordered the City of Lawrence to find the source of the raw sewage and the fix the problem. EPA officials gave the city until June 13th to do the required testing and stop the raw sewage from contaminating the Shawsheen. But, our sources at the EPA tell us that as of the date we went to

government policies because they say they care so much about the earth. But, where are they on these local environmental issues? In fact, where have they been in the last three years on ANY story The Valley Patriot has published concerning environmental disasters like the raw sewage flowing into the Shawsheen River? We haven't seen anyone protesting the mayor's office over the raw sewage, the leaking toxic chemicals at the Lawrence Water Treatment Plant, the illegal dumping on the banks of the Shawsheen and Spickett rivers. We have

heard no outcry from so called environmentalists at a city council meeting about the story we published four months ago concerning the illegal dumping at the Bellevue cemetery. In fact, we have not heard one city councilor address any of these issues either. though I am sure they will all tell you they are VERY concerned about the environment. Just remember

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METHUEN VILLAGE - The Irish Guy Performs at Methuen Village: Methuen Village at Riverwalk Park, a senior community offering assisted living and state-of-the-art Alzheimer's care, invites the public to a performance of Kevin Farley, "The Irish Guy" on Friday, August 6 at 7:00 p.m. Kevin plays 11 different instruments (12 if you count his voice) while engaging his audience in song and Irish folklore. This performance is part of the Methuen Village Summer Concert Series. Refreshments will be served and RSVP is encouraged. Dave Caponigro Performs at Methuen Village: Methuen Village at Riverwalk Park, a senior community offering assisted living and state-of-the-art Alzheimer's care, invites the public to a performance of Dave Caponigro on keyboard on Friday, August 13 at 7:00 p.m. Dave's music includes all the old standards and plenty of Italian favorites from the greats like Sinatra and Bennett. This performance is part of the Methuen Village Summer Concert Series. Refreshments will be served and RSVP is encouraged. Bill Foley Performs at Methuen Village: Methuen Village at Riverwalk Park, a senior community offering assisted living and state-of-the-art Alzheimer's care, invites the public to a performance of Bill Foley, an acoustic guitarist and harmonica player, on Friday, August 20 at 7:00 p.m. During his 25 years of experience, Bill has developed an eclectic abundance of timeless songs from all genres! This performance is part of the Methuen Village Summer Concert Series. Refreshments will be served and RSVP is encouraged. The Quintessential Brass

NEXT PAGE

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print (08-05-10) the sewage is still flowing and city officials have done nothing to clean up the contamination or find the source of the problem. I'd like to know where all these so-called environmentalists in the Merrimack Valley are on this issue. Seriously! There are dozens of groups in The Valley that claim to care about the environment. They protest global warming with their silly little signs (like that's going to help) and they advocate socialist

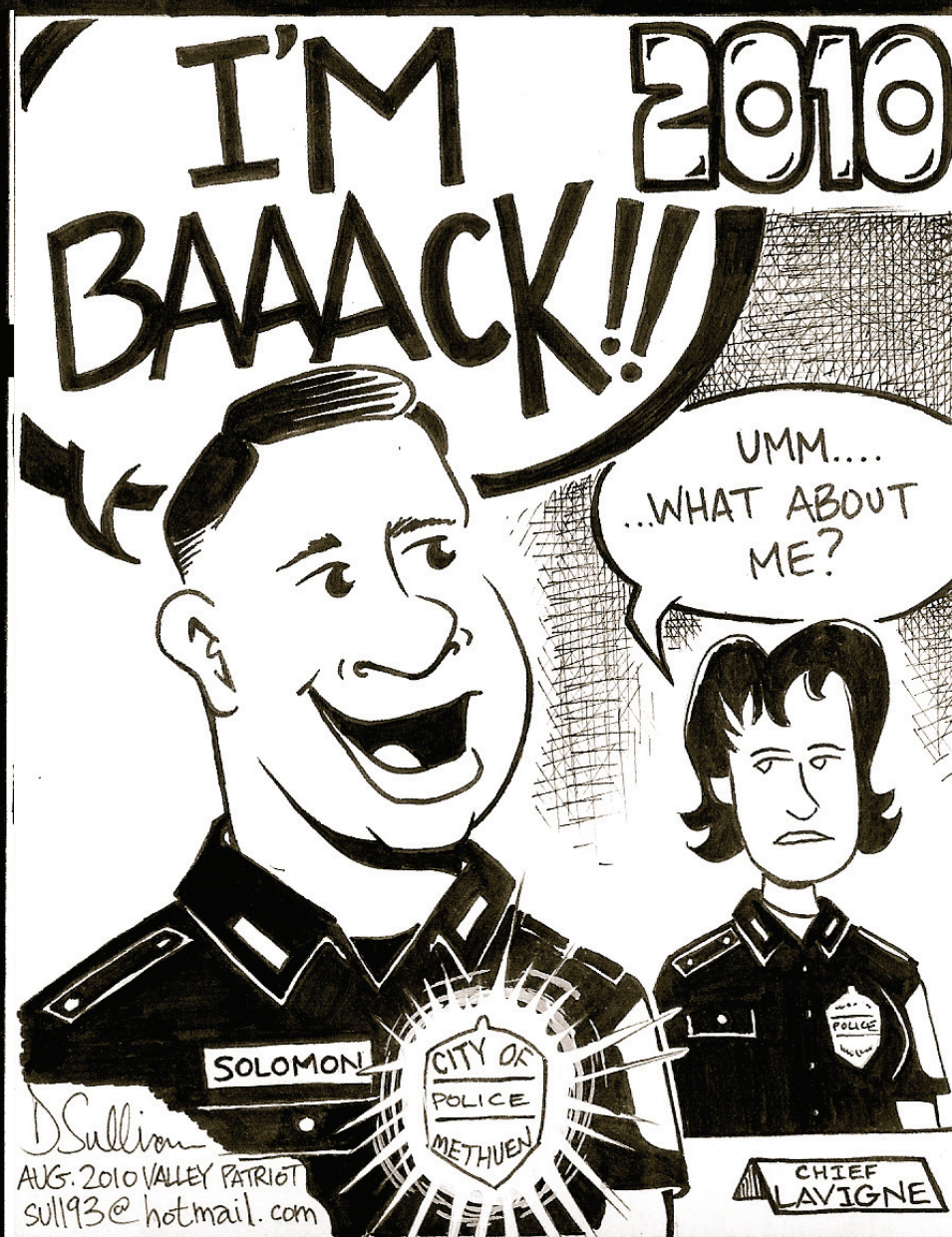
that the next time someone locally tells you that they care about the environment or that they are an environmentalist. I am so tired of these phonies who pretend to care about the earth and the environment and then do absolutely nothing at the local level where they really can make a difference. It just goes to show you that the entire environmental movement is a sham. It's nothing more than a movement to affect changes in social and political policy and has nothing to do the well being of the earth.

DRACUT - The Dracut Police Department is holding its annual charity golf tournament on Monday, September 13th at 8:30am at Campbell's Scottish Highlands. After the tournament, they will feast on great food from the Outback Steakhouse. As always, there will be goodie bags, raffles, prizes and a great time! The cost per person is \$125 (\$500 per 4-some). They are also looking for hole sponsors, so if you or your business is interested, the cost for sponsorship is \$100 per hole or 3 holes for \$200. I can also put together a 4-some + hole sponsor discounted rate if anyone is interested. Please contact Wren if you'd like to put in a 4-some so she can reserve your spot... this tournament always fills up quickly. If you have any questions, please feel free to call/text

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HOURS: Monday-Thursday 11am-9pm, Friday and Saturday 11am-11pm, Sunday noon-6pm, PHONE: 978.655.1634, On Parker St. in South Lawrence, Across from Haffner's next to Saint Patrick's School!!



NEWS ITEM: In 2008 Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi fired Police Chief Joe Solomon amid daily negative stories in the Eagle Tribune attacking Solomon and creating a political climate that made it impossible to keep his job. Last month Civil Service overturned the firing and ordered Manzi to return him to duty. **NOTE:** Mayoral Candidate Kathleen Corey Rahme called this 3 years ago as did The Valley Patriot editorial staff.

Ensemble Performs at Methuen Village: Methuen Village at Riverwalk Park, a senior community offering assisted living and state-of-the-art Alzheimer's care, invites the public to a performance of The Quintessential Brass Ensemble's Solstice Sackbut Trio on Friday, August 27 at 7:00 p.m. The trio will perform Renaissance, Classical, Baroque and even some Pop music for our enjoyment. Musicians Leslie Havens, David Lindsey, and Alan Johnson have performed in Carnegie Hall, with famous recording artists, and on National Public Radio. This performance is part of the Methuen Village Summer Concert Series. Refreshments will be served and RSVP is encouraged. Methuen Village is located in the heart of downtown Methuen at 4 Gleason Street. For more information, call 978-685-2220 or visit www.MethuenVillage.com.

WESTFORD - FALL BULB AND PERENNIAL SALE - The Middlesex Conservation District, a nonprofit environmental agency, will be holding its annual Fall Bulb and Perennial Sale on 9/24 (3-6 pm) and 9/25 (8am - noon) at the 4H Fairgrounds, 51 South Chelmsford Rd, Westford, MA. All items may be ordered in advance for best selection, through September 3; please visit our website at www.middlesexconservation.org, or call 978 692 9395 to receive a sales brochure.

All proceeds benefit the District's conservation programs.

DANVERS - THINK AND GROW NICHE - August 13 - Gwen Ryan, Newton's Axis Promotions, will speak at the North Shore Business Forum on August 13 on niche marketing.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS - August 20 - Stoneham's Patricia Merolle, of Winning, Inc., will speak at the North Shore Business Forum on

communication styles.

MARRIAGE OF FAMILY AND BUSINESS 41 YRS 24/7 - August 27 - Janice Preston, of

Beverly's Casa deModa, will speak at the North Shore Business Forum on how to run a successful retail business for 41 years and maintain a marriage while together 24/7.

The North Shore Business Forum meets at 7:15am at the Danversport Yacht Club, Rt. 62 East, Danvers, MA. The \$9 admission fee include a continental breakfast and pre-registration is not required. For more information - (978) 774-0322 - www.nsbforum.org

VETERANS - The Massachusetts Military Academy of the Massachusetts Army National Guard - established in 1913, the first State OCS in the United States is seeking the donation of books on U.S. Military History, to facilitate the

military education and training of Faculty, Staff, and Officer Cadets. This book drive is continuous and on-going. HQ, 101st Regiment (RTI/MMA), Massachusetts Army National Guard, Bldg. #5222, Sullivan Hall, Turpentine Rd., Camp Edwards, Mass. 02542

CONTACT: CPT John Macuga, MMA Staff, e-mail address: john.macuga@us.army.mil (SUBMITTED BY: Douglass R. Knight, graduate MMA OCS Class 53 (1986))

HAVERHILL - The Council on Aging is hosting an encore trip to the ever-popular White Mountain Hotel in North Conway, NH, October 14-15, 2010. Trip includes one night hotel accommodation, 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, and 1 dinner. Travelers will enjoy an evening of entertainment, a guided sight-seeing tour of Mt. Washington Valley and the Notches, a visit to Weston's Farm in Fryeburg, Maine, and admission and tour of the Castle in the Clouds. Cost of this trip is \$275 per person, double occupancy. Contact Kathy or Rita at the COA 978-374-2390 or kbresnahan@cityofhaverhill.com to purchase tickets or obtain details.

MERRIMAC - It's almost that time of year again when Merrimac celebrates families and community. This year's Old Home Days festivities will begin on Friday, August 13th at 5pm and wrap with a day long softball tournament on Sunday, August 15th. Most events (unless otherwise indicated) will take place at the Stevens Field, also referred to as the Donaghue School Field located on Locust St. in Merrimac. OHD welcomes back the RE/MAX Hot Air Balloon on Friday night! This much loved attraction has been made possible by RE/MAX on the River... thanks to Sharon Cronin and her team of realtors!

Friday night will also feature: Hayrides with Tom Flinn, Pony rides by J & J Ponies, Magician, Greg McAdams and the ever-popular... bonfire. Musical entertainment will showcase the return of Four

Pints and local rocker, Al Duplisea.

Saturday is sure to offer something for everyone. Things get rolling with the Anything on Wheels parade followed by children's games, inflatable amusements and a rock wall. Curious Creatures slither into town accompanied by a Martial Arts showcase. Throughout the day a variety of crafters, vendors and local organizations will be displaying their wares. The kickball tournament makes a return and for those with a sweet tooth, the bake-off is sure to please. Pete Falconi and Captain Carl Cash from local radio station, WNBZ, AM 1450 will be broadcasting live from 10am to 1pm. The afternoon will feature music from Adam Mendonca and Bobby Spellman Jazz Quintet and Left Hand Blue. Come enjoy Merrimac Santa Committee's famous sausages and dogs, Methodist Church's lobster rolls, Rhythm Café, and many others. The Block Dance returns by popular demand on Saturday night. Wear your beach attire and join us for demonstrations by Dance Technics and Susan Tribble. Brad Townshend of L.C.P. Multimedia is sure to keep the party moving. On Sunday, teams and spectators will be treated to a day of family-friendly competition on the ball fields. Thanks to Skips Snack Bar for once again sponsoring this event! In addition to the softball games, fans will be treated to music by Black Dog Howl and refreshments provided by local vendors.

Programs will be distributed at the following locations during the first week of August: Towne Market, Merrimac Savings Bank, Economy Bank, Common Grounds, Skips and the Merrimac Library. You may also check us out on Facebook or online at www.merrimac01860.info. Please don't hesitate to contact Merrimac Old Home Days online at oldhomedays@gmail.com or you may call: 978-346-8216.

SALEM, MA - The Essex County Estate Planning Council will be host-

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PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Above Left: Wild Turkeys wander through the North Andover Neighborhood of Brightwood Avenue and High Street. Above Right: Haverhill Mayor James Fiorentini presents a proclamation to Rachel Porten of North Andover during her Bat Mitzvah party which was held at DiBurro's in Haverhill.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN



PHOTO: COURTESY

Above left: Republican candidate for State Senate, Jamison Tomasek of Andover with his campaign team during a recent fundraiser at the Tewksbury Country Club. Above right: Bill Hudak (in tux), Republican candidate for Congress in the Sixth District against John Tierney, with Charlie Baker (in red) candidate for governor during a recent fundraiser "Stand up for America". Back Row: Melrose Alderman Monica Medieros, candidate for State Representative, Todd Fineberg of WRKO on the far right.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Above left: State Senator Steve Baddour (second from left) who held an ice cream social at the Salisbury Senior Center last month. Above right: Hanna Toabe Keyes and Sensei Michael Keyes of Methuen at an event for the Andover Baptist Church on Central St in Andover. Hanna and Michael did an inspirational speaking engagement and strongman performance for a group of teenagers at the church to teach them about using their gifts and talents to glorify God.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The Methuen Arlington Neighborhood, Inc. started their Summer Basketball League on Thursday, July 8, 2010 at 5:00 pm. The league is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Greater Lawrence and Methuen Police Department. The donation presented by the Kiwanis Club of Greater Lawrence will pay for the uniforms, trophies and the annual Basketball tournament to be held on Saturday, September 11, 2010. The league is for both boys and girls ages 7-18 that live in the Arlington Neighborhood of Methuen. Each team will play every Thursday and all participants receive a trophy at the tournament. Jeffrey Shank from the Kiwanis Club of Greater Lawrence was on hand to present the check. Also on hand for the start of the league were Officer Gardner and Officer Macmenamon. Representing Methuen Arlington Neighborhood is Linda Soucy, Founder, and Carmen Rosario, Community Organizer, and the kids who will play on the basketball league. It will be a fun summer.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

A magnificent sunset over the Merrimack River in Lawrence. This photo was taken from the outside deck of Salvatore’s Restaurant on Merrimack Street. How many people could possibly have guessed that this was photo was taken in Lawrence?



PHOTO: COURTESY

Facebook photo of the month

Shannon Flynn of Chelmsford tries to give a kiss to her dog Brewski, who, apparently thinks kissing girls is yucky! The Valley Patriot will be publishing our favorite photos from facebook each month (with the owners permission of course) and at the end of the year we will publish the best of the year.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN



PHOTO: COURTESY

Above Left: People begin to arrive at Lowell’s Folk Festival in downtown last month. Above right: North Andover Police Officer Bob Hillner gives Cameron Watson a ride on a police ATV at the National Night Out Festival Celebrations at the North Andover Middle School on August 3rd.



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SEE STORY ON PAGE 28



PHOTO: COURTESY

Design Camp gets kids engaged & excited

Electric Jungle- Students display their gear box designed electrical birds. The Design Camp at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell supplies all the ingredients for kids to achieve an exciting, friend-filled, educational, and memorable summer.



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Solomon: No deals, I'm Coming back to work

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

Last month, the Mass. Civil Service Commission ruled that the City of Methuen wrongly terminated Police Chief Joe Solomon. After more than two years of appealing his firing by Methuen Mayor Billy Manzi, and a spate of what turned out to be inaccurate stories in the Eagle Tribune, it was ruled that Solomon deserved a one year suspension but not being fired. Since he has been out of work for nearly three years, the city will have to give him two years back pay, including sick and vacation time. Mayor Manzi said he will appeal the Civil Service ruling saying that the commission "substituted their judgement for the elected mayor."

How do you feel about the ruling?

"Obviously I feel very satisfied with decisions that returns me back to work. As for other areas, I'm still reviewing them."

I was really relieved about the comments of the commissioner. They were very positive and professional statements he made about my management of the Methuen Police Department. His description about my abilities to adequately run the department and the way I had been running the department overall made me feel vindicated."

"It's interesting to see someone outside Methuen (the Civil Service Commissioner) who gets what's going on in this arena. What I was worried about going in was that they wouldn't really get what the flavor of Methuen politics really is. But he did. He seemed to really hit the nail on the head on a lot of things, and I am really grateful that I got a fair shake based on the evidence not political rumors and innuendo and false statements."

"Now I am just hoping that after all this time, the Eagle Tribune and the rest of the press will, externally and internally will look at this in an objective manner and report the actual facts. I am hoping other papers will put things fairly and equitably out there for the public now that the facts have all come out."

"One of my failings going back to 2006 was that I shouldn't have responded to some of the media accounts. The advantage of sitting back for the last three years was that you reevaluate things and you wish you could redo things. Based on my personal beliefs, I should have kept my feelings about what they were reporting to myself and stayed away from talking to the Tribune. It just gave the nay-sayers another opportunity to push their agenda in a different direction."

"The Tribune's reporting was slanted in a certain direction. And that helped cultivate a political atmosphere whereby people could come forward and make false allegations with impunity. I probably shouldn't have responded to some of those the way I did because, they just took what I said and blew it out of proportion and made things worse."

"It was an injustice to everyone. Especially the people of Methuen who are supposed to be reading and interpreting the real facts of any situation and then make up their minds. But when they don't have all the information, when they only have a slanted view of things, that's where the injustice comes in."

"Look, the night of the rally I said, 'don't take my word for it read the documents. Don't be taken in by a press story, take your time, read the reports. You know, people who are involved in city government ought to be reading it and looking at facts so they can make their own decisions about what they believe happened here. But they didn't get that chance because it was all slanted.'"

Asked if he thought it was the inaccurate press accounts of his actions as chief that led to his firing, Solomon said that it was one of the main factors but not the only one.

"There were many factors, obviously the press, but there were personal and political issues involved. Some of that was an intent to attack someone prior to facts coming out about them to distort the public's view of the facts. It was an attempt to discredit, a preemptive strike."

"Unfortunately, from 2006 on you never saw an issue played out in newspaper like this was and I understand, absolutely, that a chief having issues like this is very serious. But they (the Tribune) took minor things, miniscule things, and blew it out of proportion. It wasn't about the advantages of the conferences we went on or the tremendous work that the Methuen police were doing with the Weed and Seed grant or how we had turned around the Arlington Neighborhood. It was how much someone paid for a pretzel at a conference. It was unfair reporting."

Asked if he was willing to come to an agreement with The City of Methuen for an out of court civil settlement for wrongful termination, he said he was evaluating all his options. "Sometime in the future, when we have reflected on all the facts we will make a decision on that."

But when Chief Solomon was asked if he was willing to entertain the idea of a buyout and not return to work as the Methuen Police Chief he stated unequivocally:

"Absolutely not! That is not an option. We are open to the idea of a settlement based on the issues that have come out in this report as long as that means I am coming back to work. Either in October, or shortly thereafter depending on the legal process. But I am coming back."

Solomon was asked how he could possibly come back to duty given that the same political atmosphere and the political animosity still exists.

"Given everything that's happened, I have spent a lot of time thinking about it. I've had numerous conversations with various chiefs who faced similar situations and I've spoken with my legal council who have seen cases like this before and taken their advice."

"Don't forget when I took over as chief of police in Methuen the dept was fractioned into five different groups. From the time I came on board through 2006, we successfully reduced those fractions. We had people working harmoniously to serve and protect the people of Methuen. We, and I say we because it wasn't just me it was the professional officers that I worked with, did such a great job working together."

"We were nationally recognized for what we did in the Methuen Police Department."



"We are open to the idea of a settlement based on the issues that have come out in this report as long as that means I am coming back to work. Either in October or shortly thereafter depending on the legal process. But I am coming back."

~ Reinstated Methuen Police Chief
Joe Solomon

"So moving forward I guess I'm saying that it isn't what I am going to accomplish when I come back but what we are going to accomplish as a department and a community."

"Using the brain trusts of our community and the police department and formulating some of the ways we can expand the community policing philosophy city wide, we had such great success with."

"I believe in community policing, that's why we were successful. And it's the tenants of that program that helped us work to overcome crisis situations in the streets, it led us to be accepted in the neighborhoods, and we had the foresight to obtain a Weed and Seed grant. It's unheard of for a city of our size to get a grant like that, but we got it."

"I understand that going back is going to take time to get things going again, it's an evolution, just as it was when we started years ago. But, we are going to work together we are going to take one step at a time. It's a daily challenge."

Asked about how he will be able to work with some of the same politicians and members of the community when he comes back given the history of this issue, Solomon says he will be as professional as he has always been.

