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MAY, 2010
VOLUME 7, ISSUE 5

THE VALLEY PATRIOT

"Congress shall make no law..."

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

WHAT A DUMP!

Lawrence DPW caught dumping trash and construction waste on riverbank, St. Mary's Cemetery



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

Trash, sewage pipes and road construction dumped by city workers

After being caught illegally dumping at the Shawsheen River, The Valley Patriot found that Lawrence DPW has turned the sacred grounds of St. Mary's Cemetery into a garbage dump.

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Tech. Sgt. Donald G. Boulette

USAF, 439th Security Forces Squadron, Westover ARB

Kate Cotnoir

VALLEY PATRIOT HERO COLUMNIST

LOWELL - Technical Sergeant Boulette was born in Lowell, Massachusetts. He was raised in the town of Billerica, Massachusetts, where he attended Billerica Memorial High School, graduating in 1995. Boulette entered the Marine Corps on 12 June 1995.

He went to Recruit Training at Parris Island, South Carolina and was assigned to Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion. During his training he distinguished himself as Series High Shooter, achieving the second highest rifle score

out of a company of 593 recruits.


Upon completion of recruit training, Boulette completed Marine Combat Training at Camp Geiger North Carolina, and was then assigned to attend the Marine Corps Small Arms Repair Course, held at United State Army Ordnance Center and School, Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Aberdeen, Maryland. Boulette finished first in his class and was meritoriously promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal in January 1996.

Boulette reported for duty with Ordnance Maintenance Contact Team -1,

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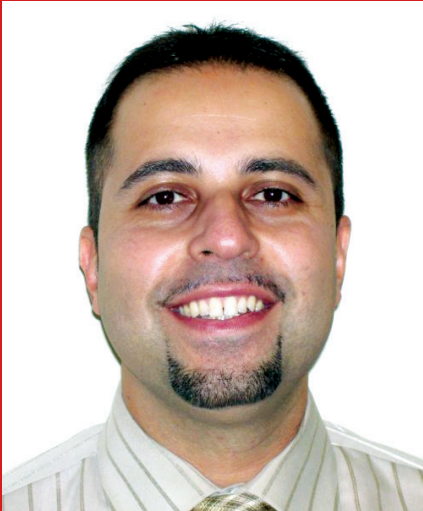
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EDITORIAL

We Support South Park... Horried by Comedy Central!

Will our president protect our rights here at home?

Last month, Muslim terrorists headquartered in New York City made death threats against the creators of Comedy Central's cartoon, "South Park". The threats came in response to an episode where Muslims were made fun of for threatening death upon anyone who depicts their "prophet" Muhammad.

Within hours, Comedy Central executives decided to appease the terrorists and censor the cartoon when it re-aired.

We are outraged that Americans exercising their free speech in this country are under threat of death for daring to violate the terrorist demands that non-Mulsims adhere to their satanic religious practices.

We are also outraged that the executives at Comedy Central have significantly chilled the free speech of every American in this nation. By giving in to these demands they have emboldened the Muslims to threaten other Americans who offend them. But, what outrages us the most is the fact that a terrorist Muslim group is operating in New York City with the blessing of our government.

With millions of satanic Muslim terrorists clamoring to wipe out our people, exterminate Jews and take down our government; allowing any radical Muslim group to operate on American soil is nothing short of suicide.

President Obama may not be at war with the terrorists who have made it to this country (and are trying to take us down from within) but they are certainly at war with us.

Comedy Central giving in to the demands of terrorists dealt a major blow against the freedom we cherish within our own country. And the inaction of the Obama administration have all but guaranteed that our free speech rights are no longer protected by our government.

The Valley Patriot supports Matt and Trey, the creators of South Park. We stand with their AMERICAN free speech right to offend Muslims, Jews or any other group they choose. We are horrified that our government does nothing about Muslim terrorists who are infiltrating our country, living among us and successfully intimidating us for not following the primitive satanic practices of their "religion".

What a travesty it will be when our brave troops win the war against Muslim terrorists in the Middle East, only to come back home to a country that no longer represents the freedom they put their lives on the line to protect.