"Nobody can ever say I was unprofessional. People see me and interact with me as a professional within the city. My job is to lead our police department and I have no problem working with our council and mayor to do that."

Asked how he could go back to working with Mayor Manzi after Manzi fired him and fought to remove him from his job, Solomon said he doesn't see a problem."

"He is the mayor of Methuen. I will be the Chief of Police. We have a direct responsibility to work together for the people of Methuen. I work with people I don't like or don't agree with all the time, it's not about personalities. I have always treated the mayor with respect and I expect we are going to work together for the people. I know I will be doing the best I can to do the job. That's what being a police officer and a police chief is all about."

Solomon was asked what happens when politicians in Methuen start coming back at him and attacking him politically.

"All I can do is control my own behavior, I can't control what other people do. I will be a professional and where there are challenges in that area in some cases, I will have to be exceptionally professional. I don't put it past any people to try and goad me into having some kind of public reactions, or attempt to use something to manufacture a problem for me. It's something I will have to be hyper vigilant about."

"But make no mistake," he added. "If there's a legitimate question that councilors or members of the community have about how we run the department or what we are doing, I will look at it."

"In the past, when someone requested police services from the mayors office or a public official, we did it the way it should be done. I will not be swayed to do anyone any favors. We have to look at this as the job and there's a lot of extremely qualified officers on the police department and as long as there are no politics and things are

done within the law, we will move forward with that."

"But, I really think it's time that people who have been negative for the last four years to sit back and stop the negativity and hopefully that's going to stop."

Solomon says the hardest part of the entire ordeal was the impact on his family.

"They are really happy with the ruling, but I can tell you that it's been tumultuous. They've had to endure personal sacrifices and the damage done to my family, my partner, my parents was really unfair."

"A lot of people in my family have received unacceptable treatment in the community that others don't have to deal with. Reading what Commissioner Stein said, however, and reading the language about politically motivated, arbitrary, capricious and retaliatory manner in which we were treated made us feel like someone finally understood what really happened."

"We need to go back and show everyone what kind of police chief I have been. I had a great career that was spotless, and when I come back I am going to continue in that tradition."

"It's who I am. But, can you ever erase the damage that has been done to us, our family name, and our emotional well being ... it can't be erased. But, we are lifelong Methuenites. Our goal is to make Methuen the best it's ever been and I and my family have always believed that and that's what we are going to continue to do."

Solomon concluded the interview saying that he really wanted to send a message to the people of Methuen who have been reading inaccurate press accounts of what happened.

"I'd like them to know the pride I've always had, and still have for the city of Methuen, for being a cop and serving the citizens. I only ask that before people form an opinion on this issue that they read the decision in its entirety as a whole document, instead of in bits and pieces because it really paints the real picture from beginning to end. Take the time to obtain the transcripts and the documents and you will be completely surprised that the evidence is there that my actions were justified. What I said in the rally I had in 2007, is to read the documents and make up your own minds."

"Those facts, with the exception of the reporting of the Valley Patriot, have never been reported on accurately."

"So, to the people of Methuen, please, make your decision based on the facts not rumors or the Tribune or other press accounts, or what I say. Look at the evidence and you will have a better understanding of this situation."

"I am looking forward to coming back to work and protecting the citizens of Methuen and I am really glad that this is almost over."



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-1pm. You can email your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com.



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RONNIE’S RANTS

Random Thoughts

Ronnie Ford
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I have always thought that Bill Manzi’s capabilities in terms of politics and just plain thinking, has always been superior. Bill is a natural whether you think he is right or wrong. The present Mayor of Methuen can fight you on a Monday, and shake your hand in the aftermath. He can be your friend easily or put you on the defensive minutes later. Mr Mayor has the propensity to listen, which is tops on the list! Somehow, he engineered a budget acceptance that I thought was not possible. Now you might not like the mayor, many people do not like red hair, or tall people, or people who laugh at their own jokes. However, you can’t accuse Mayor Manzi of sleeping or not paying attention, or being short on the gray matter (brains). It is good to have opposition which is not idle in the City of Methuen. Together the Mayor and his opponents somehow managed to have a winner! I say good luck!

Last month’s column spoke of Character or lack there of. Here we go again. Now it is the upper crust of society and the political world getting caught with the hands in the cookie jar. Namely the senior senator John Kerry of our state! And, the congressman from New York is going to make his mea maximus culpas! We are supposed to be all equal in the United states, ya right. We have the haves and the have nots and always will. The rich and famous will still try to screw the masses, and the rest of us have to lose jobs, tighten our belts, lay off essential police and firemen, support the illegals, and on and on. When are we going to learn? Does someone have to strip us of everything before we react? Where is our character? Why are we not screaming out about all the abuses that are going on? Why are we so complacent? This fall there will be another election to congre ss. Let us show them what we are made of and eliminate all the incumbents running. Elect new people and demand term limits!

Now a real man we can look up to and emulate is Doctor Thomas Hoerner! He is a true gentleman! After suffering a major catastrophic illness, and making a full recovery, he is giving back once again. He and his family (wife and daughter) are going to Tanzania to help train doctors and treat patients with his expertise in orthopedic surgery. More importantly his is bringing much needed medical equipment and supplies. Dr Hoerner and his wife, who is a pathologist, and daughter have gone to Vietnam and Cambodia in years past to help people. Why can’t we have more people whom much has been given, give back? Way to go Doctor Hoerner! We are proud of you and your family!

The system of government under which we live, was designed to provide for the protection of the populous in many different ways.

Our elected legislature is supposed to extend to the people guidance in personal problems and efforts to assist them. Instead of this worthy calling, the Solons seek for the most part, to fill their own pockets and the hell with everyone else! This has come so apparent it is really shameful. The executive branch or the President, is supposed to lead us in accordance to the Constitution and take care of the people in general. This includes economic and individual protection; and to provide for the people to advance their stature in life. However, the President seems to provide for only those who are imbedded in radical thought. People who in my opinion, are dangerous to this Country. The Supreme Court who are again supposed to protect us, pass as constitutional that the government can take your land. Your Land and home you worked so hard for, can now be taken by a large corporation and used for business! Your Home! So folks, there is no question that we have no real friends in government, or at least very few.

There is a move on now on national Internet ect. to remove all incumbents in congress. (in both houses). Well, we shall see what happens. But if you are a congressman or woman, or in any position of government, SMARTEN UP! We are eyeballing you! SO AS OF NOW, WE DO NOT HAVE ANY FRIENDS!

The health care reform bill is law. It is far from reform. Granted, there are many good things about the bill, mainly you cannot be refused insurance because of a pre-existing illness. 3/4 of the Congress have little knowledge of the bill because they never took the time to read it. Yet, they pontificated about it on TV and radio. This bill is too important to be shoved down our throats without careful deliberation. To do it the right way, there should be no outside influence, mainly the pharmaceutical, insurance, lobbyists, and big business, may not attend any meetings. They may not approach any member of congress or their staff regarding this. There should be a panel of regular people (who posses common sense) to oversee this monumental task, because the congress is not trustworthy to be left alone with it. You saw this with the clandestine meetings and backdoor deals and arm twisting. Finally we should insist on term limits, take away some of the perks and insist that Congress and the President, Vice-President, and Supreme Court Judges have the same insurance as the lowly citizens. There is much more but there is enough here to start with.

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

Jack’s Irish Craic



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

“Our Lady of Knock” 1879

Jack Doyle, County Sligo
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

“On August 21, 1879, Margaret Beirne, a resident of Cnoc Mhuine, was sent by her brother to lock up the church for the evening. When she was ready to leave, she noticed a strange brightness hovering over the church. Margaret had other things on her mind, and didn’t tell anyone what she saw. Around the same time, another member of the Beirne family, Mary, was leaving from a visit to the church’s housekeeper, and stopped with the housekeeper at the gables, where they could see the church. Mary replied: “Oh look at the statues! Why didn’t you tell me the priest got new statues for the chapel?”

The housekeeper responded that she knew nothing of the priest getting new statues. So, they both went for a closer look, and Mary Beirne said: “But they are not statues, they’re moving. It’s the Blessed Virgin!”

Thirteen others also came and saw the beautiful woman, clothed in white garments, wearing a brilliant crown. Her hands were raised as if in prayer. All knew that it was Mary, the Mother of Jesus, Queen of Angels. On the right of Our Lady stood St. Joseph, his head inclined toward her. On her left stood St. John the Evangelist, dressed as a bishop. To the left of St. John stood an altar which had a lamb and a cross surrounded by angels

on it. The vision lasted about two hours. People who were not at the apparition site reported that they saw a bright light illuminating the area where the church was. Many of the sick were healed upon visiting the church at Knock.” *www.christusrex.org/www1/apparition/pr00009.htm

One of my favorite places to visit in Ireland is Knock Shrine. Situated approximately twenty miles from Gurteen county Sligo, Knock is in County Mayo. I often make the trip there to mediate, relax and spend special time with “Our Lady of Knock.” Knock Shrine is a beautiful place to walk around, sit or go visit the graves of the people who saw the apparitions, you know you’re in a special place. If you are lucky enough you might be there when the choir is practicing, singing, “Our Lady of Knock”. It’s infectious.

Always remember to forget, the troubles that passed away.

But never forget to remember, the blessings that come each day.

May you always have a clean shirt, a clear conscience, and enough coins in your pocket to buy a pint!

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

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Mr. Tom Duggan Jr.
47 Brightwood Ave
North Andover, MA 01845

May 21, 2010

Dear Mr. Duggan,

I write to you today in remembrance of the dedicated service rendered by your father, Tom Duggan Sr. to the Lawrence Police Department. I must tell you that I was moved after reading the tribute you wrote for your father in The Valley Patriot Newspaper.

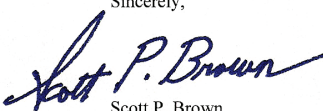
Your father's courage and commitment to ensuring the safety of the people of Lawrence and elsewhere is remarkable and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is grateful for his service.

When you write about Officer Justin Hart stating, "if I was ever in trouble and had to call for backup, I would pray that your dad would be the guy answering my call," I understood that your father was no ordinary man or police officer. He was clearly more than a selfless individual. Your father embodied compassion and his genuine desire to serve others before himself in every situation and with every person is a virtue that is rare.

I know that your father was a very special person in your life and the lives of countless other people in and beyond Lawrence. I am truly sorry that he is not with us today. I hope that you continue to share the story of your father to inspire others to emulate your father's character.

I am sure your father would be proud of you for honoring him and for continuing his legacy. May God bless you and your family, and may your father, a true hero, rest in peace.

Sincerely,



Scott P. Brown
United States Senator

United States Senator Scott Brown



recognizes

Tom Duggan, Sr.

for his 18 years of dedicated service to the Lawrence, Massachusetts Police Department and in doing so made the ultimate sacrifice on March 16, 1990. His passion and commitment to serving others in his community is truly appreciated.


United States Senator Scott Brown

May 21, 2010
Signed this day of

Rahilly Endorsed by 2 Tax Watchdog Organizations

TEWKSBURY - Patrick Rahilly for State Senate Announces two endorsements. The Alliance to Roll Back Taxes, the organization supporting Question 3 which is to roll back the sales tax to 3% has endorsed Patrick rahilly for State Senate. The Alliance is endorsing Rahilly because of his strong support for the reduction of the sales tax. Rahilly states "The best way to boost the economy, create jobs and strengthen existing businesses is to take less from the consumer, thus giving them more money to spend. The best part of the sales tax reduction is that the effects will resonate to everyone in Massachusetts, regardless of income level. I am not exactly sure how the legislature does not recognize the fact that increasing the sales tax actually hurts the most economically vulnerable citizens."

The second endorsement is by Clean Sweep Beacon Hill, a non-partisan political action committee whose mission is to



support candidates that believe in term limits, limited taxation and a less intrusive government. "There are too few organizations that are dedicated to rights of the citizens and businesses as a whole. Many organizations deal with one particular set of rights and judge the candidate solely based on that one issue. Clean Sweep takes the candidate as a whole and then decides. I am very proud to gain their trust and support." Rahilly said.

The campaign also wishes to announce the hiring of Craig Stern as campaign manager to the Rahilly campaign. Craig is a graduate with honors from Massachusetts School of Law in Andover as well as Framingham State College. Craig worked in constituency services for the House of Representatives Minority Leader Bradley Jones (R) North Reading in 2006.

Patrick Rahilly recently took the July 2010 bar exam.

SENATE: FROM PAGE 11

take another look at the idea of a finance control board but right now I think the timing is wrong."

His opponent, Patrick Rahilly says he has no idea what his opponent is looking at. "I believe that when the mayor of a city says he needs to borrow \$35 million to balance his budget and avoid layoffs in public safety, and then gets that money but lays off cops and firefighters anyway, that's financial mismanagement.. among other things. The corruption and dishonesty going on in Lawrence cannot be ignored any longer. Every community is suffering because of the bad decisions being made in Lawrence. Cops and firefighters from all over the Merrimack Valley are now acting as Lawrence's de-facto public safety force and that leaves the rest of us unprotected while our cops and firefighters are in Lawrence fighting fires and responding to crime."

"My opponent sees it differently. He doesn't think Lawrence needs a finance control board, I do. He doesn't see waste and mismanagement, and I do. That's what this race is going to come down to, fiscal accountability versus the status quo. I am the candidate who represents holding people accountable and making sure our tax money is spent the way it's supposed to be."

The Massachusetts primary elections will be held on September 14th. Democrat voters will be asked to nominate one of the three candidates (Silberstein, Wilson and Finegold) while Republicans may choose between Tomasek and Rahilly. The winner of each primary will square off in November to fill the seat being vacated by Andover Democrat Sue Tucker who announced early this year that she was retiring from politics.



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ing a professional networking cruise on August 25th, 6:15 to 8:15pm leaving from Pickering Wharf in Salem Mass at a cost of \$25.00 per person. All associated professionals are invited to attend. For more information contact Bob Gurman at 978-646-3062 or rgurman@metlife.com.

HAVERHILL – The Recreation Department, Council on Aging and Fox Tours offers a trip Fenway Park on Tuesday, August 10th. Trip includes a narrated Fenway Park tour and visits to the USS Constitution and Quincy Market. All ages welcome! The cost of this trip is \$39 per person and includes tour and transportation. Lunch is on your own at Quincy Market. Contact Kathy or Rita at the COA 978-374-2390 or kbresnahan@cityof-haverhill.com to purchase tickets or obtain details.

LAWRENCE - Groundwork Lawrence Announces its Participation in Bank of America's 2010 Summer Job Corps for Teens - \$200,000 Grant from Bank of America Helps Teens Across Massachusetts Secure Summer Jobs at Nonprofits

In response to the economic challenges facing Massachusetts communities, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation recently launched Summer Job Corps for Teens. By making available \$200,000 in grants to selected nonprofits, the program provides summer jobs to more than 50 young men and women throughout the Commonwealth. Groundwork Lawrence (GWL) is a proud nonprofit partner of Bank of America and by taking advantage of the program is able to employ two teens from the Lawrence community this summer.

SALEM, NH: Shorts and Sandals Welcome at Local Church Service - The First Congregational Church of Salem has begun its Wed. evening summer worship services, which will run through September 1st. The summer is a busy time for families, with many weekend commitments—often resulting in an attendance decline at area churches. The church has met this challenge, and for the last fifteen years has been holding this innovative service on Wednesday evenings rather than the traditional Sunday morning time. This midweek service makes worship available to those in the community who may be away or unavailable on weekends. The service begins at 7:00 pm. It is also preceded by a buffet supper at 6:00 pm, so families and commuters don't need to worry about providing a meal that night. The supper is a bargain at \$3 per person or \$8 per family. All are invited for Wed. family worship in the fellowship hall at the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, located at 15 Lawrence Road, Salem. For additional information call 603-893-3421, or visit www.FCC-Salem.org.

LOWELL - Steve Sweeney Comedy Show For Charity @ the East End Social Club 15 West Fourth St Lowell Ma 01850 Saturday September 18h, \$20.00 pp Doors

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LAWRENCE, HAVERHILL - *Learn about Careers in Human Services at Haverhill and Lawrence Information Sessions.* Northern Essex Community College will host information sessions in Haverhill and Lawrence for people who are interested in learning more about careers in the human service fields and how you can train for them at Northern Essex. Free and open to the public, the information sessions will be held on Wednesday August 18 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Rm. A124, Library, Haverhill Campus, 100 Elliott St. Northern Essex offers three certificates (alcohol and drug abuse counseling, community support and human service practitioner, and direct support) and an associate degree in human services.

Students are prepared to work as generalists to address issues related to mental illness, substance abuse, mental retardation, child welfare, homelessness, and family violence among other concerns. Practicum courses or internships give students the opportunity to gain experience in the field and to integrate that work experience with their academic learning. Students may enroll in these programs on a part-time or a full-time basis. Courses are offered days on the college's Haverhill Campus and during the evenings in Lawrence.

For further information about the human services program contact Jane Gagliardi, program coordinator at 978-556-3302 or visit the program website at www.necc.mass.edu/programs/humanservices.

NORTH ANDOVER - Give Your Child a Birthday They'll Never Forget at Smolak Farms! This year, instead of stressing over throwing your child the perfect birthday party at home, come to Smolak Farms where we will take care of all the details and planning, allowing you and your family to relax and just have fun! Birthday parties at Smolak Farm feature exciting hayrides, singing and storytelling, and a 130-year-old enchanting barn! Smolak Farms knows that every child has a unique personality, and for that reason is proud to offer six different theme party packages including Secret Garden, Dinosaur, and Barnyard Fun. The farm also offers a Create Your Own party theme so that you and your child can dream up a one-of-a-kind celebration with exciting add-on features such as an inflatable batting cage, piñata or even a personalized make-your-own-sundae table!

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Republican Candidate for Governor Charlie Baker says he LOVES Methuen! So much so, that he has been to the city several times in the last few months during his statewide campaign to lower taxes.

4029 or email us at education@smolak-farms.com. Smolak Farms, 315 South Bradford Street, North Andover, MA. Prices for packages range from \$135.00-\$370.00 and up depending on additional items. A deposit of \$150.00 deposit is required and non-refundable.

NEWBURYPORT - Once again, the folks over at WBNP Radio, in conjunction with Code 51 Productions, are teaming up to offer their second annual Jazz Cruise. DD Martin will heat up the waters of the Merrimack as you and your friends are transported upriver on the Captain's Lady III while listening to the smooth sounds of Ms. Martin as you sip your favorite cocktail and enjoy hors d'oeuvres provided by Chefs of the Old World. All the fun starts Sunday, August 29, 2010; at 5PM when the three-hour Jazz Cruise departs from the Captain's Fishing Party office at Plum Island Point (rain or shine). A portion of

the \$35 per person ticket will benefit the Firehouse Center for the Arts in Newburyport.

The Captain's Lady III (2006) is a 95 ton, 82 foot passenger boat that is handicap-accessible by ramps, which will accommodate wheelchairs and a willing crew who is happy to offer assistance in boarding. The boat will depart from the Plum Island Point office of Captain's Fishing Party and parking, located at the premise, is free for all jazz cruise participants.



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.

Legislation Paves Way for Beach Development

Two Gateway Parcels to be Transferred to Salisbury

Legislation conveying 2 pieces of State-owned land to the Town of Salisbury was enacted by the General Court and laid on Governor Deval Patrick's desk for signing, Representative Michael A. Costello (D – Newburyport) and Senator Steven A. Baddour (D – Methuen) announced today.

House Bill 4929 transfers to the Town of Salisbury 2 parcels of land on Route 1A at the gateway to the Beach Center area, giving the Town control of all frontage on Beach Road from Cable Avenue to the entrance to the State Reservation. These 2 parcels are seen as critical to the Thompson Group's proposal to redevelop the entire Beach Center district.

Town Meeting voted in May of 2009 in favor of a Home Rule petition that would eliminate a reversionary clause on a parcel of land that the State transferred to Salisbury in 1959 and has been used for the past 50 years as the Town's primary beach parking lot. Additionally, an adjacent parcel of land controlled by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) would be transferred to the Town.

"As Salisbury looks to develop the

beach center in partnership with The Thompson Group and other investors,



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

these two gateway parcels of land on Beach Road are crucial for those plans," said Representative Costello. "I want to thank Secretary Jeff

Mullan of the Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for his assistance with this bill and for understanding the vision for the future of Salisbury Beach."

"As we look to the future of Salisbury Beach, it is critical for the state to help promote private investment in our communities," said Senator Baddour. "I am pleased that this land transfer is moving forward. When The Thompson Group project is completed, these parcels of land will serve as a vital gateway for the revitalized area."

Town Manager Neil J. Harrington stated, "Without the relentless support of our legislative delegation, this important bill would not have passed. I am very appreciative of the efforts of Sen. Baddour and Rep. Costello, who once again have helped Salisbury take a major step forward toward the eventual revitalization of Salisbury Beach."



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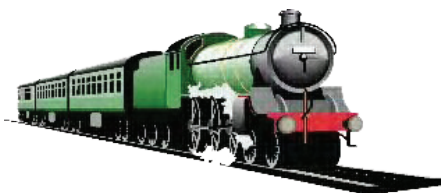
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PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

State Rep. Barry Finegold (D) Andover, endorsed Israel Reyes for mayor of Lawrence last year.

laying off cops and firefighters... he could have gotten that \$35 million and NOT laid off cops and firefighters. How do you feel about the fact that there was outright lying going on? People were being told that we needed this money to stop layoffs for cops and firefighters.

BF: See, one thing Tom, is that you know numbers. You know that if all of those things you mentioned happened, it still wouldn't have made that much of a difference. I believe it's 72 million dollars that goes to non schools and the whole was great and they had to make some very difficult decisions and that's what happened.

TD: Do you agree with the spending that the current mayor has done with the \$24 million he has already received? He gave raises to people in city hall. Hired people in other departments and laid off cops right out of the gate?

BF: No, I don't think the way you are categorizing it is correct. I think that the overseer, with the city counsel and mayor, had to make very difficult decisions and they made those decisions. And I think that anybody, including the mayor and the city council, is open to any other suggestions right now. Money is not going to come out of thin air. It's just very difficult and..

TD: Are you just not hearing what I am saying? There were other ways for the mayor to spend that money there were other places to cut, and he was telling people 'we need the money for public safety.' When he got it, he didn't spend it on public safety. Why is that ok?

BF: Your premise is wrong. That money went to pay old bills. They used some of the money, I think it

was like \$3 or \$4 million for this year's budget. But, basically this was to pay off the ongoing deficit and it wasn't going to be allowed to be put off.

TD: Do you feel lied to because what was told to us was, 'we need the money to stop cuts in public safety,' NOT 'we need this money to lay off public safety officers and use the \$35 million for prior debt.'

BF: I mean, if that money didn't come, this would be ten times worse than what they are now.

Paul: Well, I'm just not crystal clear, Tom, with BF's answer on the Lawrence situation. Let me just ask it this way, A). You don't regret your vote to give Lawrence the \$35 million and B). You don't feel lied to even though what they said was "We are going to use this \$35 million loan money for police and fire and then they didn't. You don't feel lied to?"

BF: No, but that's not true, because if that money didn't come down, we would not even have our fire department or our police department. I mean, literally, the city did not have the money to pay its bills. So, there would have been no money to pay for any police officers or any firefighters and that's why it was a situation where there really was no other solution for the city.

EDITORS NOTE: There were three other solutions before the legislature including a finance control board, a financial receiver or a state takeover of the city of Lawrence's finances. Mr. BF NEVER once mentioned the other alternatives, in fact he repeated over and over that there was "no other alternative" to giving Lawrence Mayor \$35 million with no restrictions.

TD: But you don't disagree or you won't say you agree with Willie's decisions to take that money and to fully staff other stuff first, before public safety? I mean, every candidate who runs for office says "public safety is #1" and to Willie Lantigua it's number: last. Yet I can't get any Democrat who voted for this \$35 million bill to say they disagree with that except for Senator Pangiotokos.

BF: The point is, I have fought hard for community policing dollars. I've been a strong supporter of fire fighters. But the bottom line is that a budget had to get balanced and that's what they had to do.

TD: But, we know that. I wanted you to address how he spent the money.

BF: This is for a mayor and a city counsel.... They make these decisions.

TD: It's the state taxpayers money they ought to have a say don't you think?

BF: no answer.

Public Safety... It's Everyone's Job

Joe Mendonca

VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

As we enter August, we are reminded that we must be partners with law enforcement for all of us to remain safe. August is the month of National Night Out – celebrated on the first Tuesday in August.

The Lowell Police Department has partnered with neighborhood groups for many years to sponsor the National Night Out event. This year, there were 3 separate events to reach more people and neighborhoods. The Caleb Foundation was the co-host for the event in the Lower Belvidere neighborhood. The Pawtucketville Citizens Council was the co-host for the event in the Pawtucketville neighborhood. The Lower Highlands Neighborhood Group was to co-host for the event in the Lower Highlands neighborhood.

The purpose of these events is to meet your neighbors, meet some police officers, and have some fun. In most of the events, the children have a chance to tour a police cruiser, a fire engine, and an ambulance.

These events reinforce the idea that public safety is the responsibility of not only our emergency personnel, but the residents too. Often, our public safety agencies are unaware of a situation until they are called by a resident. In most cases, time is of the essence. The sooner they are called, the more likely they are to address the problem or catch the criminal.

In recent years two forces have combined to stress our public safety capabilities. First, there have been budget challenges that have caused reduction of the personnel on the payroll. Even though we have not had layoffs, there have been reductions through attrition as personnel retire or resign to move on to other employment. Secondly, there has been an increase in property crimes. The recession has caused an increase in car break-ins and house breaks as drug addicts become more desperate to feed their habit.

The perpetrators often repeat the crimes until they are arrested. By calling the police promptly when you see suspicious activity, not only will you stop the crime in progress, but will likely prevent future crimes.

Often times, people are reluctant to get involved. They are afraid of retribution or losing time at work to testify in court. The police still need the information to stop the crime and protect our property. To that end, they have created several ways to provide the information anonymously. You can call CRIME STOPPERS at (978) 459-TIPS (8477) and be eligible for a reward. You can also text a tip to 847411 – the tip must begin with "LPDtip". You can also provide a tip via the internet by going to www.citizenobserver.com, click on "Find your Community", enter "01852", select "Lowell Police Department", select "Submit a Tip" and type your tip.

If anonymity is not a concern, then dial 911 for emergencies or (978) 937-3200 (in Lowell) for non-emergencies. The police find it very helpful to get updates or additional details as they arrive at the site of the crime. Being able to reconnect with the caller can greatly increase the likelihood of solving a crime or catching the criminal.

To reduce crime, we must be active partners with the police. The goal of the Police Department is to protect and to serve us. They cannot be successful without our help and support. If you see suspicious activity, make the call!



Joe Mendonca is a former Lowell School Committeeman (1999 - 2006), a former Lowell City Councillor (2007) and was elected to the Lowell City Council last year.

Lowell Police Association Endorses Doherty for State Senate

LOWELL – Last month, The Lowell Police Association unanimously endorsed Chris Doherty for State Senate. The Lowell Police Association has membership of approximately 150 members making it the largest police department in the 1st Middlesex District.

On the heels of his endorsement from the Massachusetts Teachers Association, a union representing over 170,000 households in the state, Doherty said he was grateful for overwhelming support of local law enforcement:

"As an Assistant District Attorney, I worked with local police to prosecute criminal offenders and develop crime

prevention programs. I am proud have the support of the brave men and women who patrol our streets and keep our communities safe everyday," said Doherty.

Dan Kennedy, the President of the Lowell Police Association said Doherty had the background and experience necessary to be State Senator:

"Chris Doherty is a prosecutor who has fought to keep our streets safe and hold criminals accountable. Chris understands the needs of our community and we know he will continue to advocate for public safety as State Senator just as he did while Assistant District Attorney."

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John McCormack
VALLEY PATRIOT BOXFORD COLUMNIST

You may have heard that American trends begin in California. If so, be very, very afraid. A recent story from the town of Bell, California, just south of Los Angeles, is an over-the-top example of a big contemporary problem.

Bell is a working class town of about 40,000 people governed by a mayor and city council. State laws govern California “general law” cities and a recent law limited a city councilor’s salary to \$400 per month, much less than councilors paid themselves in Bell. The solution was to become a charter city which would allow the city to set its own pay scales. This is a variation on the “municipal home rule” idea which operates in many states including Massachusetts.

The council set the Tuesday after Thanksgiving 2005 for a special election to convert Bell to a charter city. The measure passed with only 336 of about 9,000 voters casting ballots. The incomes of councilors and other officials then soared with seemingly nobody noticing. Their salaries were only the tip of a submerged iceberg of compensation for service on numerous city boards. The city councilors were paid around \$100,000 per year for part-time work. The city manager recently received \$788,000 per year; the assistant city manager was paid \$376,000; the police chief got \$457,000. These three officials recently resigned under pressure after a public outcry.

That’s not all. The former city manager, for instance, will likely receive at least a \$659,000 yearly pension for life. It’s only

seemingly a matter of time until someone in California government receives a million dollar yearly pension.

Two problems loom large here. One is that no law was broken. In the old days of graft and embezzlement politicians enriched themselves under the table and risked fines and jail time. Today’s high rollers are corrupt in the older sense of debasement or depravity. They understand how to game the system, receive permission for their actions, and carry them out. The second problem is that most voters have neither the time nor experience to understand what these mountebanks do.

We don’t have a city of Bell in Massachusetts, yet, but we are getting closer to the cliff’s edge. Back in 2007 late at night the last article of the fall town meeting warrant was presented as a warm-and-fuzzy equalizing of employee benefits.

Apparently some benefits were agreed to in contract negotiations and the town tries to maintain parity between employee groups. Two of the items were compensatory holidays (taking some other day off in place of the observed holiday) and personal leave time. Notably, time off under each benefit cannot be carried over into a subsequent fiscal year.

Then there is sick leave. Grounded in compassion, sick leave insures an employee against loss of income when struck by the maladies which randomly afflict any of us. Like many other places, sick leave in Boxford has been turned on its head. The formula mixes hours and 8-hour days. A full time employee can accrue thirteen sick days yearly and carry up to one hundred days until retirement.



PHOTO: John McCormack

Does Boxford Have the Money to fix Glendale Rd?

An employee with 25 years of service can be paid for up to fifty days of unused sick leave at retirement. That’s 20% of a year’s pay as a golden kick out the door.

Hundreds of other employees already have this benefit. I would “guesstimate” the amount the town would have to set aside to fund this benefit at \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000. Nobody ever asked us to appropriate \$4,000,000 or any other sum for this benefit; presumably it just shows up as several hundred thousand dollars buried in the annual budget.

Then there are pensions and retiree health care. To its credit Massachusetts has tried to make its pension system actuarially sound with moderate success. The recent economic crash and rebound have left the system about 70% funded. The problem is this assumes stock market returns of over 8% per year forever. This once common assumption has been widely criticized as unrealistic. The rate should possibly be much lower which means the system is more unfunded than stated and will require much greater contributions from taxpayers or employees.

Retiree health care is included in OPEB (other post employment benefits) and an employer annual required contribution (ARC) for fiscal 2009 was computed under new regulations to be \$1,382,868. The town’s actual contribution was expected to be \$347,651. This means the town owes over \$1,000,000 to a currently imaginary OPEB fund and will owe \$1,382,868 every year for the next 29 years to fully fund OPEB. This appears to be a million dollar hole in the annual budget which we are ignoring.

Government is like the swell at the bar buying rounds for the house and putting it on his tab. The bill is coming due and it is enormous.



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

Design Camp at UM Lowell gets kids engaged & excited

Michelle Blood
VALLEY PATRIOT INTERN

When Doug Prime was asked what campers have learned at the Design Camp at the University of Massachusetts Lowell this summer, he said “We really know how to mess up a room!”

Is there a better way for a kid to spend their summer than making a mess and having fun while doing it? As parents know, keeping kids entertained during summer vacation isn’t an easy task. Planning fun trips and managing summer sports and friends is as stressful as having a full time job.

Summer isn’t meant to be chaotic. It should be filled with adventures, laughs and everlasting memories. The Design Camp at the UML supplies all the ingredients for kids to achieve an exciting, friend-filled, educational, and memorable

summer.

Over the past 10 years, Doug Prime the founder and director of the UML Design Camp, has successfully kept the young growing minds hooked on the idea of creative learning and invention. The Design Camp is a weekly day camp for students in grades 5 through 10 focusing on science, engineering and invention. The camp offers many different hands-on workshops that allow kids to exercise their imagination and experiment with endless gizmos and technology.

The workshops include sessions focused on crime investigation, robotics, architects, flight school, electrical devices, contraptions, and many other stimulating activities. Each workshop challenges students in different ways. Students are encouraged to solve design problems by brain storming, prototyping, and experi-

menting.

For example, the Electrical Jungle is a popular workshop that works with switches, circuits and also requires creative building. As a final product, the students must build a bird which consists of moving body parts, glowing eyes, and real sounds that are set off by touch. This task not only challenges the students, but also teaches them to apply fundamental concepts and solve difficult design problems.

Peter Gaulet, (14) is a returning third year design camp student. Peter started in the gizmos and gadgets workshop, and this year he has chosen to venture into flight school. Flight school enables the students to plot out their ideas in designing propellers, and small planes.

“You can use your skills from flight school and apply them at home,” said Peter when asked about the value of what

he learned.

As for many other students attending Flight School, Peter is developing a deep appreciation for the process of designing and building gliders and rubber-band powered planes. Peter noted that he is now working at home on a 4-foot RC Plane.

Each year The UML Design Camp continues to grow. This summer more than 1800 students attended camp. It seems that more and more kids are enjoying “messing up a room” while learning valuable life skills.



Michelle Blood is a student at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell and an intern for The Valley Patriot as well as the Paying Attention Radio Program on WCAP. You can email her at: michelle_blood@student.uml.edu

LAROCQUE: FROM PAGE 12

ing in the name of the Constitution, not the Framers’ Constitution, but a “constitution of our times”, a “living constitution,” resembling, sadly, the constitutions of failed, repressive, and dictatorial nations across the world.

One of their goals is to transform the Constitution from a guarantor of “negative liberties” into a charter of “affirmative government” guaranteeing an array of “positive” rights. The Founder’s Constitution generally is a charter of negative liberties meaning that it says what the state and federal government can not do to you! What it doesn’t say is what the state and federal government must do on your behalf! The Founder’s Constitution defines individual rights in terms of what government cannot do to you. For example, the government

cannot inflict cruel and unusual punishment and therefore the individual has a constitutional right not to be subject to such punishment. Also the Framers’ Constitution doesn’t guarantee rights to material goods such as housing, education, food, clothing, JOBS, or health care, rights that place a related obligation upon the state to obtain the resources from other citizens to pay for them, (The Redistribution of wealth!) The advocates for the 21st century constitution have many grievances with the individual rights premises of our Constitution as written, such as the largely procedural focus of the 14th Amendment’s due process clause, with its old-fashioned concept of such rights as those to life, liberty, and property. This explains their interest in employing the privileges or immunity clause, which seems to them opened-ended and suscepti-

ble to definition by judges at their own discretion. They also promote that a privilege or immunity might be interpreted to allow the invention of a host of new “rights” and thus are construed to guarantee social or economic equality. However pleasing this might sound, there should be no mistake: adopting this interpretation will supplant representative decision-making with the decision-making of unelected, unaccountable, and life-tenured judges. Should the privileges and immunities clause be used in this way, as a charter of positive rights, ours will become an America in which citizens are constitutionally entitled to their neighbors’ possessions in which economic redistribution has become as ingrained a principle as federalism and the separation of powers; in which the great constitutional issues of the day will focus on whether porridge should be subsidized and housing allowances reimbursed, and in which a

succession of new “rights” will be parceled out as people are deemed worthy of them by be-robed lawyers in the judiciary.

In conclusion, America’s founding principles made her unique, free and powerful, but some today would have her abandon those principles and become like other nations and just follow the United Nations. It is this call to be like other nations that has caused us to decline. The United States is truly great and it’s every citizen’s responsibility to keep her that way and to do so we must vote in November for candidates who believe and stand for the Founder’s Constitution. God Bless.



Peter Larocque is a former member of the Lawrence School Committee. You can call him at 978-682-0900, email him at peterlarocque@hotmail.com



PHOTO: COURTESY

New downtown parking garage culmination of 7 1/2 year effort

Last week, the city and the MVRTA broke ground on a new parking facility in downtown Haverhill. When it is completed, this new \$11 million facility will provide between 315 and 350 new parking spaces for commuters, downtown residents, employees and shoppers.

This new parking facility is part of our 7 1/2 year effort to revitalize downtown Haverhill into once abandoned factory buildings into upscale living in the new tax base. We call it “the Haverhill Renaissance”.

The effort started over 7 1/2 years ago, when the city rezoned downtown to allow residential housing as a matter of right. This, in turn, brought in Beacon properties of Boston which agreed to invest over \$30 million to turn abandoned shoe factories into upscale housing. Beacon properties, in turn, inspired an even larger developer, Forrest City Development of Cleveland, Ohio, to invest over \$70 million in the old Hamel leather building. A number of smaller developers followed suit on Washington Street. On Granite Street, the Archdiocese of Boston was interested in the old AT&T building which had been abandoned for

about 50 years.

These buildings were all built before the day of the automobile and all lacked adequate parking. Having adequate parking was critical to the redevelopment of these buildings and the redevelopment of the buildings was critical to being able to pay for a new parking garage. Ultimately, we were able to work out agreements with the developers to pay for spaces in the new parking garage. The contribution of the developers made the garage possible. The garage made the redevelopment of old factory buildings possible.

The new parking garage will be ready in about a year or year and a half. When it is completed, it will be a major economic boom for a downtown.

Next month, the final old shoe factory will be converted to housing and will be completed. All told, over \$120 million has been invested in downtown. Downtown property values are up by several million dollars and now bring in over \$1 million in additional tax revenue over and above what they were paying only a few years ago. This additional tax revenue helped us to weather the storm that all cities have been going through.



MOVING HAVERHILL FORWARD

with Mayor Jim Fiorentini

Additional outdoor dining coming to downtown Haverhill

Mayor James J. Fiorentini last month announced that 100% completed design plans have been submitted on behalf of the City to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation’s Highway Division (MassDOT- Highway) for a Streetscapes Improvement Project set to commence later this year. The project has an anticipated advertising date of early September.

The Haverhill Downtown Streetscapes Improvement Project will improve pedestrian access, safety and ambience along Washington and Wingate Streets. The project includes sidewalk upgrades, new curbs and ramps, new brick accents, new trees, planters and benches, along with widening of sidewalks in key areas. The creation of new ‘bump-outs’ will allow for greater potential for outdoor dining along parts of Haverhill’s acclaimed ‘Restaurant Row.’

“I have long advocated for more side-

walks dining in Downtown Haverhill, and I am thrilled that this Streetscapes Improvement Project will provide the infrastructure to allow for this,” stated Mayor Fiorentini. “This project, for which I have advocated, will beautify the appearance of our downtown historic district and make this area even more attractive for shoppers, patrons, diners and pedestrians of all kinds,” added the Mayor.

The Streetscapes Project is funded by a federal earmark obtained by Senator John Kerry and Congresswoman Niki Tsongas back in 2008 and signed into law as part of an Omnibus Budget Act in early 2009.

As part of the plans for this project, unneeded existing sidewalk bump-outs on Washington and Railroad Avenue will be eliminated and returned as parking spaces, so that there will be no negative impact on parking in the downtown as a result of these pedestrian improvements.

Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association expands service area into Haverhill

The Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association (TMA) Board of Directors voted unanimously to expand the TMA service area into Haverhill, MA. The expansion came about due to inquiries from Haverhill’s businesses wanting to participate and take advantage of the multiple TMA alternative transportation programs to help serve the area employers and employees appropriately.

If you are a Haverhill business please contact Andrea Leary, Merrimack Valley TMA Executive Director to find out more information about the TMA programs and how best we can help serve you and your community. Please contact Andrea Leary by calling 781-639-6262 or via email at andrealeary@verizon.net.

Recently, the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce presented the TMA with the valued small business award in the Business Assistance Category at a recognition breakfast at DiBurros’ Function Hall in Haverhill, MA.

“This is a wonderful honor. I am so excited that the MVCC has recognized the Merrimack Valley TMA in such a way.

This award is a direct result of the leadership and guidance provided by the TMA’s Board of Directors” said Andrea Leary, Merrimack Valley TMA Executive Director.

The Merrimack Valley TMA is a non-profit organization of employers, property owners, developers, and municipalities who are working together to address employee transportation issues in the Merrimack Valley communities of Andover, Haverhill, Lawrence, North Andover, and Methuen. The Merrimack Valley TMA is part of a larger organization called MassCommute, which represents 300 companies and nearly 300,000 Massachusetts employees in Massachusetts.

Our objectives/goals and success

- Work with its more than 85 member businesses to address issues such as: traffic congestion and access, road and bridge construction, support for compliance with state, federal and local regulations such as the Massachusetts Rideshare regulation, Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and site plan Special Permit mitigation.

HAVERHILL, page 31



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Dr. Michael Provenzano

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And every Friday night through Sept. 3, from 7:30 to 10pm, join the DJ Fizzgig's Friday Night Beach Party at the beachfront stage including Top 40 hits and hula-hoop, limbo and dance contests with cool prizes!

SURFSIDE LIVE! 2010 CONCERT SERIES & FIREWORKS SCHEDULE - Sat., August 14th, 7:30 – 10pm
ENTRAIN

10pm Fireworks Display

Epic in sound and kaleidoscopic in vision, the eclectic Martha's Vineyard-based six-piece Entrain has been thrilling critics and fans alike since its inception. Entrain has recorded seven albums, all of which have been praised for their ability to shift effortlessly between musical styles - from rock, blues, calypso and ska, to zydeco, jazz and funk - often within the same song. The band's goal is to create music that makes people feel good: to spread a little joy around and watch how infectious it can be!

Saturday, August 21st, 7:30 – 10pm
ADAM EZRA GROUP

10pm Fireworks Display

The Adam Ezra Group is a dynamic roots, pop and acoustic rock band rising to the top of the Boston music scene. Their unique sound perfectly combines with Ezra's passion for smart, well-written lyrics and the band's fine-tuned musicianship. AEG has been selling out shows across New England and building their fan base nationally, having opened for the likes of John Mayer, Jason Mraz, Rusted Root and Cracker.

Saturday, August 28th, 7:30 – 10pm
BONERAMA

10:00 pm Fireworks Display

Even in a city that doesn't play by

the rules, New Orleans' Bonerama is something different. They can evoke vintage funk, classic rock and free improvisation in the same set; maybe even the same song. The band has repeatedly been recognized in Rolling Stone, hailed as "the ultimate in brass balls" and praised for their "... crushing ensemble riffing, human-feedback shrieks and wah-wah growls." Bonerama carries the brass band concept to places unknown!

Saturday, September 4, 7:30 – 10pm
BEATLEJUICE

10pm Fireworks Display

The number of Beatles Tribute bands is probably countless, but in New England, at least, none come more highly praised, critiqued or recommended than Beatlejuice. The band has taken on a history of its own and features some of this area's finest musicians whose talent and showmanship go far beyond the norm in tribute bands. Recreating not only the early hits with uncanny accuracy, Beatlejuice also performs the heavily orchestrated masterpieces such as Strawberry Fields and I Am The Walrus.



SurfSide Live! Concert Series & Fireworks is presented by the Salisbury Beach Partnership, Inc. and the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce and is sponsored by Xfinity, Newburyport Five Cents Savings Bank, Institution for Savings, Budweiser, Joe's Playland, Blue Ocean Music Hall, SurfSide5, Tripoli's and Cristy's Pizza.

Directions and more information - One of the state's most popular summer destinations and pristine natural resources, Salisbury Beach is easily accessible from Routes 1, 95 and 495, and less than a tank of gas away from most major cities in New England. Ample parking is available nearby all activities. SurfSide Live! Concert Series & Fireworks event updates and schedules as well as sponsorship information can be found at www.beachfests.org. Activities are subject to change. More information and schedules at www.beachfests.org or call the Summer in Salisbury Hotline at (978) 462-7274.