We implore the executives of Comedy Central to re-air the Mohammad episode of South Park, unedited. Moreover, as American citizens we demand that our government officials (from the president on down) protect our rights here at home before it is too late. We must protect the creators of South Park and eradicate any Muslim terrorists who operate on our own soil.

Otherwise, we might as well just surrender to satanic Muslims, bring home all our troops, turn over every Jew in America and start studying the Koran.

News tips

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

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.

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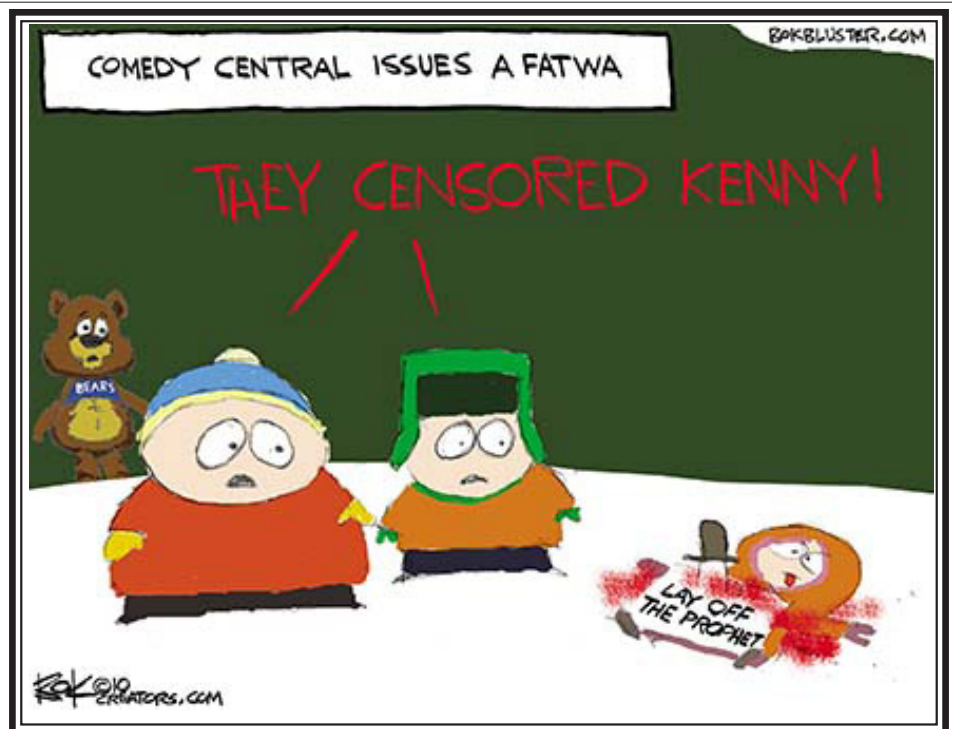
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To The Editor:

Well, Arizona just raised the bar!

Hearty congratulations are due Governor Jan Brewer and the Grand Canyon State Legislators.

For those who may be living under a rock, Arizona recently passed our nation's strongest legislation to date designed to enhance law enforcement agencies' ability to protect its citizens. This new law criminalizes a person's inability to prove citizenship and require local and state law enforcement officers to ask people about their immigration status.

Yes, Arizona found the testicular fortitude to do what any responsible government can and should do to defend and protect its citizens from foreign invaders. It is common knowledge that illegal aliens are trampling Arizona's economy and threatening their legal citizens' very way of life. Arizona (and many states, including our own) suffers from a large influx of illegal aliens living and working in their communities as a pariah.

These people do not pay income and other taxes as legal Arizonans do, take jobs at ridiculously low wage rates that their Citizens may otherwise take, and suck government services away from legal citizens, and often without paying for those services. In short, the problem of Illegal Immigration was sucking the life-blood out of their state and their State Government took definitive action. Bravo to Arizona!

Interestingly, other states such as Texas, with similar illegal immigrant problems, have taken notice of the new Arizona law and are working on similar legislation.

Critics have raised concerns about the possibility of Racial Profiling by law enforcement agencies. The new law prohibits this behavior and punishes any law enforcement officer who engages in this illegal practice. Other critics say that Illegal Immigration and Border Protection legislation should not be a state issue

— that that responsibility should remain Federal and not state in scope.