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PHOTO: COURTESY

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The Hampton Beach Community Church is a Non-Denominational Church located at 49 Ashworth Avenue, Hampton Beach, NH, (behind McDonald's & the Water Slide, near the corner of D Street and Ashworth). The Singing Church holds Sunday services at 9:30AM each week in the summer time beginning June 20th and running for twelve weeks through September 5th.

BLUE OCEAN MUSIC HALL LIVE ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE THROUGH NOVEMBER 20, 2010

AUGUST

Fri., August 6, 8pm – THE FOOLS & FORTUNE (\$20/\$25)
Wed., August 11, 8pm – BELA FLECK, ZAKIR HUSSAIN & EDGAR MEYER (\$40/\$45)
Thurs., August 12, 8pm – COMEDIAN JIMMY TINGLE (\$20)
Fri., August 13, 8pm – THE POUSETTE-DART BAND Satch Kearns Band open (\$25)
Thurs., August 19, 8pm – EVOLUTION A Tribute to Journey (\$25)
Fri., August 20, 8pm – EASTON CORBIN, Chad Burdick opens (\$23)
Thurs., August 26, 8pm – COMEDIAN PAUL D'ANGELO (\$17)
Fri., August 27, 8pm – THE KINGSTON TRIO Allen Williams opens (\$45)

SEPTEMBER

Friday, Sept. 3, 8pm – JOHN CAFFERTY & THE BEAVER BROWN BAND (\$40)
Thursday, Sept. 16 – THE DAVE MATTHEWS TRIBUTE BAND (\$18)
Half Way to St. Patrick's Day Irish Music Weekend:
Friday, Sept. 17, 8pm – EILEEN IVERS (\$30)
Saturday, Sept. 18, 8pm – BLACK 47 (20)
Sunday, Sept. 19, 7pm – TENOR JOHN MCDERMOTT (\$40)
Thurs.–Sun., Sept. 23-26 and Sept. 30–Oct. 3 – TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING (\$68 incl. dinner)

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 9, 8pm – PHYSICAL GRAFFITI Led Zeppelin Tribute Band (\$25)
Wed., October 13, 8pm – SUPER DIAMOND Neil Diamond Tribute Band (\$20)

NOVEMBER

Tuesday, November 2, 8pm – BLUES TRAVELER (\$35)
Saturday, November 6, 8pm – COMEDIAN PAULA POUNDSTONE (\$35/\$40)
Friday, November 12, 8pm – THE MACHINE Performs Pink Floyd (\$20/\$25)
Saturday, November 20, 8pm – EDWIN MCCAIN (\$20)

About the Blue Ocean Music Hall - Showcasing national and regional bands and solo acts from today, as well as artists and musicians from the past who maintain a dedicated fan base, Blue Ocean Music Hall caters to discriminating adults and baby boomers ranging in age from their 30s through their 60s. The music hall presents artists in a wide range of genres, from rock and R&B, to jazz and country. Comedy shows and children's entertainers are also a focus of the show offerings. Featuring exceptional acoustics and a comfortable, relaxed environment with panoramic ocean views, Blue Ocean Music Hall has a seating capacity of close to 500 people, and a 750-person capacity for general admission shows. Most seats are within 50 feet of the stage and the versatile space can be configured as needed, including cabaret style with cocktail table seating, traditional theater style or open floor with limited seating for larger general admission shows.

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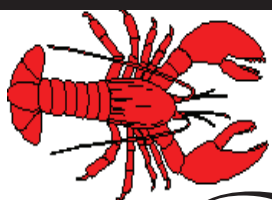
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CLT Slams Misguided Rep. 'Taxes' L'Italien

Lawrence "Lonnie" Brennan

VALLEY PATRIOT GEORGETOWN COLUMNIST

Our notoriously left-of-left-of-left ultra-liberal, ultra-tax-raiser (6.25% sales tax, 6.25% meals tax, 6.25% beer and wine tax, and more than three-quarters of a decade of blind support for every tax increase, and every spending increase, and every assault on the retired hardworking families in our community, and a solid F-rating from CLT), 'representative' Barbara 'Taxes' L'Italien recently outdid herself. Ms. L'Italien, in all her arrogance, sponsored legislation to effectively eliminate the initiative petition process.

That's right. If 'Taxes' was successful, according the Executive Director of the Citizens for Limited Taxation Barbara Anderson, the initiative petition process in Massachusetts would be dead. As the sole restraint on unbridled assaults on our tax dollars, the citizen's right of address, right of creation of "Proposition 2 1/2" for example, would be forever extinguished if Ms. L'Italien got her way.

To make matters worse, according to Anderson, 'Taxes' L'Italien tried to sneak her constitutional amendment in through an off-beat method.

"I don't think they would try to do it if they didn't think they could sneak it through," Anderson explained about the off-beat method used to attempt a run at a constitution convention vote, with obscure, seemingly harmless 'equality' language and a run through a certain committee vote.

Outraged at the arrogance and sneakiness, Anderson exclaimed that "It shouldn't be stripped away without everyone knowing what they tried to do."

When reviewing the veiled language of the radical left-leaning L'Italien sponsored article, Ms. Anderson noted that it would close the door on the taxpayers: "If adopted, it would eliminate, well, just about everything, and it certainly includes any attempt to cut or limit taxation" in the future, she explained.

"I thought it was something left over from the gay marriage issue, that they were still annoyed about that, but ah, then that issue is dead" Anderson noted on WRKO minutes before the vote. But upon simple inspection, Anderson understood exactly what L'Italien, Byron Rushing, Cynthia-Stone-Creem, Alice Wolfe, and other radical legislators were trying to sneak through: "These people really, really hate your right to go out and make your own laws or repeal laws, if you don't like what the legislature is doing," Anderson explained.

"They're from the left wing of the left wing of the left wing of the Democratic



Lawrence Mayor Lantigua and State Rep. Barbara L'Italien

party," WRKO talk show host Charlie Manning noted as he described L'Italien and her cabal.

"People should be aware that whether you're liberal, conservative, animal rights activist, environmentalist, if you are trying to use the initiative petition process, these people are trying to stop you," Anderson said.

Anderson went on to explain that our government derives its powers from the people, not the other way around, and elitism has reached a dangerous point in our Massachusetts legislature. It certainly has in the 18th Essex, with L'Italien (solid F-rating on taxes), and Barry Finegold (voted to support benefits for illegal aliens, just like L'Italien, and voted for sales, meals, and wine tax increases, and has a solid F-rating on spending and tax increases by CLT, and is running for Senate, promising of all things, to be good in the future. Yeah, right. Is he selling the Tobin bridge too?)

Fortunately, 'Taxes' L'Italien failed to note that CLT is comprised of common, decent, taxpaying, regular citizens, not snoots and elitists, and that these normal, hardworking, and often financially struggling families are sick of countless tax increases. L'Italien took on CLT, and that was a big mistake. It was like showing up for a gun fight with a straw and purse full of spitballs. CLT got on the airways, sent out press releases and alerts, and "we shone a light" on what 'Taxes' L'Italien and her cohorts were trying to do.

When it came time for a vote, a big CLT spotlight shone brightly upon the podium, and no legislator dared to enter the light. The measure died in the blazing sunshine. Score another win for sanity. Anderson highly recommends that voters remember the shenanigans in Boston and the arrogance of L'Italien, Wolfe, and the cabal, and vote them out in November.



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.

HAVERHILL: FROM PAGE 29

- Serve as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas that impact economic development in the greater Andover region.
- Provide strong advocacy for its members both with the state legislature and Congress for commuter-oriented legislation.
- Create personalized transportation programs for its member companies and their employees including: carpool/vanpool matching; promotional events; guaranteed ride home program; personalized commute planning; park and ride information; general transportation information; and links to public transportation (MVRTA, MBTA, and LRTA).

- Merrimack Valley TMA Executive Director, Andrea Leary secured \$2 million dollars in funding for the next four years from MassDOT to be distributed amongst all 11 Massachusetts TMAs.

- The Merrimack Valley TMA Board of Directors voted unanimously to expand the TMA service area into Haverhill, MA.

You're invited to find us on both Facebook, www.facebook.com/MVTMA and on Twitter, <http://twitter.com/MerrimackVlyTMA>. Merrimack Valley TMA, c/o Northeast Transit Planning & Management Corp. 28 Brook Road, Marblehead, MA 01945, www.MerrimackValleyTMA.com



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THE DOCTOR IS **IN**

On Fibromyalgia ...

Rami Rustum, M.D.
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

"I hurt all over and feel tired the whole day!"

This is the usual statement heard from any patient suffering from fibromyalgia.

Fibromyalgia is a chronic condition characterized by widespread pain in the muscles, ligaments and tendons, as well as fatigue and multiple tender points.

The disease affects about 3% of the population in the United States. Women are much more likely to develop the disorder than are men, and the risk of fibromyalgia increases with age. Fibromyalgia symptoms often begin after a physical or emotional trauma, but in many cases there appears to be no triggering event.

* Symptoms - Signs and symptoms of fibromyalgia can vary, depending on the weather, stress, physical activity or even the time of day. The whole mark of the disease is: Widespread pain and tender points.

The pain associated with fibromyalgia is described as a constant dull ache, typically arising from muscles. To be considered widespread, the pain must occur on both sides of your body and above and below

your waist.

Fibromyalgia is characterized by additional pain when firm pressure is applied to specific areas of your body, called tender points. Tender point locations include:

- * Back of the head
- * Between shoulder blades
- * Top of shoulders
- * Front sides of neck
- * Upper chest
- * Outer elbows
- * Upper hips
- * Sides of hips
- * Inner knees

Fatigue and sleep disturbances

People with fibromyalgia often awaken tired, even though they seem to get plenty of sleep. Experts believe that these people rarely reach the deep restorative stage of sleep. Sleep disorders that have been linked to fibromyalgia include restless legs syndrome and sleep apnea.

Co-existing conditions

Many people who have fibromyalgia also may have:

- * Chronic fatigue syndrome
- * Depression
- * Endometriosis
- * Headaches
- * Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)

- * Lupus
- * Osteoarthritis
- * Post-traumatic stress disorder
- * Restless legs syndrome
- * Rheumatoid arthritis

Tender Points as frequently identified in Fibromyalgia

* Causes of Fibromyalgia

There is no known or proven reason in fibromyalgia, but it most likely involves a variety of factors working together. These may include:

- * Genetics. Because fibromyalgia tends to run in families, there may be certain genetic mutations that may make you more susceptible to developing the disorder.
- * Infections. Some illnesses appear to trigger or aggravate fibromyalgia.
- * Physical or emotional trauma. Post-traumatic stress disorder has been linked to fibromyalgia.

* Risk Factors

Risk factors for fibromyalgia include:

- * Your sex. Fibromyalgia occurs more often in women than in men.
- * Age. Fibromyalgia tends to develop during early and middle adulthood. But it can also occur in children and older adults.

* Disturbed sleep patterns. It's unclear whether sleeping difficulties are a cause or a result of fibromyalgia. But people with sleep disorders — such as nighttime muscle spasms in the legs, restless legs syndrome or sleep apnea — often have fibromyalgia.

* Family history. You may be more likely to develop fibromyalgia if a relative also has the condition.

* Rheumatic disease. If you have a rheumatic disease, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus, you may be more likely to develop fibromyalgia.

* Tests and diagnosis

The diagnosis of Fibromyalgia is usually made from the history of the pain in addition to performing detailed clinical exam. No lab work or x-rays imaging is needed.

* Treatment

In general, treatments for fibromyalgia include both medication and self-care. The emphasis is on minimizing symptoms and improving general health.

Since the symptoms of fibromyalgia are diverse and vary among patients, treatment programs must be individualized for each patient. Treatment programs are most effective when they combine patient education, stress reduction, regular exercise, and medications. Recent studies have verified that the best outcome for each patient results from a combination of approaches that involves the patient in customization of the treatment plan.

Patient education

Patient education is an important first step in helping patients understand and cope with the diverse symptoms. Unfortunately, not all physicians are intimately acquainted with the vagaries of this illness. Therefore, community hospital support groups and the local chapters of the Arthritis Foundation have become important educational resources for patients and

RUSTUM, page 43

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Pain in the neck?

DR. Jin Sung

VALLEY PATRIOT CHIROPRACTIC COLUMNIST

Do you suffer from neck pain?

If you do, you're not alone. Nearly 75 percent of American adults will suffer from neck pain at some point in their lives. And, looking at our anatomy, it's no wonder so many of us do. Though having your head perched on top of your spine gives you a great view of your environment, the set-up is rather like propping a bowling ball atop a tower of blocks. The price? Our necks are prone to injury of the muscles, ligaments, tendons, and joints. But by paying attention to our posture, doing regular stretching and strengthening exercises, and visiting our chiropractors, we can help keep our necks pain-free.

Causes of Neck Pain - Neck pain ranges from mild (annoying and distracting) to severe (incapacitating). Poor posture during normal, everyday activities such as watching TV, using a computer, reading a book, or talking on the phone can easily trigger minor neck pain. TV watching can be particularly bad for the neck if you're lying on a couch, with your head propped at an awkward angle for a prolonged period of time. Holding the phone between the jaw and shoulder (rather than in your hand), reading at a desk or table with your head hung over a book, or working with a computer monitor below eye level can also be particularly stressful for the neck. By resting and making efforts not to



repeat the offending stresses on the neck, minor neck pain usually disappears on its own within a day or so.

Neck pain that won't go away or keeps coming back can signal a more serious underlying problem. Subluxations or joint restrictions; injuries such as whiplash; diseases like osteoarthritis, meningitis and tumors; congenital malformation; and degeneration (such as that in arthritis) require more than rest. A trained healthcare professional such as a doctor of chiropractic (DC) can help. He or she can determine whether the cause of your neck pain is minor and easily treatable or more serious and requiring more intensive, extended treatment. Then he or she may recommend chiropractic adjustment, massage, natural anti-inflammatory supplements, and/or

NECK PAIN, page 36



Anna Jaques offers video EEG monitoring for patients

NEWBURYPORT -- Anna Jacques Hospital is pleased to announce the successful introduction of advanced video EEG monitoring for patients with epilepsy and suspected seizure disorders. The Anna Jacques video EEG monitoring program allows patients to be set-up at the hospital but to have their monitoring session at home. In order to ensure all relevant data is captured, the monitoring typically lasts for two to three days. According to local neurologist and epilepsy specialist, Lanny Y. Xue, M.D., Ph.D., having sophisticated video EEG monitoring equipment locally means that the patient may be able to avoid the cost and inconvenience of an inpatient hospital stay many miles from home.

Dr. Xue did his advanced training in epilepsy and clinical neurophysiology at New York University Medical Center. He is affiliated with New England Neurologic Associates, and has been very involved in bringing the video EEG equipment and services to Anna Jacques since his arrival in Newburyport. He points out that

"epilepsy, in its various forms, may be more common than area residents realize." While most people think of epileptic seizures as uncontrolled convulsions, most seizures are far more subtle. Children with staring spells or the elderly experiencing changes in mental status may be having seizures. In fact, Dr. Xue notes, "any recurrent event including periodic speech problems, tingling sensations, migraine headaches or vision changes should be evaluated." He encourages patients with these types of symptoms to see their primary care physicians. Dr. Xue also points out that fainting spells could be the result of either heart problems or seizures.

The video EEG equipment being used at Anna Jacques is provided by DigiTrace EEG Services, of Peabody, MA. Dozens of U.S. university-based comprehensive epilepsy centers utilize DigiTrace video EEG monitoring equipment and services as an adjunct to their inpatient monitoring capabilities. The company also operates EEG testing centers in 17 major metropolitan areas nationally.

Be prepared for back to school for kids with asthma or allergies

Dr. Thomas Johnson

VALLEY PATRIOT ALLERGY COLUMNIST

It's back to school time again! If your child has asthma, allergies, or food allergies you need to be prepared before sending them to school. You should plan ahead in the event that your child's allergy or asthma symptoms worsen at school. A big part of that plan is anticipating that your son or daughter will need to be treated at the school itself. Children with asthma should have their medications and inhaler available at the school as well as a protocol in place for when to use it. Some key times to pay special attention to are before physical education and if asthma symptoms occur. Children and teenagers with food and insect allergies should have avoidance information as well as an Epi-Pen available to treat severe reactions. Also, those with food allergies need to pay stricter attention at lunch and snack times. School staff needs to be put on notice as soon as school is back in session so they can be on the lookout for symptoms. Also you need to speak to your child about coming forward immediately at the onset of any allergic reactions or breathing difficulties. Young people are sometimes reluctant to come forward with problems in front of their classmates. Seconds can count in an allergic situation so you have



to help them overcome their embarrassment. All of the above should be dealt with before the school year begins, as the school may have a policy for what needs to be done before medications can be given to a student, such as a form for your doctor to sign.

Food Allergies - A child with food allergies should have a complete plan in place at school in the event of accidentally eating the food they are allergic to. Talk with your child's doctor about filling out this plan for the school. It also helps to plan with teachers and the school nurse to ensure that the allergy-causing foods are

DR. JOHNSON, page 36



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Live the WOW!

Helloooo? Anybody Home? Knock, Knock. You There? Learn to be Ready at All Times When that Soft VOICE Inside Your Head Tells You Now is the Time to Make Your Move Toward Living the WOW!

Thomas Connors
VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Give me a dollar for every opportunity that came your way and was not taken advantage of because you just let it pass by. Give me a dollar for every time that little voice inside your head encouraged and pushed you to do or not do something and you totally ignored it. Either way, I'd be a millionaire many times over!

We are so predictable. Most of the time we are so busy going about our daily work and routine errands we either don't listen or don't hear that voice inside our heads trying to give us much needed advice. Even worse, when we do hear it, we ignore it as some worthless nuisance that is bothersome at best.

Perk up those ears and listen carefully! There is a message there that just might lead you to spectacular Opportunities Living the WOW!

Step back to your childhood. Every mother on the face of the earth went to "ear" school. Today we teach our kids Karate and Tae Kwon Do. Our mothers? They were all, every one of them, blessed with the ability to MAKE every child listen. Sometimes, husbands too!

Whenever I purposely ignored what my mother was saying, she had the moves. She'd grab an ear of mine and pull it open wide; all the while reminding me that she was talking to me! Talking? That wasn't talking, it was TORTURE!

That simple ear pull would cause the

toughest kid to tear up. And if you thought you'd foolishly prove your toughness by playing nonchalant, she'd add an effective twist to increase the pain.

I remember Mom explaining something to my Dad and me at the table one day. Both of us were not paying attention. (I think it was a male thing.) She focused her ire on me first. Then, after my Dad finished laughing at me, she tortured him! We did as we were told.

LAUGH all you want. People Living the WOW! not only listen to that VOICE inside them, they, more often than not, follow the advice and direction it seems to give.

Go ahead, call me crazy. Call the people Living the WOW! Crazy while you are at it, too. Crazy as a fox, I'd say.

We all have "thoughts". But, what are they really? They are VOICES that seem to always be with us. From the moment we get up in the morning, to the minute we fall asleep at night, these voices guide us in our daily works and efforts. They suggest what to do and what not to do. They encourage our moral development and warn us of danger. They cause us to think before we act. They form the basis for our Dreams and motivate us to reach for more.

Some call these thoughts "intuition" or your "conscience". Others call them a "gut" feeling. To others they refer to them as their "inner voice".

Listen well! Today the stakes are much greater. They involve Opportuni-

ties for the taking and Warnings to avoid danger and disappointment. In other words, that VOICE wants to show you How to Live the WOW!

Whatever you choose to call them, realize they are there. Listen closely to what they say. Then, consciously, decide to follow them or not.

At American Training I have seen women who were victims of domestic violence readily acknowledge that something, some VOICE told them to get out of their relationship. That VOICE was clear and helped motivate them to protect their children and themselves. Others will tell you they ignored "warning signs" and ended up bruised and beaten. Only then, did they realize the validity of their VOICE and left their toxic environment. In every case, listening and following the VOICES of their heart, left them with no regrets.

People Living the WOW! pay very close attention to their VOICES. It's their secret to living the life they want. It can be for you, too.

Experience has taught people Living the WOW! that you ignore your VOICE at your own peril. Not only do they want to avoid things or situations that don't feel quite right, but, they also don't want valuable Opportunities to slip away either.

First, they acknowledge the existence of their VOICE.

They don't hide from it or pretend it doesn't exist. Second, they focus on the message. They interpret its meaning and

whether it is real or not. Sometimes the message may be mixed or unreasonably influenced by outside circumstances that are irrelevant. And third, they act. They decide to follow their VOICE or they choose to ignore it based on what is best for them at the time. Most important, they live with their decision and move on.

Think about this. What if that VOICE comes directly from God above? Would you be so quick to ignore it?

If people never listened to that VOICE inside them, they never would have taken the risks necessary to put a man on the moon, pursued cures for death causing disease or climbed the highest mountains and forged the deepest seas. Instead, people Living the WOW! take risk and pursue their Dreams to accomplish the greatest achievements generation after generation all because they listened to their VOICE.

The proof is all around you if you just look and listen.

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 © 2010

Simple Wisdom

The Christmas Tree in Summer

Gail Van Kleeck
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Last night in the midst of these humid hot days, I dreamt of a Christmas tree that stood outside a church in England and of a little girl who belonged to the Church and helped to decorate it for the holidays. There was something about the colored lights and the way they were reflected in the freshly fallen snow that called to her. Their sparkle and brilliance seemed to fill her with a sense of wonder.

When World War II was being waged, the tree, like the windows of the city remained dark at night. During those years of blacking out their windows and leaving the lights off their tree, the people who belonged to the Church found other ways to decorate it. Sometimes they decorated it with mittens or scarves for needy children. Sometimes they decorated it with small containers of food for hungry families. Sometimes they decorated it with popcorn and cranberries for the birds. Sometimes they hung doughnuts from its generous boughs for those who passed by.

Through the years, both the tree and the little girl grew older. The war ended and the lights of the city once again streamed from its windows at night. Yet everyone except the woman, who had once been that little girl, forgot about the wonder of the tree's colored lights.

Then, when the church's roof needed to be replaced, workmen found the box of lights that had been tucked away in its rafters so many years before.

Sometimes dreams come to me in pieces, which at first don't seem to make much sense. Sometimes, like the girl and

the Christmas tree, they come to me in a connected and seemingly incomplete story or group of thoughts.

Yet I believe our dreams can help us to see our waking lives more clearly, that they can be the open door that connects our conscious and our unconscious mind. I believe if we let them, they can help us see our strengths and give meaning to our challenges. And so I wonder about this little story and what it may have to do with me and also perhaps with some of you.

I wonder if these troubling times are somehow like those black-out days of long ago. I wonder if the fear we feel and the challenges we face diminish our ability to remember the light that lives within us. I wonder if reconnecting with our inner light and with our sense of wonder and awareness can help us find our way.

I wonder too if this dream does not remind us to reach out to those who are less fortunate, to help one another and to hang the equivalent of doughnuts and mittens to our own inner Christmas tree.

I wonder if changing our focus just a little can remind us of our values and make a difference in our lives.

WHAT WE FOCUS ON IS TRULY WHAT WE SEE



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

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Driving with our Seniors

Terri Mercier
VALLEY PATRIOT SENIOR COLUMNIST

The big debate over whether or not our seniors should be able to continue to drive is certainly a hot topic these days. Let's consider a few things first before we choose a side. Consider the fact that our senior population is larger than any other generation currently. By 2012 approximately 10,000 Americans will turn 65 every day and by 2030 Americas overall senior population will reach nearly 71 million. So most certainly you will see a higher number of accidents with that age group. Teens actually have the highest rate of accidents, not our seniors as is the popular belief.

We all too often are quick to buy up and take what is reported on the news as the gospel truth. Another senior citizen had a bad accident they report. Well I would be willing to bet besides that seniors accident that day there were a lot more accidents caused by many different populations. While there are tragic and heart wrenching accidents that do happen, why is it that we get so hung up on taking away seniors licenses ? The daily chatter is they should not be on the road. I have a hard time understanding people's outrage at this. We do not become as upset with other types of accidents as emotionally as we do with the senior driving issue it seems lately. These same people I hear complaining about our seniors are texting and talking on their cell phones while they try to balance their big gulp on their lap while driving. This is okay?

Come on people get mad with these scary situations. Road rage, drunk driving ,under the influence of drugs, speeding, texting and cell phone use are some of our biggest causes of terrible accidents. I would much rather be driving behind a senior that has two hands on the wheel going a little too slow than a teen racing to get nowhere important too fast while he chats on his phone slurping down his slushy. We are more likely to be injured or killed by someone speeding than perhaps that slower moving senior.

Then there is the other side of it. There are real legitimate safety concerns with our seniors that drive. Aging affects senior drivers in multiple ways. Physical and mental changes are occurring and certainly diminish their abilities. Eyesight and hearing no longer have the clarity it once had. Reflexes are not as great. Reaction time has slowed down. Drowsiness from medications and reduction in the ability to focus or concentrate can be a problem. There are all kinds of medical issues that could be potential accident causing factors. Personally I have had to deal with a senior causing an accident

with my own son. He was crossing the street correctly, walking with his bike and a responsible adult with him. One of my senior neighbors came down my street too fast and hit him. The senior got out of his car and yelled at my son who was lying on the ground injured then returned to his car and drove off. Clearly this senior driver had forgotten the rules of the

road. Never mind his total lack of empathy towards the child he just injured. What do we do? Perhaps

it is time we stop wasting tax payer's dollars on all these time consuming studies and put some support measures into place. The ability to drive oneself to take care of appointments and errands helps maintain a senior's independence and identity. We should not just uniformly strip them of this. Everyone's safety should come first. Instead of choosing a side to this we should all be able to come together and meet in the middle.

Communities need to give them support and options. Re-education, self evaluation tools, medical check ups, refresher classes, road tests and enhancing our transportation systems could all be helpful. Build housing complexes that seniors can live in that feature smaller versions of a food market, pharmacy, mail, banking and leisure activities as well as a shuttle service that seniors who are not wealthy can afford to live in. By doing this you have reduced their need to drive to accomplish tasks of everyday survival needs and they remain independent. The best part of this would be that they made the choice to give up driving and are not left mentally distraught over how they will survive. Many assisted living facilities are designed this way now however you have to have some wealth to live in them. Why not build reasonably priced living accommodations? Many seniors want to remain independent yet the homes they live in currently are too much for them to continue to maintain.

There are good and bad drivers of all ages. Accidents will always happen. We have it within our power to come together to make positive changes without years of debate in the political arena as to what to do to reduce the number of tragic events. In a nation that is suppose to be free why are we discriminating against our seniors because of their age instead of helping to support them?



Terri Crow Mercier is the Director of Activities At Colonial Heights Care and Rehab-where she has worked for many years. You can email Terry at mike3433@msn.com

NECK PAIN: FROM PAGE 34

strengthening and stretching exercises. In some cases, the DC will refer you to a specialist.

Prevention is Key - How can you avoid the need for treatment in the first place? The first step is to take note of your everyday posture. If your job requires a lot of phone use, consider wearing a headset. Do you slouch when you watch TV? Lie on the couch? Choose to sit upright, in a posture-supporting chair. When studying or reading, avoid putting the book or magazine on a flat surface. Instead, consider using a book prop. And, if you notice your computer monitor is below eye level, elevate it by placing it on top of

a shelf or tower. If you experience neck pain that doesn't abate within 24 hours, seek the advice of a trained healthcare specialist for the appropriate diagnosis and treatment. And remember, because chiropractors specialize in the neuromusculoskeletal system, they are some of the most well-trained healthcare professionals to consult about neck pain.

Dr. Jin Sung is the owner of Functional Chiropractic, Inc located behind Heavenly Donuts at 126 Merrimack Street, Methuen MA 01844. He can be reached at (978) 688-6999.

Volunteer drivers needed for the American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery®

Local Residents Needed to Drive Cancer Patients To and From Treatments Throughout Eastern MA

The American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery program is in great need of volunteers to drive local cancer patients to and from their chemotherapy and/or radiation treatments, especially in need are patients receiving treatment in Boston. An integral part of treating cancer successfully is making sure cancer patients receive their treatments, but many find making transportation arrangements is a challenge. The American Cancer Society provided more than 8,100 rides to cancer patients in Massachusetts last year, but needs new volunteer drivers to keep up with the demand for transportation.

"Due to the increasing amount of transportation requests, we have a genuine need for Road to Recovery drivers, especially those willing to drive to Boston hos-

pitals," said Lynn Basilio, Area Director for Health Initiatives. "We are hoping that local communities will continue to support this valuable program by volunteering their time to help increase the number of rides we are able to provide."

You too can make a difference in the fight against cancer is by becoming a driver for the American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery. Drivers use their own vehicle to drive patients to and from their treatments. The schedule for volunteers is flexible, treatment appointments take place weekdays, primarily during business hours. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer driver for Road to Recovery, please contact your American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

Dr. JOHNSON: FROM PAGE 34

avoided.

It is also very important to have emergency allergy medications and an Epi-Pen available at the school to treat a severe food allergy if there is an accidental ingestion. Depending on the age of the child, severity of food allergy, and school policy, the medications should be kept with the school nurse, teacher, or with the child. Involve the child's physician in this decision.

Asthma - Many schools require a plan to determine when, what and how much medication to give to a child with asthma. Make sure that the child's physician is involved in filling out these forms. Asthma is most likely to flare at school when the child is exposed to allergens during exercise or inside the classroom, or when the child is sick. Outdoor activities may also flare a child's asthma. This may be due to cold air, exercise or exposure to outdoor

pollen and mold. Your child's physician may recommend the use of a rescue medication prior to exercise or strenuous outdoor play, or additional allergy or asthma medications during seasonal allergy time.

Venom and Stinging Insect Allergy
If a child is allergic to a stinging insect, such as bees, then it is important to have an Epi-Pen and allergy medications available at the school to treat an allergic reaction if the child is stung. Depending on the age of the child and school policy, the medications should be kept with the school nurse, teacher, or with the child. Involve the child's physician in this decision as well.

Don't wait until your child goes back to school put a plan into place BEFORE the school year starts so that your child can be treated at school if needed. With the proper preparation your children can have a safe and happy back to school season.

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Teen Talk with Tyler Dumont

Tyler Dumont

VALLEY PATRIOT TEEN COLUMNIST

The summer hasn't been long enough. Not that it's over, but we're almost there. And you know what that means. School. But, since I'm going into my senior year, I guess I really don't mind. I'm really looking forward to it. It will be my last year before I venture off to the (hopefully) bigger, better, and more interesting parts of my life. For the rest of you teens who face the same thing, I hope you're looking forward to it, too. Whether you're going to college or not, hopefully you have some idea of where you'd like to go in your life. My guidance counselors didn't stop pounding it into my head all year that this summer is going to be a challenge. And, they were right. I'm hoping to go to school for broadcast journalism, and let's just say that broadcasting schools aren't exactly the easiest to get into (or afford, for that matter). It's a very popular and growing field. I just hope that the journalists of the next generation don't fall into the same trap as the current ones did. I hope my college professors can manage teaching an unbiased

political class, too. Anyway, back to what I was saying. As I write this column, I'm sitting on a futon bed up at a resort near Sebago Lake in Maine. So, I am managing to still enjoy my time. I'll be headed down to the beach to go jet skiing shortly. But, you know what irritates me? Summer reading. What is the point of summer reading? I don't get it. Isn't summer supposed to be a break from everything? I honestly don't feel as if I benefit from reading a fictional book whatsoever, especially during the summer. What kid in this world wants to sit down and focus on hundreds of pages of text when they could be tanning at the beach, tubing, eating, and all that good stuff. It's not that I don't like reading I just can't focus on reading multiple novels during the summer. I honestly can't. And I know there's just no way I'm the only kid who faces this. But, whatever I guess. You just have to do it. Oh, and I almost forgot to tell you! Teen Talk returns for a one night special this month, as the Spinners will have the night off for the All Star break. On Monday,



TYLER DUMONT



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August 16, we'll be welcoming back the best and truly most accurate psychic in all of New England, "Linnea"! We'll also feature a local teenage band called, "Master Rhymes". It all starts at 7 PM. Good luck going back to school, whether it's late August or early September, and I'd love to hear any feedback about how it went for you. Just send it to my email below!

Tyler Dumont is the seventeen year old host of "Teen Talk" on 980 WCAP in Lowell, MA. You can contact him through email at teentalk@980wcap.com or by phone at 617-433-6174. Become a fan of his show on Facebook by visiting www.Facebook.com/TeenTalkwithTylerDumont

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-Mike Gagliardi,
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Ye Gay Ol' Valley

Gay Writers of the Valley

D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

I thought I'd step away from my political ranting and introduce you to two members of the valley's gay community who are also writers. Brian Tessier is a 44-year-old attorney and single father of two adopted boys, aged 4 and 8. Tessier recently published a book entitled The Greatest Wish, which is geared toward parents, both adoptive and otherwise and GLBT families. Tessier says that his book is, "birthed from wishes, created by hope, and written in love, this is a touching story of adoption and wishes coming true. It is sure to move the hearts of many."

What inspired Tessier to write his book was his wish to become a father and his plight in adopting his two sons. The Greatest Wish is about a father who is fiercely proud of his sexuality and shares his story of adoption with his new son. He has collaborated with artist Donna Estabrooks to create a, "... beautifully crafted picture book. The central message, despite being about adoption is to communicate just how special someone in your life is, to have hope and persevere." You can purchase his book at www.thegreatestwish.com.

Tessier is very active in working towards helping pre-adoptive parents, their children and their families. 50% of the sales of his book go toward a non-profit organization called We Hear the Children; founded by Tessier. This organization is, "dedicated to funding children's causes related to education, diversity, tol-

erance and the arts. If you are interested in learning more about his organization you can go to www.wehearthechildren.org.

The second writer is, well, me, D. B. Langevin. I am a 46-year-old 8th grade social studies teacher who is married with one daughter aged 19 and two sons aged 18 and 16. My wife, who I've been with for 12 years and married to for 6, warned me that it would be cheesy to introduce and 'interview' myself as a writer. So, call me cheesy.

The title of my book is Sticks and Stones. It consists of four interwoven fairytales introducing alternative lifestyles and the struggles to embrace them. Set in the middle ages, King Henry's manor is sent in a tailspin when he accepts females as knights into his court. Even more controversy is stirred up when he declares that all marriages between consenting adults will be condoned. As to be expected, not all kingdoms agree with these new edicts and will go to war to either fight for or against them. Many men and women will be wounded or even die to protect their beliefs. Eventually, the kingdoms will see that acceptance and tolerance is key to a peaceful society.

As a member of the gay community, I am well aware of the struggles both internally and externally when introduced to a changing society. As a teacher, I see students every year wrestling with their identity while trying to stave off the condemnation of their peers. There

GAY WRITERS, page 53

The Heartbeat of The Valley

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT CULTURE COLUMNIST

When I moved back home from Tampa in the early 1990's I gathered together a young adult group from St. Margaret's in Burlington to share an idea. A crisis pregnancy center was needed in the area. To make a long story short everything fell into place, and from 1993 Heartbeat in Burlington has been helping girls and women keep and love their unexpected babies.

At Heartbeat all services are completely free of charge, including pregnancy testing, counseling, crisis intervention, material help, financial help, housing assistance, rides to appointments, turkeys at Thanksgiving, and virtually anything else that could assist women before, during, and after their pregnancies. Heartbeat survives on donations from the community and no one takes a penny for their work. For the past 17 years Maureen Lynch, Muriel Ostrowski, Kathy Lopolito, and other dedicated volunteers have been doing magnificent work under the radar; and as a result there are many more children alive and women happy with the decisions they made.

I caught up with Muriel Ostrowski of Heartbeat to ask a few questions. The following quotes are from our head counselor:

On the day to day operations of Heartbeat:

"Heartbeat currently operates with about ten volunteers. Most mornings there are two-three volunteers in the office. We are open Tuesdays thru Fridays from 9:30-12:30. We deliver assistance to many moms who have no transportation. The

women who come to us for the first time are either pregnant or have babies under one year. Once we begin assisting them we continue to help as needed and as our resources allow. We operate totally on donations and pay no salaries. Some pregnant women that call are not sure what decision they will make, or are planning to abort their babies and mistakenly think we provide abortions. We talk with them about their circumstances and options and offer assistance and support in choosing life. Some of these women choose life for their babies after discussing the alternatives and learning that help is available. We help them with maternity clothing and baby needs; we assemble 'layettes' with clothing, blankets, diapers and other basic baby needs like bottles, wipes, diapers. We also provide baby equipment such as car seats that we purchase with donated funds. Many of these are provided by members of many churches, mostly Catholic, who hold 'baby showers' to collect items for needy families. Last year 103 babies were born to moms helped by Heartbeat with 54 so far this year."

On a few anecdotes to share:

"A young mom expecting twins early in August came in today. She had nothing for the children. We provided many things and will be continue to help. One mom recently said, "Many people say they will help, but Heartbeat really does!"

"One father said, 'We came to Heartbeat not knowing what we would do. We talked with Kathy and chose life. Our son is the best thing that has ever happened to us. We are so thankful to Heartbeat for all the help!'"

"Another mom who called about abor-

MURANO, page 52

Guns save lives, but the media won't report that!

John Stossel

VALLEY PATRIOT SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

You know what the mainstream media thinks about guns and our freedom to carry them?

Pierre Thomas of ABC: "When someone gets angry or when they snap, they are going to be able to have access to weapons."

Chris Matthews of MSNBC: "I wonder if in a free society violence is always going to be a part of it if guns are available."

Keith Olbermann, who usually can't be topped for absurdity: "Organizations like the NRA ... are trying to increase deaths by gun in this country."

"Trying to?" Well, I admit that I bought that nonsense for years. Living in Man-

hattan, working at ABC, everyone agreed that guns are evil. And that the NRA is evil. (Now that the NRA has agreed to a sleazy deal with congressional Democrats on political speech censorship, maybe some of its leaders are evil, but that's for another column.)

Now I know that I was totally wrong about guns. Now I know that more guns means — hold onto your seat — less crime.

How can that be, when guns kill almost 30,000 Americans a year? Because while we hear about the murders and accidents, we don't often hear about the crimes stopped because would-be victims showed a gun and scared criminals away. Those thwarted crimes and lives saved usually

aren't reported to police (sometimes for fear the gun will be confiscated), and when they are reported, the media tend to ignore them. No bang, no news.

This state of affairs produces a distorted public impression of guns. If you only hear about the crimes and accidents, and never about lives saved, you might think gun ownership is folly.

But, hey, if guns save lives, it logically follows that gun laws cost lives.

Suzanna Hupp and her parents were having lunch at Luby's cafeteria in Killeen, Texas, when a man began shooting diners with his handgun, even stopping to reload. Suzanna's parents were two of the 23 people killed. (Twenty more were wounded.)

Suzanna owned a handgun, but because Texas law at the time did not permit her to carry it with her, she left it in her car.

She's confident that she could have stopped the shooting spree if she had her gun. (Texas has since changed its law.)

Today, 40 states issue permits to competent, law-abiding adults to carry concealed handguns (Vermont and Alaska have the most libertarian approach: no permit needed. Arizona is about to join that exclusive club.) Every time a carry law was debated, anti-gun activists predicted outbreaks of gun violence after fender-benders, card games and domestic quarrels.

What happened?

John Lott, in "More Guns, Less Crime," explains that crime fell by 10 percent in the year after the laws were passed. A reason for the drop in crime may have been that criminals suddenly worried that their next victim might be armed. Indeed, criminals in states with high civilian gun ownership were the most worried about encountering armed victims.

In Canada and Britain, both with tough gun-control laws, almost half of all burglaries occur when residents are home. But in the United States, where many households contain guns, only 13 percent of burglaries happen when someone is at home.

Two years ago, the Supreme Court ruled in the Heller case that Washington, D.C.'s ban on handgun ownership was unconstitutional. District politicians then loosened the law but still have so many restrictions that there are no gun shops in the city and just 800 people have received permits. Nevertheless, contrary to the mayor's prediction, robbery and other violent crimes are down.

Because Heller applied only to Washington, that case was not the big one. McDonald v. Chicago is the big one, and the Supreme Court is expected to rule on that next week. Otis McDonald is a 76-year-old man who lives in a dangerous neighborhood on Chicago's South Side. He wants to buy a handgun, but Chicago forbids it.

If the Supremes say McDonald has that right, then restrictive gun laws will fall throughout America.

Despite my earlier bias, I now understand that striking down those laws will probably save lives.

John Stossel is host of "Stossel" on the Fox Business Network. He's the author of "Give Me a Break" and of "Myth, Lies, and Downright Stupidity." To find out more about John Stossel, visit his site at www.johnstossel.com. To read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Building a systematic withdrawal plan around a sustainable withdrawal rate is a smart effort for making your money last, but it may not be enough. Assume you have a retirement portfolio worth \$1 million. Initially, annual withdrawals of 5% (\$50,000) seem conservative. You may be surprised to learn however, that at that rate there is only a 90% chance your money will last just 20 years. In other words, one in ten people following this seemingly conservative withdrawal strategy could potentially out live their retirement nest egg later in life.

In addition to careful consideration of withdrawal rates, retirees must be aware of the significant risk market volatility poses. Erratic swings in equity-based investments can decimate portfolio values without warning - seriously threatening potential future income since percentage-based withdrawals shrink as total assets are eroded.

Holding onto what you have - asset preservation - is a top priority for retirees. Though you may not know how long you'll live, you do know that running out of money is not a scenario you hope to experience. If only there were guarantees... The good news is: there are.

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A Lifetime Income Annuity is a financial product that does, in fact, guarantee life-long income. To illustrate, imagine that same hypothetical million-dollar portfolio. From it, you could use \$730,650 to purchase a Lifetime Income Annuity, which will provide the \$50,000 per year of income you had planned to live on. But, this \$50k is now guaranteed for as long as you live, regardless of market performance. No more worrying about outliving your savings. Plus, you would still have \$269,350 left in your portfolio to access as you wish, making

the Lifetime Income Annuity significantly more efficient than a simple withdrawal strategy.

In case of premature death, the Lifetime Income Annuity has a Cash Refund option, which returns to beneficiaries the difference between the initial premium and whatever has been already paid out. If inflation is a concern, an Annual Increase Option can be added to the annuity contract at purchase -- initial annual payments would start off smaller, but increase each year between 1 - 5% according to the owner's preference. Over time, the total annually adjusted payouts would potentially provide more income than their unadjusted counterparts.

1 Source: Internal New York Life Analysis Systematic withdrawal plan withdrawal rates, and associated portfolio duration, based on hypothetical portfolio allocation:-50% equities, 50% bonds -125 basis point annual fund management expense. Withdrawals increase 3% per year. Systematic withdrawal approach based on 5 simulations of 1,000 scenarios each of correlated equity and bond returns using an economic scenario generator: Correlations estimated using historical monthly S&P 500 Index and Lehman U.S. Aggregate Index returns over the past 20 years. Equity and bond index returns are assumed to be normally distributed. The model is intended to be an indicator of potential returns at various confidence levels and is not designed to be a forecast of future investment performance.

2 New York Life's Guaranteed Lifetime Income products are issued by New York Life Insurance and Annuity Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of New York Life Insurance Company. Guarantee is based on the claims paying ability of the issuer.

3 New York Life \$730,650 income annuity for Female, 75 years-old, Single Life with Cash Refund payout option, with 3% COLA, pays \$50,000 before-taxes the first year. New York Life income annuity illustration run on 6/16/09. In general, income annuities have less liquidity than investment portfolios. Guarantee is based on the claims paying ability of the issuer.

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Q- My parents own a small home and some other assets that we helped them to put into a trust to protect the home from Medicaid claims, etc. Our attorney says they are ineligible for a reverse mortgage since the home is now owned by the trust. Is this correct? - Mary & James, Lawrence MA

A- No, it is not! Your attorney is misinformed. I have completed reverse mortgages for numerous borrowers over the years who had their home in a Revocable Trust. I have also been able to complete reverse mortgages for borrowers who had a home in an Irrevocable Trust. You need to seek the assistance of a very experienced reverse mortgage consultant to guide you through the process.