Frankly, I don't disagree with them. Clearly, Arizona's legislative action was a wake up call to the Federal government, who miraculously now sees the need to fix this problem at the Federal level: "I support and am actively working with bipartisan members of Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level because this issue cannot be solved by a patchwork of inconsistent state laws," said Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano in a written statement.

That is all well and good Ms. Napolitano, but until the day comes that our Federal Government finally fixes this problem, Arizona took matters into their own hands, and I applaud them for that.

Please don't misconstrue my position on this issue as a knock on Legal Immigration and Naturalization. That is far from true. Our nation was built on legal immigrant populations who enhanced and enriched our country. These legal immigrants educated themselves, learned and spoke English, bought homes, raised their children, paid their fair share of taxes, saved, invested in our communities and integrated themselves into the very fabric of America. They are the embodiment of the American Dream and we should recognize and celebrate their many contributions and successes.

We need to support good, upstanding people who believe in the values in which we believe and want to become Legally Naturalized United States Citizens. We should open our arms to hardworking people who want to contribute and integrate themselves into our American Melting Pot. But let's be sure to insist that immigration is done the right way - legally. Anything less is preposterous, patently unfair and altogether unsustainable.

Mark Dubinsky, Bedford NH

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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Our Federal Government Needs to be Re-shackled ... by the Constitution

Dr. Charles Ormsby

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I used to be against an activist Supreme Court. I no longer am.

I want an activist Supreme Court. I want the justices to do their job.

Don't just defend the Constitution (for a change), but begin to repair the damage that has accumulated from years of intentional destruction.

Liberal or Progressive justices have consistently contorted the language of our Constitution to free the federal government of the legal constraints erected by our nation's founders, constraints that were carefully engineered to protect individual liberty. When carefully crafted contortions were not up to the task, judges merely ignored the Constitution's explicit instructions.

Their modus operandi has been: First try to twist it, but if you can't twist it, ignore it.

Make no mistake about it, contortions of the framers' intent during the 1800s may have been viewed as innocent short-cuts to conveniently deal with the "problem du jour," but more recent attacks on the Constitution over the last 100 years have been consciously orchestrated by judges who seek to fundamentally change our form of government.

The destruction of our constitutional protections is cumulative and its ability to safeguard our liberties is hanging on by a thread. The Constitution is on life support and the Progressives, led by President Obama, are reaching for the plug.

Today, our government's laws, agencies, and daily practices are routinely in conflict with our Constitution. When Congress crafts a law, it no longer worries very much about the Constitution. When constitutional questions do arise, it is not the Constitution that restricts lawmakers; they merely find permissive precedents piled on top of faulty decisions that give them the desired license to tighten the noose around our necks.

A substantial majority of our government's powers that are routinely exercised are without proper legal basis. Most of our federal laws are inconsistent with the Constitution's original intent and, therefore, the actions taken by our government

to enforce these laws represent an abject abuse of power.

It is time to perform a house cleaning and correct the purposeful contortions of logic that our courts have committed. If the blueprint for governing America, based on individual liberty, is not restored by our Supreme Court soon, it may be too late.

The United States has a social compact. It is called the Constitution. The intent of our Constitution is clear when based on its plain text read in the context of the times during which it was written and debated.

We are lucky that the voluminous debate that occurred during ratification is well preserved.

The historical record makes the following two conclusions abundantly clear:

1. There is no constitutional basis for the unbridled growth of government power that the courts have progressively embraced since our founding, and

2. There is no legitimate legal basis for the resulting, substantial loss of the freedoms of American citizens.

It is time for a house cleaning. It is time to re-establish our Constitution as the supreme law ... not the supreme suggestion ... of the land.

Past decisions, decisions that plainly extend the federal government's power beyond that intended by our founders, must be overturned.

The offending decisions do not need to be overturned or unraveled one-at-a-time, like a movie run in reverse. The court merely needs to apply the Constitution's original intent to cases going forward. Doing so would go a long way towards restoring the American Dream.

There are numerous individual decisions that would contribute to revitalizing that Dream and avoiding the constant erosion of constitutional protections.

One would be a decision that recognizes the Second Amendment as protecting an individual right and, therefore, neither the federal government nor the individual states could arbitrarily deny an individual's right to keep and bear arms. An opportunity to do just this is currently pending (McDonald v. Chicago).

A second would be overturning the Kelo v. City of New London decision (protect-

ing private property from eminent domain abuse). While the Kelo decision has not led to a wholesale abuse of property rights yet, it represents a precedent that could not only excuse but encourage routine takings of private property in the future.

A third would be restoring our First Amendment rights to political speech by overturning the decision that declared the McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance "Reform" Act constitutional. What the court did not understand about "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech" is difficult to comprehend.

Each of these corrections of past errors (or purposeful distortions) would be very important, but none of them would substantially drain the swamp. There are two decisions that this author sees as having the potential to resurrect the constitutional barriers to the government's constant assault on our liberties.

The first would be a decision that severely restricts the interstate commerce clause and, therefore, the license it gives the government to constantly expand its authority over our lives.

Calling the interstate commerce clause "the elastic clause" used to be a cute way of saying it has been expanded well beyond what the authors of the Constitution intended. It is no longer cute. It is now an admission that the courts have played fast and loose with our Constitution. They have turned a well-meaning clause into a "get out of jail free" pass for the government.

Any time the government has wanted to meddle into the economy and make it less free, it has turned to the commerce clause for a ready excuse.

The original intent of the commerce clause was to keep the states from setting up protectionist tariffs at state borders, thus restricting FREE trade and Balkanizing our economy. It was initially intended to protect the operation of free markets, to encourage the growth of our economy, and to expand our economic freedoms.

It was NOT intended to restrict markets or our freedoms. And it certainly was not intended as a hammer to force individuals to buy anything, and certainly not health insurance.

Imagine James Madison's response if told that the commerce clause would one day provide the government the power to force a single man or an 80-year-old woman to purchase insurance that covers pregnancy! If we truly understand individual freedom, as Madison certainly did, we will also understand that freedom extends to allowing individuals to not buy goods or services even if someone else, anyone else, thinks they should.

The legal challenges currently being brought by 18 to 20 states against the recent government takeover of healthcare provides the court a chance to make a very clear decision restricting the powers previously excused by the commerce clause.

If handled properly, the decision could have an impact well beyond the health-care debate and dramatically reign in the federal government's power over our daily lives. Once the decision is rendered and the associated principles clearly enunciated, future challenges to oppressive federal regulations across a wide spectrum of activities can be mounted.

The other major opportunity to re-establish individual liberty is to ensure that the Ninth and Tenth Amendments, long ignored by our Supreme Court, are fully respected.

Their language is plain and their intent is clear. Precisely for these reasons, distortions of logic could not obliterate them ... only ignoring them would permit Progressive judges to escape their confines.

Here they are:

Ninth: The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Tenth: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

If you research court decisions that rely heavily on these amendments, you will find that few exist. All they are good for is restricting the federal government's power while protecting the rights of the states and individual citizens ... and what Progressive/Collectivist wants to do that?

To hell with "stare decisis et quia non movere" which translated means "to stand by and adhere to decisions and not disturb what is settled."

Gross violations of the plain text meaning of the Constitution can never be considered settled.

The Constitution is there to protect us - you and me - not to let the government run roughshod over our lives.

We will only be able to re-claim our liberties if the voters speak loudly (not softly) in support of liberty this November.

If we don't, our only redress will be to carry a big stick. And who knows where that will lead.



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

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An open letter to American Jews

Ben Shapiro
SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

Dear American Jews,

I write to you as a charter member of the tribe. I’m not only Jewish, I’m religious. I’m married to an Israeli girl (she’ll receive her citizenship next year and she is a proud soon-to-be American). I go to synagogue regularly, keep kosher, keep the Sabbath.

American Jews, I have one request of you: please pull your heads out of your posteriors.

I mean that in all sincerity. Your continued support for Democrats and an administration that is openly anti-Semitic is a disgrace. Your embrace of a party that seeks to hamstring Israel in the name of a wholly fictitious Middle East peace process is contemptible. Your loyalty to a president who consistently sides with Palestinian and Iranian mass murder-supporters is disgusting.