Q- I am told that FHA will be reducing the dollar amount I qualify for by another 5% in October. If I wait until the end of the year to do my reverse mortgage what will that mean to me? - Louis, Methuen MA

A-If you own a home worth \$200,000 and you are in your early 70s, it means you will qualify for about \$6,000 less. Worse, FHA is also planning to raise the FHA Mortgage Insurance Premium from the current .5% to 1.5% in October. This premium payment added to your interest rate raises your effective interest rate for HECM (Home Equity Conversion Mortgage) loans 100 basis points (1%). Over the life of the loan this will add many thousands to the cost.

Q-My home is assessed for \$197,500 by the town. Is this the same as appraised value?-William, No. Andover MA

A-No. Assessed value is established by your town for real estate tax purposes. Appraised value for purposes of your reverse mortgage is determined by a qualified FHA certified appraiser. Basically, this is the current expected fair market value as determined by rules and methods required by FHA and documented via comparable recent sales in your vicinity.

Q-We still owe about \$123,000 on our mortgage. Are we eligible to do a reverse mortgage? - Mathew & Lillian, Wilmington MA

A-Very likely. Anyone who qualifies can do a reverse mortgage on a principal residence provided there is enough money available in their calculated benefit to cover the payoff of any mortgages/liens. Have your reverse mortgage loan consultant help you calculate exactly how much you qualify for to determine if you meet that requirement. Even if you come up short by a few thousand dollars it might be worth it to consider paying some cash down on your existing mortgage to meet the threshold.

Q-There are a lot of fees & costs involved in a reverse mortgage. Do I have to pay these expenses upfront?- Bob, Salem NH

A- Actually, fees & costs involved in a reverse mortgage are not substantially different from the fees & costs for a conventional mortgage. The difference is that

the conventional mortgage lender is able to mask some of those costs in the interest rate quoted to you by adding an additional 1/8th point, for example. But to answer your question, if you deal with an experienced reverse mortgage consultant ... you should not have to pay any fees or costs out-of-pocket initially.

Q-My neighbor is telling me to avoid doing a reverse mortgage because the bank owns your house and will sell it once the money is gone.-Peter, Lawrence MA

A -Your neighbor is wrong. The bank does not own your house... and the bank does not sell your house once the money is gone. These are falsehoods that continue to circulate among folks who are uneducated about modern reverse mortgage programs.

Q-I own a three family home in Lawrence. Can I do a reverse mortgage? Billy G, Lawrence MA

A -Yes, provided you meet FHA requirements. Owners of the property must be 62 years old (or more), they all must live in the property, mortgages or liens on the property cannot exceed the calculated benefit, the property must be in reasonable repair.

Q-We spend December through April in Florida. Are we still eligible to do a reverse mortgage on our primary home here in New Hampshire?- Rita, Andover MA

A-Yes. But FHA requires that you live at least 181 days per year in your New Hampshire home. You need to work with an experienced reverse mortgage consultant to make sure you don't run afoul of FHA requirements. For instance, if you present a Florida driver's license as your picture ID (required), this will raise a red flag to the lender's underwriting staff. Your loan officer will help you resolve these issues so that they do not present roadblocks to approval.

Q-What happens if I end up owing more than my house is worth? Do my children or heirs pay the difference to the lender?- Sally, Lawrence MA

A-HECM (Home Equity Conversion Mortgage) loans are non-recourse loans. This means that nobody (not even you) has any personal liability for repayment of the loan. If your loan becomes due and your loan balance is greater than the home value at the time... the lender will collect any additional amount owed from FHA. This is one of the purposes of the FHA Mortgage Insurance.... it protects you from owing more than the home value.




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Lawyers group backs legislation to grant parole for drug offenders

The Massachusetts Bar Association is pleased that sentencing reform in Massachusetts cleared a major hurdle Wednesday night when the Legislature passed an MBA-backed bill that grants parole eligibility to non-violent drug offenders serving mandatory minimum sentences.

“We applaud the Senate’s action on sentencing legislation,” said MBA General Counsel/Acting Executive Director Martin W. Healy. “Passage of mandatory minimum reforms will not only save the commonwealth million of dollars, but reduce the rate of recidivism among offenders.”

A long-standing opponent of mandatory minimum sentences, the MBA’s Drug Policy Task Force issued a report earlier this year recommending meaningful drug sentencing reform. The astronomical increase in the state’s correctional population – at a cost of \$48,000 per offender annually – is partly due to an increase in drug arrests. Under the current sentencing laws, non-violent drug offenders face a one-size-fits-all system and have no incentive to plead guilty because judges have no discretion over sentences.

“It’s a giant step forward,” MBA Drug Policy Task Force Chair and Past President David W. White Jr. said of the legislation. “People have been arguing for sentencing reform for decades. We’re only halfway there, but it is a sea change.”

In addition to the cost savings, this legislation would reduce recidivism. Instead of being released directly into the community, offenders would be eligible for parole and work release programs. Numerous studies have shown to these programs help offenders re-enter the community and prevent them from re-offending, which approves public safety.

The bill now awaits action by the House of Representatives. Formal legislative sessions have ended for the year and will resume in January.

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.

The 1st Annual Great Stone Dam Classic Canoe & Kayak Race

Saturday September 18th, 2010
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Start: 11am **Registration:** 9:30am to 10:45am

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Race Committee:

Francisco Urena (furena80@yahoo.com) Shawn Burke (canoeber@yahoo.com)
Pam Browning Priscilla Reinertsen
Hosted by Greater Lawrence Community Boating Program.

- Directions:**
- **From Rte 93:** Take Exit 45 (River Road/S. Lawrence) and head towards Lawrence. Go 1.7 miles until you see a sign for the "Lawrence Riverfront State Park." Take a left onto Eaton Street and follow signs to "The Boathouse."
 - **From Rte. 28 in Lawrence:** Turn west onto Andover Street (Metropolitan Credit Union/Caesar's Pizza) and go 1/2-mile. Take right onto Eaton Street after you pass McDonald's. Follow signs to "The Boathouse."

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DR. RUSTUM:FROM PAGE 33

their doctors. Arthritis Foundation is a national voluntary health organization that provides community education through their many local chapters. Community hospital support groups also provide an arena for patients to share their experiences and treatment successes and failures.

Stress reduction - It is extremely difficult to measure stress levels in different patients. For some people, spilling milk on the table can represent a significant tragedy! Stress reduction might include simple stress modification at home or work, biofeedback, relaxation tapes, psychological counseling, and/or support among family members, friends, and doctors. Sometimes, changes in environmental factors (such as noise, temperature, and weather exposure) can exacerbate the symptoms of fibromyalgia, and these factors need to be modified.

Exercise - Low-impact aerobic exercises, such as swimming, cycling, walking and stationary cross-country ski machines can be effective treatments for fibromyalgia. Exercise regimens are most beneficial when performed on an every-other-day basis, in the morning. How exercise benefits fibromyalgia is unknown. Exercise may exert its beneficial effect by promoting a deep level of sleep (non-REM sleep). Similarly, avoiding alcohol and caffeine before bedtime can also help promote a more restful sleep. While these diet changes may not apply to everyone, they can be very helpful for some. There is no specific fibromyalgia diet or food supplements that are recommended for all patients.

Medications - Traditionally, the most effective medications in the treatment of fibromyalgia have been the tricyclic antidepressants, medications traditionally used in treating depression. In treating fibromyalgia, tricyclic antidepressants are taken at bedtime in doses that are a fraction of those used for treating depression. Tricyclic antidepressants appear to reduce fatigue, relieve muscle pain and spasm, and promote deep, restorative sleep in patients with fibromyalgia. Scientists believe that tricyclics work by interfering with a nerve transmitter chemical in the brain called "serotonin." Examples of tricyclic antidepressants commonly used in treating fibromyalgia include Amitriptyline (Elavil) and Doxepin (Sinequan).

Studies have shown that adding Fluoxetine (Prozac), or related medications, to low-dose Elavil further reduces muscle pain, anxiety, and depression in patients with fibromyalgia. The combination is also more effective in promoting restful sleep and improving an overall sense of well-being. These two medications also tend to cancel out certain side effects each can have. Tricyclic medications can cause tiredness and fatigue while Prozac can make patients more cheerful and awake. Even more recently, study of patients with resistant fibromyalgia found that Lorazepam (Ativan) was helpful in relieving symptoms.

Prozac has also been shown to be effective when used alone for some patients with fibromyalgia. In 2007, Pregabalin (Lyrica) became the first medication approved specifically for treating fibromyalgia. Lyrica has advantages of flexible dosing that can be adjusted according to persisting symptoms.

Other treatments - Local injections of analgesics and/or cortisone medication into the trigger-point areas can also be helpful in relieving painful soft tissues, while breaking cycles of pain and muscle spasm. Some studies indicate that the pain reliever Tramadol (Ultram) and tramadol/acetaminophen (Ultracet) may be helpful for the treatment of fibromyalgia pains. The muscle relaxant Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) has been helpful for reducing pain symptoms and improving sleep.

The nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), while very helpful in treating other rheumatic conditions, have only a limited value in treating fibromyalgia pain. Narcotic pain relievers and cortisone medications have not been shown to be beneficial in this condition. Narcotics and cortisone medications are avoided because they have not been shown to be beneficial and they have potential adverse side effects, including dependency, when used long-term.

Both biofeedback and electroacupuncture have been used for relief of symptoms with some success. Standard acupuncture was recently reported to be effective in treating some patients with fibromyalgia.

While you are dealing with this problem it is good to know that you are not alone.

Organizations such as the Arthritis Foundation and the American Chronic Pain Association provide educational classes and support groups. These groups can often provide a level of help and advice that you might not find anywhere else. They can also help put you in touch with others who have had similar experiences and can understand what you're going through.

- References:
- 1- American Pain Society
 - 2- Mayo clinic website
 - 3- National Fibromyalgia Association
 - 4- Medicinenet.com



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



Justice for Ruby

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

Ruby Deery of North Andover, a very precious and adorable French bull dog who carries herself with a little bit of an edge, has lived quite a life in her 4yrs.

Before Ruby moved to town her life wasn't so nice. In fact it was horrible, no other word but horrible!

Most rescues have a story and unfortunately they usually aren't all that pleasant. Ruby's story is simply unbelievable. Ruby was a victim of a very sick man who not only had hoarding issues but he also abandoned Ruby and left her to starve and die. She was confined to the first floor bathroom and chained in the bathtub with no food or water for a lengthy period of time. What is just as appalling is this owner was an assistant principal at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn NY.

Thanks to some concerned neighbors, Rescue Ink and the Nassau County SPCA, Ruby was saved. After three months of rehabilitation and living in a foster home, Ruby was then adopted by Cam and Margus Deery and relocated to North Andover in 2008.

I have the honor of being Ruby's pet sitter. Every time the Deery's go away I look forward to having my "Ruby" time. We walk around The Common, watch red sox games and fall asleep on the couch. Just last week when I was pet sitting, I had to laugh when we were watching the Bachelor and Ruby growled at the tv at the same man I thought was totally pathetic. She is something! This once people shy and food aggressive bull dog now snuggles on my lap, falls asleep in my arms and lets me hand feed her. Ruby's favorite treats are bananas and her favorite blanket has leopard print and is baby soft.

As for Frank Hopson the assistant principal, well at the end of this past June he pleaded guilty to Animal Cruelty and Abandonment of Animals. Hopson was promised a sentence of 15 days in jail and 200 hours of community service by the court in exchange for his plea.

Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care in North Andover MA is a local pet care professional. She has been featured on local radio, tv and newspapers educating the general public on animal care and animal health & wellness. Tracey is a proud supporter of Police, Fire & Military K9 units. Tracey may be reached at wigglewalk@comcast.net

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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Protecting your puppies in the hot weather

Kate Whitney

VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY COLUMNIST

I hope everyone is having a wonderful summer, I certainly am! I can't believe it's August already... where does the time go?

Before we know it, the days will be shorter and the leaves will start turning those beautiful autumn colors.

Even with fall on the way, the heat is still very much present and will be for another good month. With that said, I wanted to talk about a serious issue that all dog owners should be aware of during the summer – dog heatstroke. Just because your dog is “healthy” doesn't lessen its chances of succumbing to heatstroke. So pay attention to the tips in this article and increase the chances of your dog having a safe and happy rest of the summer!

Temperatures are high across the country, some places hotter than others, but all have temperatures that have the ability to cause damage to our pets if we are not aware and cautious. Did you know that dogs are much more prone to develop heatstroke than humans are? Why? The answer has to do with sweating. When we are hot we are able to sweat through our skin (the average human has about 20 square feet of skin). This sweating activity allows us to cool our body temperature so we don't over heat. Dogs can only sweat through their foot pads and can cool off only by panting.

There are a few common situations that can lead to heatstroke such as: Being left in a car in hot weather (more on this below), being confined on concrete runs, chained outside without shade or water, being a short-nosed breed (like a pug), being muzzled while put under a dryer (happens at the groomers), too much activity (running and playing) when it's hot out. So make sure you are especially cautious on hot days and do not do any

of the above.

So now that you know what can cause heatstroke in dogs, let's talk about the signs that dogs exhibit if they are suffering from heatstroke. Some signs of heatstroke are: rapid, frantic, noisy breathing/panting, tongue is bright red, saliva is thick, vomiting, reddish-purple gums, and signs that the dog is disoriented (unsteady and staggering). You can usually tell that heatstroke is present just by looking at the dog, but it can be confirmed by taking the dogs temperature with a rectal thermometer.

A normal temperature is 100-102.5 degrees F. If a dog with heatstroke is untreated, it will demonstrate some or all of the signs listed above. Some dogs will have diarrhea that is often bloody and it will also become weaker. Coma and death usually follow.

If you think your dog has heatstroke there are some actions you can take to treat it.

First of all, don't panic.

Your panic will lead your dog to panic, and nothing good will come from both of you in panic mode. If you can, bring your dog immediately to the vet. Some things at home you can try: move your dog to an air conditioned/cool room, or if you are outdoors, a shaded area. Apply cool (not cold) water over his body to lower the core body temperature. Put cold towels or ice packs on the dog's head, neck, and chest and allow the dog to drink small amounts of water or lick ice cubes.

A HUGE contributor to heatstroke and death is something that I really hate to see: dogs being left in cars.

Never leave your dog in the car – even with the windows open and even “just for a minute” while you run in to buy some soymilk. It only takes a few minutes for a dog left in a car to succumb to heatstroke and suffocation which can lead to brain damage and death.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The Valley Patriot's PuppyGirl, Kate Whitney getting a kiss from Dash while she holds two foster puppies waiting to be adopted through One Tail at a Time. Please adopt a shelter dog or foster a puppy looking for a permanent home! For more information you can email One Tail at a Time at onetail@comcast.net

Even if your car is parked in the shade, the inside temperature can get well over 110 degrees in only a few minutes. If you see a pet in a car, alert the store management and if the owner doesn't return, contact animal control or the police. The bottom line is just don't do this. It might not be as convenient to drop your dog off before doing errands, but trust me... what wins in the end?

Convenience or your dog alive at home waiting for you? Also, please don't put your dogs in the bed of a pick up truck. The metal bed can burn a dog's paws and belly, and the sun and flying debris can really cause damage to the dog.

Opt to keep the dog inside the cab with you; either tethered to the seat or in a crate.

So remember, during the hot months be on the lookout for signs that your dog is getting over heated. Restrict exercise during the hottest times of the day, crate your dog in an open wire cage to allow for ventilation, and provide shade and fresh, cool water when your dog is outside (hot weather makes your dog drink more to keep hydrated, so make sure to

check the water dish more than normal and make sure it is always full). Bring your dog into air conditioned spaces as much as possible.

Keep these tips in mind and you and your four legged friend will both have a wonderful and safe rest of the summer!

In conclusion, I wanted to remind you all to please adopt your pets. According to data collected by the HSUS (Humane Society of the US) there are an estimated 6-8 million dogs and cats entering shelters each year. An estimated 3-4 million are euthanized every year. If this isn't a sobering statistic, I don't know what is. Please remember to adopt your pet and do not buy from a breeder or pet store. There are so many amazing dogs and cats desperately waiting for their forever homes... remember, don't shop, adopt!

Kate Whitney is a Boxford resident and owner of the Swingrite Corporation. If you are interested in adopting a puppy or becoming a foster parent to a puppy waiting for a home you can email Kate at Kwswingrite@aol.com



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Support your Local Police K-9

Tracey Zysk
VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

In a time of economic distress for many towns and cities, Mayors and Towns Managers are evaluating every position within their municipal. Where can the cuts take place? What positions can be eliminated and what positions just cost too much? These are the common questions that are being asked each time a budget needs to be reviewed.

One position I must advocate for is the role of the local Police K-9 units. Recently there was an article in another local paper that put a spin on this in a manner that was totally incorrect. This paper made it sound like local Police K-9 units are nothing but a waste of tax payer's money. It went on and on basically saying the tax payers are paying for vet and grooming services but didn't mention what these dogs do. Not only was I offended by this I realized this paper had no idea what the role of a local K-9 unit provides to a community. If they did, they most certainly wouldn't have printed an article that was so irresponsible.

Yes, there are Police K-9 units at the state and the county level in Massachusetts and there are several towns that also have local units. Some may argue that this

is duplication of roles. Why have a local unit when you have a state unit? Well, it isn't any different than having a local and a state police department. It's the same reasoning with the dogs ...the roles are different. Dog are sworn in Officers. They are hired and trained to do a job; protect their community.

The cost of having a local dog unit is unquestionably worth every dime. In fact, it is very cost effective. Let's say there is a lost child in the woods of a specific area of town. The parents are frantic and the police have started their search. The local K-9 unit, the same unit that trains in those woods, comes into action. They know the trails and every side trail and hidden trail off of those trails. The response time for that dog to find that lost child has been proven over and over again to be much quicker than an officer without a dog or an officer working a dog not from that community. Most importantly, because of a local K-9 unit a child was found and a life was saved. Secondly, because the response time was immediate and the dog knew the area, the child was found, this cost the tax payers less than if they had to reach out to other departments for assistance.

Therefore, if the tax payers are paying to have local K-9's go to the vets and to



have a wellbeing visit to a groomer. so be it. It may have been YOUR child's life that was saved by that canine.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL K- 9 UNITS

Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care in North Andover MA is a local pet care professional. She has been featured on local radio, tv and newspapers educating the general public on animal care and animal health & wellness. Tracey is a proud supporter of Police, Fire & Military K9 units. Tracey may be reached at wigglewalk@comcast.net



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Animal Law, it is Important

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

When Erica Catanese 27, was growing up as a child in Burlington MA her dream was to be a veterinarian or to go into criminal justice. Never in her wildest dreams did she expect to go to law school and have the opportunity to study Animal Law. But when the opportunity presented itself, she knew she would be able to study both her passions, animals and the legal system.

An avid horseback rider, animal rescuer, and vegetarian since her teens, Erica has and always will be surrounded by her animals. It is just a part of her life and her animals have made her who she is today. Compassionate, loyal, and responsible are all traits that Erica has developed through her love of animals.

To some studying animal law may seem like a nice elective, however, Erica thoroughly explained its importance. "Animals have no voice, but crimes still happen to them. Having animal law in place allows our judicial system to enforce the law."

As Erica mentioned it has statistically been proven children that abuse animals, tend to abuse their spouses or loved ones when they are older. There is a clear pattern in this. She also mentioned the comparison of an animal hoarder to child neglect. There are similarities in behaviors.

But one of the characteristics that has really stood out to Erica is the control factor. People that over control their animals; verbally, emotionally and or physically have extreme behavior problems in their daily lives and how they interact within society. Which in return can lead to criminal lifestyle for these individuals.

At the Mass School of Law, the curriculum covers a variety of topics. Some but not all are the following: the food industry, farming industry, treatment of domestic and wildlife animals and legal system. But the most important theme of the program is to bring animal awareness



and their rights to mainstream society.

Erica has recently graduated and is looking forward to incorporating her animal law into her criminal law background. "It's just a natural fit and I believe it will help me be more aware and better at my job from all perspectives."

Erica we wish you the most success in fighting for our animals!! We also hope your recent wedding and honeymoon were absolutely wonderful.

Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care in North Andover MA is a local pet care professional. She has been featured on local radio, tv and newspapers educating the general public on animal care and animal health & wellness. Tracey is a proud supporter of Police, Fire & Military K9 units. Tracey may be reached at wigglewalk@comcast.net

State Rep. candidate & animal advocate Jim Lyons talks about animal legislation

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

With elections coming up I thought it was important for our readers to know the thoughts of our candidates in regards to animal wellness and to animal legislation.

Why some may ask? Well, with the pet industry growing at a rate of 5.4% in this past recession year it is obvious people are taking a vested interest in the health and rights of their family pets.

Massachusetts has been the leader of animal rights in legislation. In 2008 it was the first State to ban Pet Renting and this past July Massachusetts passed Logan's Law, a bill to ban Devocalization of Animals.

Jim Lyons candidate for State Representative - 18th Essex has had family pets his entire life. In fact he is the first to tell you he, his wife, and two sons have always thought of their dogs as a major part of their family. Currently, the Lyons family has two cocker spaniels Scamba and Scotterpie.

I had the wonderful opportunity to ask Jim the following questions regarding animals.

Q: Why is it important to pass humane legislation regarding animals in Massachusetts?

JL: "Animals are a very important part of my family. But animals don't have a voice and I believe that is our responsibility as citizens and the responsibility of our legislation to be there to protect them. They can't speak but we can and we need to speak for them."

Q: Do you believe town(s) should have an ordinance on how many dogs one household can own? Why or why not?

JL: "As long as the animals are being treated humanly and people are being responsible then there is not problem. However, a town may need to step in if a situation is turning into an abusive or a hoarding situation. The town should also regulate the businesses that choose to go into breeding. This will help eliminate hoarding or illegal breeding practices."

Q: Animal abuse is a felony in Massachusetts, unfortunately once it gets to the courts it tends to be dropped. How do you feel about this and how would you like to see this handled by our judicial system?