Your backing of a man who has spent his life surrounding himself with the worst anti-Semites America has to offer — Jeremiah Wright, Rashid Khalidi (former Palestinian terrorist spokesman), Louis Farrakhan (“I don’t like the way [Jews] leech on us”), Samantha Power, Robert Malley, to name a few — is nothing short of reprehensible. Rahm Emanuel’s presence in the Obama cabinet doesn’t ameliorate Obama’s anti-Semitism — it just provides it convenient cover. Al Sharpton wrongly called Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell “house negroes”; Emanuel is a kapo.

Even as you continue to buttress a president who seeks the destruction of your co-religionists, you demonstrate your myopia by rejecting the tea party movement and evangelical Christian Israel-supporters.

The tea party movement is your ally for three important reasons. First, it supports capitalism against the forces of socialism — and capitalism keeps America strong enough to provide Israel with a

hand against its evil adversaries. Second, American Jews are, by far, the highest-earning religious group in the United States — the tea party fights for your right to keep your money. Third, the tea party stands against government overreach — and in an era when government overreach promotes anti-religious secularism, Jews must stand with the tea party.

Your rejection of evangelical Christians is even more idiotic. Evangelical Christians are the only major voting bloc preventing President Obama from breaking ties with Israel. When Janet Porter, an evangelical Florida talk show host, heard about Obama’s anti-Israel tyranny, she responded by asking her listeners to buy dozens of yellow roses to send to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office as a show of support.

The price per dozen: \$19.48, in honor of the year of Israel’s founding (1948). Over 14,000 flowers were delivered. Meanwhile, Adm. James Jones, Obama’s national security adviser and the man who brought Jew-hater Zbigniew Brzezinski into Obama’s inner circle, was busy telling anti-Semitic jokes before the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

“But they want to convert us!” many American Jews shout. Not all Christians do. But for the rest — so what? Would you sacrifice the support of millions of good-hearted Christians because they want to discuss Jesus with you? If your own belief system is so fragile, the weakness is yours, not theirs. While you expend energy whining about Jehovah’s Witnesses who show up at your door with a Bible, Obama supports radical Muslims who would show up at your door with a gun — or, as in the case of Daniel Pearl, a butcher’s knife.

Now, I understand, American Jews, that most of you don’t care about Israel.

JEWS, page 40

NoBama-Go Yankees!

Robert O’Koniewski, Esq.
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Baseball and politics have historically crossed paths each season, especially as politicians try to curry favor with voters by opting to throw out the first pitch at a ball game of the home town favorites. Sometimes that can even backfire, when an alleged athletic male exposes his girl-like throwing technique to the ridicule of true fans. (Note to Obama, next time stay home and help weed the garden.)

Last year, however, as it became increasingly clear that Obama and the current Democratic cabal in Washington is focused on taking more and more from productive members of our society and giving to less productive participants in our American tableau, to the point of touting the need for “spreading the wealth” and pontificating that maybe some people have “made too much” (easy to say when you make \$5 million off of books you probably didn’t even write), I found myself increasingly becoming an openly rooting fan of the New York Yankees with each passing week of the season, even finding myself urging them on to a 27th World Championship. And sure enough they did it.

Why did this happen to me? One simple reason - I see no rational sense to take from the successful to give to the failed, the unmotivated, and the uninspired. Since the late 1990s when Major League Baseball instituted revenue sharing into the scheme of baseball’s financials, I have hated it. Why should more successful teams be penalized for their success and forced to hand over their hard-earned greenbacks to teams that do not have a sniffing interest in succeeding? I do not even have a problem with teams moving or just closing down entirely.

Dead is dead, any way you cut it.

The entire revenue sharing charade was put into place as part of the players’ collective bargaining agreement with the vague dictate that a team utilize the dough “to

improve its performance on the field.”

As I understand it, the revenue sharing system is based on two pots of money. First, there is the money that comes into MLB collectively from the sale of licensed merchandise, national TV and radio deals, and other media sources like the MLB Network TV and radio deals (great stuff, by the way). This money is split equally among the 30 ball clubs.

The handling of the second piece of the equation drives me batty. It consists of local revenues generated by each team through their ticket sales, concessions, and TV and radio contracts. These monies then go through a “taxation” formula that eventually has money moving from the higher revenue clubs to their low revenue competitors. In a sense, this is the equivalent of McDonald’s cutting a check to Lawton’s each year. It’s sole premise is that smaller market, low revenue teams (think Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Minnesota) cannot compete with the big market, high revenue teams (Yankees, Red Sox, Mets) because they do not have the dough annually to throw at all those high-priced free agents. The fact that these low-hangers actually won titles without the assistance of the handouts is a discussion for another day.