JL: "A crime is a crime and a felony is a felony. If a person is charged with animal abuse, which is a felony, then the charges should go on the books as is. There really isn't any question about it."

Q: With all the recent budget cuts what is your opinion on local K-9 Police units, do you believe this position should be eliminated at the local level and handled strictly by the State Police or do you believe this position should still be handled locally?

JL: "I believe it is all about Local Control. The State shouldn't be forcing any community on any issue on how to manage their budgets. If a town wants to put funding towards their Police K-9 units that is a decision I believe should be made by the towns, not something that is forced upon by the State."

In regards to this article, I also reached out to State Rep David Torrisi, State Rep Barbara L'Italien and candidate for State Rep Kevin Begley all which declined an interview.

Jim Lyons is running for the seat of State Rep -18th Essex which includes Andover precincts 1,7,8 Boxford precinct 2, Georgetown precinct 2, Haverhill 2-1, 2-2, 5-2, 7-2

Methuen precinct 7 and North Andover precincts 7 & 8

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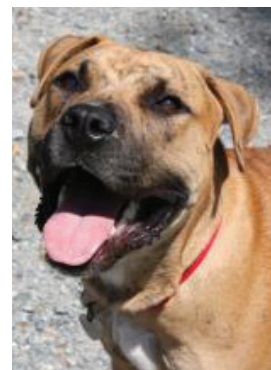
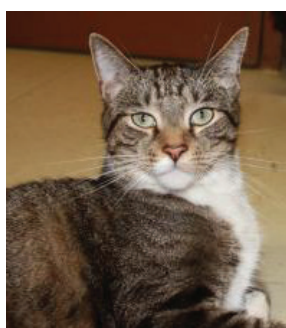
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>>> Marty has been homeless for almost 6 months. Hey there! I'm Marty McFly I am a wonderful cat. I am very loving and love to watch you while you are on the computer. I am energetic and independent. I prefer to be a solo cat, but would be ok with another independent cat that didn't cramp my style. So if you are looking for a great cat come down and see me. If I am not in my cage ask the staff, I may be in the office hanging out.



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Dairon Sky is Back with new Release

Natasha Clark
VALLEY VIBE CONTRIBUTOR

Dairon Skye is back and S.Exier than ever – we must add! The artist that once wooed audiences with his four-octave range about surviving through love’s trials is now turning into a respectable sex symbol in his own right and playing by his own rules.

Now at the ripe age of 25, Dairon is still working as an independent force but has grasped onto the reality of his career and has paved a path of whom he wants to reach with his music. With his latest release, “S.Ex: Spontaneously Exposed” due out later this year, Dairon takes his audience through the aftermath of his debut, “Suffocatin’ My Heart From Loving”.

“I remember waking up and feeling sexy again after the hurt had faded and I had accepted what had happened. I wanted to go out and live the nightlife. I think that we all go through that phase in our lives until you find the one. This album reflects that period.”

With the new installment of happiness, Dairon has changed his approach in music where he has now fused his RnB roots with Dancehall, Pop, Reaggeaton, and Hip-Hop which now he can now display his dance training and offer the full out performance that his followers have been waiting for.

“Right when I released the first album, I knew that I had made a mistake as I was very selfish wanting to create an album about myself – I didn’t think about the marketing until it was complete and in today’s day of music, your live performance is what sells records.”

Out of the seven producers that offered their talents to the first project, only one



has returned, as the new set is complete with fresh talent with a new vision in tact – to make the people dance with catchy hooks and booming bass lines. For example, the underground single, “Breathe Bitch” has become the anthem to addressing the haters who are trying to stop your shine as the radio single, “Just One Time” is regarding the recent recession and how music is a motivating force in finding happiness during this economic time.

Now comfortable in his own skin, Dairon is prepared to release the “The S.Ex Project: The Trilogy” which will feature the original release, a remix edition and lastly a deluxe version of the new style of RnB that he is embracing. Still representing heart felt lyrics but with an approach that is completely unexpected – Dairon is exemplifying the true art of music but paying much respect to the ones who came before him by delivery harmonies between voice and sound.

This album definitely showcases the direction of where today’s music is heading – so I hope that you all are ready for “S.Ex” as RnB just got sexier!



Shawn Terenzi’s Academy of Dance in Lawrence

Darryl A. Braswell
VALLEY VIBE REPORTER/EDITOR

In my late teens, I ran a dance group and we all had dreams of creating the ultimate dance studio that would satisfy our every need as a performer. We came close to achieving our dreams by leasing a space for almost three years, but sadly after purchasing mirrors, knocking down and repainting walls, having our logo designed, website in construction and building our success - we ended up closing our doors and going our own separate ways in June of 2008. As I continued forward, I recently came across Shawn Terenzi – the owner of his own dance studio, which is, located right behind where I had opened my doors five years prior. Intrigued by the dozens of trophies in the front window, I freely decided to discover what was available behind the glass doors of Shawn Terenzi’s Academy of Dance.

As I entered their facility, I was greeted by a pleasant smile that asked, “How may I help you, Sir?” I was taken by surprise. I didn’t feel like a “customer”, I felt as if the kind woman at the front desk actually cared about my needs as an inspired entertainer.

“Would you please offer me a tour of the studio”, I asked as I was curious to see what was behind the walls of the dance studio that opened shortly after the doors of my very own studio closed.

Almost without warning I was greeted by Shawn Terenzi himself and he guided me through his vision of what he created - what a school of dance should be. His smile was inviting as he proudly guided

me through the halls and as I glanced, it took me back to the conversations of what my former dance students had discussed of what our dream studio would look like.

Their studio consists of three large individual classrooms, each equipped with ballet bars, mirrors, air conditioning and hard wood floors – everything that I had dreamed of having within my own studio. The walls were labeled with letters for placements for the students and when it was time for recital rehearsals, the mirrors were draped in cloth to assist them in mastering their craft of learning their placement as professional performers. These things were in my own plans of the potential expansion of my own studio and right before my very eyes there it was.

After much conversation with Shawn, I discovered that he is from a history of dance studio owners that successfully range across Massachusetts and that his family is very involved with entertainment. Shawn’s training began roughly about twenty years ago at his Aunt’s studio, “Eleanor Rubino Academy of Performing Arts” in East Boston. Shawn also went on to dance professionally at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, VA and also toured the world performing on cruise ships. When Shawn returned home, he then started working for a dance studio in Bradford, MA before opening his own studio within Lawrence, MA seven years ago.

I inquired what wanted him to bring his talents to Lawrence and he modestly answered that he did not want to create

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Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner with Artie Januario

In the summer, there are many things to do down the Cape, but did anyone think about the Comedy Lounge?

This entire summer at the Radisson hotel, the only comedy club in town is back having shows every Saturday night.

On July 24, Alvin David, Mike Whitman, Ira Proctor, and Artie Januario tore the stage up in front of a room packed of comedy fans.

David, the host of the night talked about being in the air force when he was younger, and had people laughing, and said, “Okay, one more,” for the people that didn’t get the jokes. That was a great segway to set up his next line, and make the audience think of what is going on.

“We had a lot of fun tonight,” said David. “We had myself, and Michael Whitman, and Artie Januario, with a little Ira Proctor. It was a good crowd. It was a little lean off the top, but we got through it, and we made it happen. Everybody had a good time.”

Performing at the Comedy Lounge about four times a year, David said Whitman is one of the funniest comedians he has met in his entire life.

“Artie killed it tonight, and you had Ira doing a guest spot, which is just great for everybody.”

If there were three comedians performing that night, Whitman would have been the middler, but since there was four, I guess he was known to be second place?

With a story telling act, Whitman was talking about being at work, and having to

take five harassment classes last year. He joked, “How long is it too long to stare? We’ll never know.”

Chuckling a few times at the end of each joke, Whitman brought up a bit about email e-greets. He laughed, “Happy Birthday different font, Michael R. Whitman. Times New Roman, that’s just what I wanted. I hated last years Courier New.”

After the show, Whitman said the audience was, “Pretty tight. It felt like I had to start them up every time, but they come. They look like they had a good time.”

Performing in Hyannis for 5 years, Whitman feels it’s good when performing with friends.

“Alvin’s great, and Ira stops by as a national headliner for a guest spot, and Artie takes you home,” said Whitman.

Every Thursday at Remington’s restaurant, he hosts his own show at Dick Doherty’s Comedy Vault in Boston.

Januario said, “Tonight’s show was an excellent. We had about 100 people, which is close to the capacity, and I was happy about that because it’s always good to perform in front of a full room.

Performing down the Cape as opposed to on the other side of the bridge, Januario said he feels people are more laid back here.

“If you’re down here on the Cape as opposed to the greater Boston area, it’s harder to do local references. When I mentioned Revere Beach, very few people knew what I was talking about, because there’s people here from New York, Con-

necticut, or I don’t know where they’re from, but they don’t know some of the local stuff. You can do big stuff like Red Sox, or Patriots because people know that. Then again, you might alienate people because there might be New York Giants fans here, or Yankees fans here.”

When Januario went on stage, along with the other comedians, the crowd responded well. Everyone seemed to go bonkers when he talked about being a pharmacist, growing up in Revere Beach with needles in the sand, and his family.

Proctor, who made a guest appearance, was taping a bit for Comedy Central. He had a hilarious bit about Dunkin Donuts saying, “For now on we have a bathtub outside, we’re going to fill it with regular coffee.” With that said, he finished with talking about having an easy pass on the

side of the building, and a coffee cup outside driving by at 60 miles per hour, swooping up the drink.

Catching up with Proctor after the show, he said he has to send three minutes of film to Comedy Central. “I have a special two night weekend on Labor Day,” said Proctor, explaining that people should come back to the Comedy Lounge.

For more information about the Comedy Lounge, go to <http://www.comedylounge.com/>.



“Shawn Hansen recently graduated from UMass Lowell. He has published work in eight different newspapers. He also has a television show called, “Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner,” which is based as a Late Night show with Jay Leno, or Jimmy Fallon. His show is at Burlington Cable Access TV. To get in touch with Shawn, email him at Shawn.Hansen.sportsentertainment@gmail.com.”

Within DraMa, there's Hope

Darryl A. Braswell
VALLEY VIBE REPORTER/EDITOR

In the music scene, you have people that will either love you or hate you - there is no true way around it. Andres "DraMatik" Gonzalez is living proof of the harsh reality that the industry can bring and how his artist persona can get in the way of his true self. I must admit that I had heard the harshest stories him in the past and after meeting him, I left completely inspired by his journey and his contributions to the city of Lawrence, MA.

When you view videos of DraMatik online, there is your everyday raw "gangsta" real to his music and presence. One video that I would reference was a homemade video where DraMatik is seen sitting on his bathroom toilet as he is "Sh*tting on the Industry" - in reference to how fake the industry can be and setting the record straight that his music is one of a kind. The video is humorous but gritty in its own right, you would never believe that this man has a side of him this nurturing and giving. DraMatik is only a piece of what makes this man who he is.

But in actuality, who is DraMatik? After meeting him within his office where he aids young adults to better their education and further their career options, I discovered that he is a full time employee, inspirational youth speaker and most importantly, a full time father figure. The list is truly endless of what this man emulates, in all seriousness, I was in the presence of what a true role model should be in our community.

Being raised by his three older sisters and his mother, DraMatik was exposed to domestic violence at a young age which his brought him to Lawrence, MA - the safe haven from the harmful hands of his abusive father. His older sister was a Dee Jay who introduced him to music and inspired his appreciation of the art, which truly did not show until the year of 2000 where he was now in his late twenties. I found it very unusual that he had started as late with his craft as it is so common to hear of lyricists to begin from their early teens and polish their skills through school yard rap battles.

Inspired by the great rappers that came before him, DraMatik was born and the stage name was inspired by the "drama" within his own life as a child. He wrote rhymes about his past, positive messages to inspire others, domestic violence and the hidden truth about the industry as he



has lived it all. Now, ten years later and still making a name for himself, he has turned down numerous major label contracts, as they wanted to make his sound more "commercial" - in essence, taking away the "drama" from who truly was... a street therapist.

After the birth of his first son at the young age of seventeen, and almost losing his life to a bullet to the chest DraMatik knew what his purpose in making music was for - to educate! Words as powerful and with true meaning, it can motivate the masses to accomplish great things and being from where his listeners are from, they know that his words are sincere. His mission in joining the W.O.L.V.E.S., (Warriors Organizing Life Values Escaping Struggle) was justifying the power of motivational music amongst what others would call "lower class" America, especially against his Latino people.

Ten years into his success, DraMatik has been recognized for his music by being nominated and winning an a BMC Award for best Underground Hip - Hop

Album last year, lending a hand in creating the The LawTown Voice project - lead by Bylli Crayone - where twenty local artists from the city of Lawrence came together to record "Trust & Believe" in hopes of raising funds for the survivors of Haiti in their time of need earlier this year and expanding Hip -Hop to folk music with his latest release.

To receive more updates on DraMatik and his movement, please check him out on the following links:

www.myspace.com/theswellseasons
www.facebook.com/dramatikwolf



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dupz

The true meaning behind the Lawrence Bread & Roses Festival!

Darryl A. Braswell
VALLEY VIBE REPORTER/EDITOR

As any hard working American in today's society, Labor Day weekend can mean one of two things; the last week of beautiful beach weather and/or the first three day weekend that eases in the Fall season. If you're anything like myself, them considering both reasons is the way how to describe the three day weekend that has saved me from just straight insanity knowing that summer was ending and the cold was before myself. Without knowing, I live within a city that has it's fair share of history and twenty six years ago, a group of individuals decided to celebrate the hardships of the generations before that has brought forth this holiday.

Unfortunately, I must admit that I truly did not know what the meaning of Labor Day meant within Lawrence, MA until I met with the organizers of the annual event back in March of this year. I was enlightened with the history of the city that began in the early 1900's and new significance of the event had began.

The following is an excerpt from their website regarding The Bread & Roses Strike:

In 1912 Lawrence became the focus of international attention as the scene of one of the landmark events in American labor history. When a state law reduced the workweek from 56 to 54 hours, the mills cut the workers' pay. Averaging only \$8.76 a week, most of Lawrence's 30,000 textile workers walked off the job, and stayed out for nine weeks in a harsh winter.

The strike was remarkable for the cooperation among immigrant workers, for the role of women, and for the strikers'

practice of expressing themselves in song. Some women strikers reportedly carried banners proclaiming, "We want bread, and roses, too", symbolizing their fight for both subsistence and dignity, thus the name, the "Bread and Roses Strike".

The strike highlighted issues of child labor, workplace safety, and subsistence wages. It was an important step in labor's long struggle for gains, which many of us now take for granted.

On September 6, 2010, please join in celebrating the festivities with wonderful family orientated live entertainment from the likes of Bread & Puppet Theatre Co., Grupo Fantasia with the Mirabal Dancers, Sweet Willie D, Alastair Moock, Itchy Feet, The Pentucket Players, Dairon Skye, Bylli Crayone, DraMatik and local dance troupes from across the city. Krochmal Farm will be present to offer pony rides and bring other live animals for the day. Children will not only have fun but also learn a piece of the history that helped form the great City of Lawrence.

To learn more about the strike, please visit the Lawrence Heritage State Park where the strike exhibits, historical booths, demonstrations and videos are played. At the center walking and trolley tours are offered where everyone is welcomed to learn more about the strike.

The Lawrence Heritage State Park is open daily, from 9AM to 4PM and is located at 1 Jackson St., Lawrence, MA. For other information, please feel free to call 978-794-1655 or email heritage@state.ma.us.

The festival will be taking place at the Common Park in Lawrence, MA at noon and shall end roughly around 6PM. All are welcomed to attend, as it is free admission to enjoy the festivities!

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a conflict between the studio that he was currently employed by and felt that building a name for himself fifteen miles away was respectable. Witnessing his sincerity of the topic, it complimented the nature of his establishment and all the pieces to the puzzle were falling into place.

Shawn has built a team of educators who not only share the same passion of dance; they also want to assist others in achieving their potential in the industry. The staff consists of five instructors, Shawn Terenzi, Jason Hernandez, Kaitlin Costello, Tina Fosman and Jeannine Terenzi. Most of the instructors are members of the Dance Teacher's Club of Boston and Dance Masters of America, which are two organizations that have strived to advance the art of dance for over one hundred years. Shawn's studio offers classes in Tap, Jazz, Hip Hop, Gymnastics, Ballet, Pointe, Lyrical, Salsa and Zumba. The students can either take part of their competitive team, be one of the recreational dancers or both.

One of the studio's recent success stories is Cody Rutherford, a fifteen year old young man, who just achieved the National Award of "Young Mister Dance Ovations" in June. His older sister Britani Rutherford, eighteen, also achieved fourth runner up of the National Title of "Miss Dance Ovations". Both brother and sister were one of the first students to join the studio seven years ago and have inspired many students within the studio.

Besides being extremely affordable, dedicated students are deemed for excellence as every eight weeks the students are observed on Closed Circuit TV's in the waiting room so that their progress is clearly displayed to their parents and friends. The proof is illustrated on the screens as true talent is molded with time and perseverance. "Competitive or recreational, everyone has their own special need that we tend too."

Within the next three years, Shawn plans to expand to his fourth dance studio room but still keeping the business "Family Focused" and expecting to grow gradually with time. Being more concerned of the growth of his students, Shawn is confident that he has built a business based on quality instead of quantity!

I urge everyone to visit Shawn Terenzi and his amazing staff during their Open Houses on August 31st, September 2nd and 4th to view their set up and what they can offer any student of any ability level. Be prepared to taken away by the charisma and professionalism that exudes from the Dance Academy. As I departed Shawn's studio, I turned to my left to view the remains of my establishment that had closed two years prior and smiled - the dream is still there.

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VALLEY PATRIOT TV REVIEW

Valley Patriot MOVIE REVIEW

Game Shows without Game

Beth Daigle
VALLEY PATRIOT ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

What’s the deal with game shows these days? When I was a kid, my grandmother would sit my sister and me down to watch a few rounds of “Match Game” or “The \$10,000 Pyramid” and we would be riveted. The classic challenges, quirky hosts (Gene Rayburn and Dick Clark) and time-stamped contestants created a nice blend of comedic competition that was entertaining, but not over the top.

Today, I don’t know what to make of the so-called game shows that have hit the airwaves. “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire” started the hype years ago and as soon as its popularity soared, the overkill kicked in and suddenly you couldn’t escape Regis Philbin and his overly-communicative contestants. It is so annoying to watch these people recite their entire thought process aloud. Never mind the friends and family in the audience who persistently and animatedly shout to their clueless contestant kin to coach them along.

Similarly irksome programs have since followed such as “Deal or No Deal” and current day’s “Minute to Win It” and “Downfall.”


The fact that “Minute to Win It” has their players performing the most idiotic tasks in an effort to increase their earnings is simply painful to watch. I feel like it is less of a game show and more an exercise in hazing. And what’s with Guy Fieri as the host? He was lucky enough to win “The Next Food Network Star” a few years ago – I think he should quit while ahead and stick with the cooking

gig.

Okay, now for the worst of the worst – “Downfall.” What has our society come to that a television game show’s hook is to drop replicas of winnable items off the top of a 10-story building allowing them to crash to their destruction as a result of the contestant’s inability to answer questions in a timely manner. There is also the option of dangling loved ones off said skyscraper in a last ditch effort to win the big bucks. Are you kidding me? And again the host leaves some unanswered questions. WWE wrestler Chris Jericho? He seems to be an odd and ill-fitting choice.

I long for the humor and talkative talent of former game show hosts who seemed naturally made for the role – one that not just any television personality could fill. Good game shows don’t need the gimmicks and crazy antics. They just need the right combination of smart, yet witty hosts, personable and intellectually capable players and a clever premise without all the hoopla.

Call me old-fashioned, but I’d take the classics over today’s game show goofs in a heartbeat.



Beth Daigle is a freelance writer who writes for several area publications. Beth is a North Andover resident and happily reports on the good, the bad and the ugly in television entertainment. Beth's background is in marketing having earned her BA from University of Massachusetts, Amherst and MBA from Bentley College. Send comments to Bethdaiglevp@comcast.net

Inception

Ben Flagg
VALLEY PATRIOT MOVIE REVIEWER

Inception is... well it’s... I can’t even describe it because I’m 95% certain that this movie melted my brain (in a good way)!

This movie deals with such complicated dimension switching, brain bending, and thought provoking ideas that it makes the Matrix seem like an Adam Sandler movie by comparison. But in all honesty, that might make this a hard review to write, just because every little thing is absolutely essential to the plot. However, I’ll try my best to gracefully dance around the important parts.


Let’s start with the title. The word Inception means to plant something (not literally, as in a garden) and that is what Leonardo DiCaprio is trying to do in this movie. Actually, let me back up a bit. This movie is set in the near future where people can go into someone else’s dream. Some have turned this into a profession, getting hired by the government to go into someone else’s dreams and extract information. That, as you may have guessed, is extraction - the opposite being Inception, which is to plant an idea. That has never been done before, so it requires a little extra finesse to pull off. Also, you have to get REALLY deep into someone’s head to pull it off, so you have to go into a dream, then from that dream into another dream, then FINALLY from that dream into another dream. It is in that last dream that the idea is planted. This makes the movie extra complicated because time has different meanings depending how deep into a dream you are. Plus some people stay behind, wounds get better the farther you go, physics in level 1 might affect the physics of level 2. It’s these sorts of things that add up to a very profound and complicated movie.

I’ve been talking about how complicated this movie is, but I failed to mention one

very important thing. The people who won’t understand it will absolutely hate it, but the people who understand it will adore it. I very thankfully understood it, so I completely LOVE this movie. It’s actually fun trying to figure this movie out, as it was in the Matrix. Some of you may have also noticed I keep mentioning the Matrix, and that’s because this movie borrows very heavily from that movie (but not to the point of full on ripping it off).

As far as performances go, there’s nothing really spectacular going on here. Leonardo DiCaprio is the star here and as usual for him, he does fine. Towards the end there are some serious emotional scenes where he really shines. Then you have his sidekick played by Joseph Gordon-Levitt, who’s actually bordering on bland and emotionless. To be fair, in the context of the film his blandness somehow makes sense. Next there’s the comic relief, played by Tom Hardy. His character can only be described as a British Alec Baldwin. There are some other minor teammates, but the last major one is played by Ellen Paige (who you all know as Juno) who plays a college student who builds the dream worlds that these people go into. Her character is just sort of “there” and when in the dreams, she really doesn’t do anything.

In short, go see this movie. I’m not asking you, I’m telling you. Go see this. And if you love the Matrix, see it twice. It’s wonderfully shot, and pleasantly challenging to the average movie-goer. I guarantee that if you go see this movie, you will be thoroughly entertained for the 2 ½ hours you’re watching.



Ben Flagg is a freshman at Methuen High School. He participates in the JROTC and Drill Team. He also enjoys playing the bass guitar in his spare time.

Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner with Mitch Fatel

Performing on stage for the first time at the age of 15, comedian Mitch Fatel reflects about his early career in the entertainment industry. He reminisces about dressing up in Incredible Hulk pajamas, telling everyone in the crowd he had to leave early because he has school in the morning.

On Sept. 11, Fatel will be coming to The Wilbur Theatre at 246 Tremont Street in Boston, and will be performing there for the first time since last year.

Appearing for the first time in front of an audience, Fatel was at the Comic Strip, and felt it was unique to have a young kid on stage.

“It was a really excited moment for me to go on stage, and I was always very nervous, but the audience was very happy to see a young kid try something new,” said Fatel.

When his comedy club teacher booked the gig at the Holiday Inn, Fatel hit the stage for his first time performing in front of a bunch of businessmen during happy hour.

“I started getting booed, and said, ‘One day you guys are going to be sorry you’re booing me because I’m going to be famous, and you’re going to have to pay to see me,’” said Fatel.

Born in Manhattan, raised in Yonkers, NY, Fatel feels he didn’t move to Los Angeles because he loves his home state.

“I’m such an East coast fan,” said Fatel. “I feel so comfy here, and I was always able to make a living in comedy



not having to live in L.A., so I kind of set down roots here. I probably should be out in L.A., but I just can’t leave New York, I just love it so much.”

Even though 35-year old Fatel first took the stage at the age of 15, he doesn’t consider being a comedian for 20 years.

“I always have a problem with anybody saying that they are something, and they don’t make a living at it,” said Fatel. “I always thought that it’s so easy for people to say there a comic just because they have been on stage. I say, no that’s not what

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Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner with Tom Green

Acting in the movies Freddy Got Fingered, Road Trip, Bob the Butler, Stealing Harvard, and many more, Tom Green started his career on a Canadian access television program in 1994.

Performing with a variety of different celebrities, Green said he had the most fun working with Rip Torn, Harland Williams, Jason Lee, Cameron Diaz, and Sean William Scott.

Hosting a current talk show on the Internet from his house, Green has been on tour since this past January, and will be coming to The Wilbur Theatre at 246 Tremont Street in Boston on Friday, Sept. 10 at 7 p.m.

“I’m excited to be coming to Boston,” said Green. “I’ve been to Boston once in my life. I loved it, and I think it’s one of these things where I really felt like I haven’t been to Boston enough to be honest with you.”

Traveling all over the United States on tour, Green feels like it’s an amazing theater to perform at.

“I have had a few friends that have performed there recently who tell me it’s the best place to perform in the country. Rob Schneider, and Norman MacDonald told me about it, and I’m excited about that, and it’s going to be a great show.”

Starting his own television show at Community Television in Ottawa from 1994-1999, Green said it prepared himself for the big stage.

“A few years later, we were on the



Canadian Comedy Network, which was an actual paid cable show that I was working for that we got picked up by for two seasons,” said Green, explaining that it eventually was picked up by Music Television [MTV] in New York.

With his show airing on MTV for a number of years, Green played a lot of pranks on his parents. He said some of his favorite stunts pulled were leaving a decapitated cows head in their bed, painting their house plaid, and airbrushing their car with an explicit design, just so he could videotape their

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HEROES IN OUR MIDST: From page 1

life forever.

A couple years after graduating high school, Joe found himself in a whirlwind of a rut.

He did not have a steady job, nor did he have a car. He felt as though he was stuck in a state of nothingness and going absolutely nowhere with his life. In the mid-eighties, at the height of drugs and rock and roll, Joe decided that he would make something of himself, even at the age of 21.

He took a journey to the U.S. Army recruiting office. However, as much as he wanted to serve his country, the Army was very pushy and so anxious to have him enlist that it actually turned him away from joining the Army all together.

He decided, after some consideration, that he would

take a chance with the Navy. They, on the other hand, made it obvious to him that although they wanted him to enlist they would take him tomorrow, in a week, or in a month. The recruiter was slow paced and relaxed.

He sat with Joe and showed him his excellent test scores. Then without anymore consideration, Joe enlisted. His

mother originally thought his decision not to join the Army was a result of his girlfriend at the time, Leslie, convincing him not to join.

He however did join, and did so, without consultation with anyone.

Costa soon found out that he would be leaving only a week later. Once he finally got home and sat in his room and looked around, it finally sank in and as he

thought about it, the fear of what he was about to embark on brought tears to his eyes.

Nonetheless, alone and unafraid he left for boot camp in February of 1988 and headed to Great Lakes Illinois. He was then sent to Operations Specialist or "A" school in Dam Neck, Virginia where he spent four months. He then boarded The Amphibious Assault ship USS Shreveport LPD-12. He would serve on this

ship until 1991.

The ship was the Primary Control ship for all amphibious assaults. His duty on the ship was located in the heart and soul of the vessel. He was a radar monitor and used the ships scope to guard it from any buoys or land masses that might cause harm to the ship. He embarked on a Mediterranean cruise in 1989 stopping in

France, Italy, Turkey, Portugal, Spain, and Egypt.

Like most sailors Joe would have gone crazy without any recreation. He decided to use his talents to help entertain his fellow sailors.

He posted a flyer, mentioning the prospects of starting a band, and before he knew it a few sailors and a couple of marines decided to join him and they became known as the Pelicans. They played shows while at sea and also performed in France and Italy.

In August of 1990 Joe and the crew aboard the ship were deployed to the Persian Gulf for the start of the Persian Gulf War. For the next eight months, Joe was involved in Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In April of 1991, Joe severely sprained his ankle and was assigned to shore duty.

This was a result of much manual labor and many injuries to his ankle. He had a history of weak ankles in his family and once the Navy doctors realized that this was a reoccurring thing, they put a cast on his ankle and he was sent to the fleet area and surveillance facility in the Virginia capes.

He was given a two week leave and it was then that Joe decided to marry Leslie. After his leave, he reported back to Virginia and Leslie soon followed and moved down there with him.

In 1992 the USS Shreveport received the Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy for outstanding readiness and performance. Although Joe was not onboard at the time the award was given, his eight months of dedication and hard work helped the ship receive the award. In April of 1992, Joe was discharged and he headed back home to Lawrence.

One cannot assume that they would know what it is like to serve his or her country at a time of war. They cannot assume they know what it feels like to defend and protect the freedom for which

its countries ideals are built on. Joe and many other Americans do know what that feels like.

It is with them and them alone that the idea of putting their lives on the line for all Americans ideals and freedoms can rest. As the motto of the USS Shreveport goes "No Shore Too Distant, Alone and Unafraid", Joe answered that calling when he joined our Nation's Armed Forces. Heroes like Joe take this call to arms everyday. Nothing we do will ever be enough to thank people like this.

In Joe's case, the Military was a chance to make something of himself. Going into the service during wartime is something no 21 year old should have to do.

But Joe insists that "It truly turned out to be a much needed life experience and made me grow up fast and become the positive thinker I am today".

The Valley Patriot is proud to call Joseph M. Costa its Valley Patriot of the Month and a hero in our midst.



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Gary Manion is a former candidate for Lawrence City Council and a student at Merrimack College. You can email him at manniong@merrimack.edu

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Veterans' benefits, some plans working better than others

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

As stated in a recent meeting of the American Legion National Executive Committee, some Veterans' benefits are not doing what the government intended. For example, the department created to serve veterans could be doing a lot better in the realm of hiring veterans. According to data provided by the Legion's Economic and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division, veterans make up just 41.3 percent of VA's Central Office workforce and only 28.1 percent of the Veterans Health Administration. Some regional offices also have percentages that dip into the mid-20s. That, National American Legion Commander Clarence Hill said, is unacceptable.

"The fact that veterans comprise only 30 percent of VA's workforce is not just a shame - it's a disgrace. Well, I'm mad as hell about it, and I'm certain most of the people in this room are too. But what I'm feeling is a constructive anger, not a pointless rage," Hill said in his closing remarks. "What The American Legion is seeking is a partnership with the VA, not a war of words. We want to work with the agency that was created to serve veterans, not against it." Commander Hill said the Legion wants VA Secretary Eric Shinseki to send to his entire department a letter stating that the policy of veterans' preference needs to be adhered to.

Per the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, the federal government must favor returning war veterans who were honorably discharged when it sets out to hire new employees. Veterans aren't guaranteed federal jobs, but they do receive greater consideration for them. Each veteran who left the service honorably has a veterans' preference point total. Veterans receive an extra five points in the numerical score system, while disabled veterans get 10 points.

"We believe VA should have a workforce

made up of 75 percent veterans," Hill said. "We want to help them in this regard - not as adversaries but as constructive partners. This is not just about VA. In fact, VA ranks first among non-Defense agencies in the hiring of disabled veterans and second only to DoD in the overall number of veterans.

"This is about who we are as a nation. This is about the homeless person on the street who we pass by because we feel threatened. It's about who he or she was yesterday - the shining soldier from Iraq in a crisp uniform with rows of medals. Are we to tell the Marine who helped liberate the nation of Afghanistan that they are unqualified to work as a government employee for the Department of Commerce? Wouldn't any citizen want the former Naval intelligence officer to protect their community as a civilian police detective? Or how about an airman working as a computer specialist at your local bank?

"America has been at war for 20 years, whether everybody in society realizes it or not. There is a huge population of young people that answered the nation's call since August 2, 1990, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. The No. 1 priority for most people leaving the military is to find a job. The American Legion will be there for them." Commander Hill has appointed an ad-hoc committee on employment and veteran's preference issues, regarding VA's hiring practices and the ways the Legion can work with the department to increase the amount of veterans in its workforce. As this develops, I will put updates in my articles.

In contrast, on June 29, Barry A. Searle, Director of The American Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division, attended a quarterly update brief of veteran's service organizations by the Department of Veterans Affairs' National Cemetery Administration. During the briefing, NCA pointed to its hiring practices and veterans' preference as

being the best of any in the federal government, with veterans making up 71.5 percent of its workforce.

On a different note, the Department of Veterans Affairs is offering bronze medallions to attach to existing, privately purchased headstones or markers, signifying a deceased's status as a Veteran. The new item can be furnished instead of a traditional government headstone or marker for veterans whose death occurred on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave in a private cemetery is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker.

Under federal law, eligible veterans buried in a private cemetery are entitled to either a government-furnished grave marker or the new medallion, but not both. Veterans buried in a national or state veterans cemetery will receive a government headstone or marker of the standard design authorized at that cemetery.

The medallion is available in three sizes: 5 inches, 3 inches and 1 1/2 inches in width. Each bronze medallion features the image of a folded burial flag adorned with laurels and is inscribed with the word "Veteran" at the top and the branch of service at the bottom. Next of kin will receive the medallion, along with a kit that will allow the family or the staff of a private cemetery to affix the medallion to a headstone, grave marker, mausoleum or columbarium niche cover.

The VA is currently developing an application form for ordering the medallion. Until it is available, applicants may use the form for ordering government headstones and markers, VA Form 40-1330. Veterans with a discharge issued under conditions other than dishonorable, their spouses and eligible dependent children can be buried in a VA national cemetery. Other burial benefits available for all eligible veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery,



include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate, and a government headstone or grave marker.

The new medallions will be available only to veterans buried in private cemeteries without a government headstone or marker. Families of eligible decedents may also order a memorial headstone or marker when remains are not available for interment.

The Department of Veterans Affairs operates 131 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico, and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. More than 3 million Americans, including veterans of every war and conflict - from the Revolutionary War to the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan - are buried in VA's national cemeteries on more than 19,000 acres. The number keeps growing as members of "the greatest generation" pass away. And we continue to have our brave men and women make the ultimate sacrifice to keep us free.

Please remember the troops who protect our way of life and their families who also make sacrifices for all of us.



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

MURANO: FROM PAGE 40

tion said, 'My dad was going to pay for the abortion. We look at my daughter (now) and get tears in our eyes. We can't imagine our lives without her. I wouldn't tell the others, but she is my favorite!'"

"One mom this spring who chose life after calling us about abortion came in with her mom. As they left the woman's mom said, 'I wish there had been an organization like yours when I was 16 because I had an abortion.' We talked about the regrets and guilt she still experiences over thirty years later."

"I have never had anyone who chose life for their child say they wish they had

had an abortion. They are always thankful. Several mothers have told me that having their baby saved their lives. They were headed on a downward spiral with drugs or alcohol and were really messing up their lives. When they became pregnant they found the motivation to straighten up and get help and do what was best for their babies. After their babies' births they felt a sense of purpose and great love for their child; and they had no desire to go back to their former way of living."

On what motivates Muriel to give so selflessly to these women:

"I became interested in pro-life work after a friend, pressured by her husband,

aborted their child. I was distraught. Since then I have learned that many women (recent research shows it to be about 65% of those who abort) are pressured by their boyfriend, parents, husband or others to abort their children. So much for a woman's choice! I later received God's call to leave my teaching job to volunteer for Heartbeat."

"We have helped a number of women whose boyfriends or families were pressuring them to abort. One young woman was told by her family that if she didn't abort the baby she could no longer live there. They said they weren't going to have their lives ruined by a baby. So much for cherishing a grandchild! That young woman eventually aborted the baby and is still living with guilt and regret several years later. Another woman was recently told by the baby's father that if she didn't abort he would cut the baby out of her! She courageously gave birth to a healthy baby!"

"Another motivating factor for me is the emotions I feel for the women who come in pregnant but have had abortions. Most have a very difficult time living with having aborted one or more of their children. I have had many cry on my shoulder saying that decision was the worst thing they ever did and would never do it again. Most say they think about how old the baby would be and whether it was a boy or girl. They have many regrets and much guilt."

"As I always tell women who call asking about abortion, 'We care about the mothers and the babies.' We care about fathers, too, but we see far too few of them. We talk with women about making better choices in the future. It is easy to blame the men for not stepping up to the plate

and supporting their children but women also need to take responsibility for making good choices, like chastity, and waiting to find a husband who will be a good father to their children."

How to help:

On behalf of Muriel and all the women helped and babies saved we thank everyone who has contributed to mission of Heartbeat. If you would like to donate money or gently used goods, or would be interested in counseling or running a fund raiser, please call 781-229-7887 or e-mail pregnancyma@verizon.net.

Because many of Heartbeat's clientele have been from the Lowell area we had worked out a deal to fix up an abandoned building on the grounds of the old St. Jean Baptiste Church on Merrimack Street in Lowell. After getting it nicely furnished and ready to go the archdiocese had to sell the property. We also looked into establishing a Heartbeat in Lawrence but couldn't get the funds or community involvement at the time. If you would like to be involved in placing a Heartbeat in your area please contact us.

And for women or couples who would like more information about Heartbeat services call our office at 781-229-7887 Tuesdays thru Fridays from 9:30 -12:30, or visit our website at www.PregnancyMA.com.



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

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GREEN: FROM PAGE 49

reactions.

Although all these stunts were pulled, Green said his parents never actually called the police on him. His father's name is Richard, and his mother's name is Mary Jane. Green said, "Sometimes I tell my mother that she should open up a marijuana dispensary. Mary Jane Green's I think would be a very popular spot."

On his talk show that can be seen by going to www.tomgreen.com, Green will rap with the artists he has on that day.

"I've had Flavor Flav, and Xzibit, Jurassic Five, Too Short, and I rap with them on my show, and it's pretty cool," said Green.

Other than having rap artists on his show, Green has interviewed Ed McMahon on more than one occasion, Jimmy Kimmel, and Val Kilmer. His influences of starting a talk show on television have been David Letterman, Jay Leno, Johnny Carson, Talk TV, Monty Python, and Saturday Night Live [SNL].

"Since I started my public access show, I got to host SNL, I got to host the David Letterman show," said Green, explaining that he was one of the very few people in the world that got to guest host that show.

"Right now I'm doing it weekly cause I'm on tour," said Green, explaining that anyone can watch his shows online. You can go there anytime, 24-hours a day, we're on the air."

Green said his online show has an estimated 2.5 million viewers per show. He feels if people come out to his show, they will enjoy it, especially if they liked his work on MTV.

"It's a very high energy, silly, ridiculous, thought provoking fun show," said Green. "I'd like to attack things around me in my own life, and pop culture in the news."

After the show, Green is going to have a meet and greet where pictures will be taken.

He will be at The Wilbur Theatre on Sept. 10, and the Comedy Connection in Chicopee on Sept. 11.



"Shawn Hansen recently graduated from UMass Lowell. He has published work in eight different newspapers. He also has a television show called, "Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner," which is based as a Late Night show with Jay Leno, or Jimmy Fallon. His show is at Burlington Cable Access TV. To get in touch with Shawn, email him at Shawn.Hansen.sportsentertainment@gmail.com."

FATEL: FROM PAGE 49

you do, you're not a comic. In my mind, I never considered myself a comic until I was making a living at it."

Fatel said that people, who want to be comedians, shouldn't consider themselves to be in the industry until they make it big.

"I always took pride in that, and never considered myself a comedian until I got my first paycheck ever, and started paying the bills. I was a waiter for many years, and then in 1996, I went to the Montreal Comedy Festival, and I got a \$150K holding deal with Disney, and went from someone who is making \$350 a week to somebody who suddenly has a check for \$150K. I think that's when I finally considered myself a comedian."

In Fatel's shows, he starts off saying his name, and that he is very funny. Reflecting on his teenage years, Fatel remembers going to a comedy show with his parents, and hearing someone reading off a list of names. "Hey everybody, how's everybody doing, how's everybody feeling, you having a good time?" I thought to myself, I've seen that so many times, and I thought how different and unique, and

weird would it be if a guy just walked up and said, 'Hi, I'm very funny,'" said Fatel.

On stage, he will talk about hobbies, and topics that are clean so everybody can bring their parents.

Recently, Fatel had an audition for a Doritos radio commercial.

"I should be able to get it because I do actually really love Doritos, so I didn't have to act like I was faking it," said Fatel. "It's just so crunchy."

For more information about Fatel, go to <http://www.mitchfatel.com/>. He will be at the Comedy Connection in Chicopee on Sept. 10, and The Wilbur Theatre on Sept. 11.



"Shawn Hansen recently graduated from UMass Lowell. He has published work in eight different newspapers. He also has a television show called, "Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner," which is based as a Late Night show with Jay Leno, or Jimmy Fallon. His show is at Burlington Cable Access TV. To get in touch with Shawn, email him at Shawn.Hansen.sportsentertainment@gmail.com."

GAY WRITERS: FROM PAGE 40

was nothing, no books, magazines, TV. Shows movies or any media of any kind that affirmed who I was and what I was feeling when I was young. When there is nothing to represent who you are, the message is clear: you are nothing. This is probably the reason why gay teens are three times more likely to commit suicide than their straight counterparts. I wrote these stories to give them a voice and let them know that they count and that they are valued.

Sticks and Stones is a book geared toward the middle reader but it has been read and enjoyed by all ages. If you'd like to find out more about the book or purchase a copy, you can find it at www.authorhouse.com.

Hopefully, Brian Tessier and I will help others to see that love and acceptance are so very important in an ever changing society and it is critical to let those people in your lives whom you care so deeply about know that they are loved and valued.



Dani Langevin is a teacher and has a Bachelors in Fine Art and Masters in Education. She has written four young adult novels, one of which is self-published. You can email Dani at DaniBLangevin@aol.com

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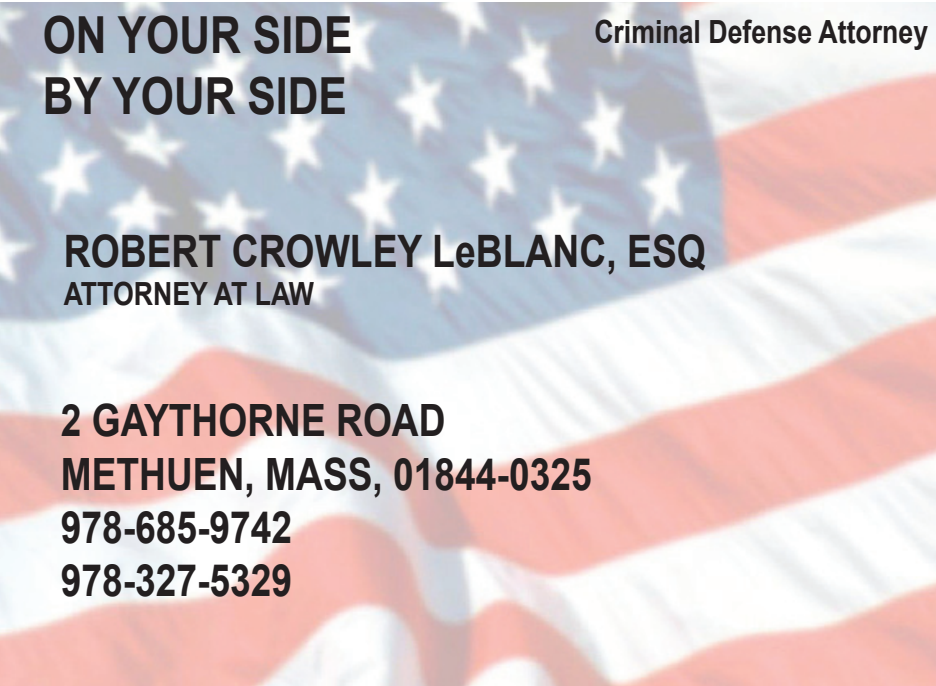
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