The third leg of the sharing pot surely was designed by Obamacrats even before there were any. The so-called luxury tax (actually the “Competitive Balance Tax” in official parlance) consists of those monies clubs must send back to the MLB home office as a penalty should they spend beyond a certain payroll ceiling “softly” set by the MLB green shades (in 2010, \$170 million) pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement with the players union. Have a payroll over that amount – BAM – here’s your bill. Pay your “tax” so that MLB can cover certain player benefits and league functions.

Since its inception in 2003, according to information from Maury Brown of the Business of Sports Network, four teams

NOBAMA, page 40

Patrick’s Price Controls Next Step to Government-Run Health Care

James Bohn
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

The Patrick Administration has taken the next step toward the establishment of single-payer health insurance in Massachusetts. Last month the state rejected 235 of 274 proposed health insurance rate filings. Health insurers filed suit. The final outcome is still in doubt but should the Governor prevail, Massachusetts will have the most rigid system of health insurance price controls in the nation.

Price controls discourage innovation and lead to low quality service. The reason is simple. Cutting-edge technologies and high quality care costs money. If a provider can’t get a better price by offering a better product, why do so?

In this case, there may be a hidden agenda. Price controls drive out private providers. Government steps in. In the long-run the Governor’s policies may well result in the replacement of private insurance with a government-run single-payer system for health insurance.

Single-payer may be Deval Patrick’s real agenda. He faces a tough election in the fall. Single-payer is popular with his Democratic base. It is in the platform of the Massachusetts Democratic Party. What better way to rally the party faithful?

Consumers and taxpayers (the same in single-payer) lose in two ways. First, they bear higher costs due to the inefficiencies of providing services through a government monopoly. Second, they no longer get the benefits of innovation and compe-

tition on the basis of quality and value by private providers.

Politicians make the claim that they are protecting the public from evil corporations. Remember how they railed against the ‘obscene’ profits of health insurers in passing Obamacare? Here there are two problems with Governor Patrick’s use of that narrative.

First, most Massachusetts health insurers are non-profit cooperatives run for the benefit of their members. No ‘obscene’ profits here. Second, Massachusetts health insurers are already losing money on policies written. Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the largest insurer in Massachusetts, lost \$150 million last year and expects to lose money again this year.

Price controls are popular with politicians. In the short-run price controls benefit consumers (i.e., voters) at the expense of producers. But eventually the private sector gives up. Capital exits. Providers leave. Government takes over.

To see how this would work, consider an example from another place, time and industry—subway transit in New York City. Until 1940, the subways in New York City were run by two private companies—the Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit Company (BMT) and the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT). There are still references to the BMT and IRT in New York today.

These companies operated under price controls from 1913 until just before World War II. Fares were capped at 5 cents. Over

time costs rose. In 1940 the companies asked to increase fares to 10 cents a ride. The LaGuardia administration refused claiming that the public interest was at stake.

To prevent ‘profiteering’ by private enterprise, the City took over the subway companies. And what did they do? The city raised the fare to 10 cents! It didn’t stop there. In the seventy years since the City took over the subway system, fares have risen 400 percent faster than inflation! Of course, there’s no private profiteering—just government waste.

We can expect the same result in Massachusetts. Once private insurers can no longer recover costs, they’ll stop writing policies. Since Massachusetts residents are required to purchase health insurance, the state will have to step in as the provider of last resort.

Government inefficiencies from single-payer will strain state finances. The result will be lower quality care, lower reimbursement rates for doctors and an end to innovation.

Health insurance costs rise faster than inflation because advances in medicine mean physicians can relieve human suffering and extend life in new ways. That’s a good thing.

Take an example that the Governor can relate to. Governor Patrick had a hip replaced last fall. There have been extraordinary advances in joint replacement technology over the last thirty years. But

cost has gone up.

Today a hip replacement costs about \$35,000. In 1980, the cost was about \$8,000 (\$21,000 in today’s dollars).

Still, I don’t think that the Governor would want to trade today’s technology for 1980’s even if he were charged the 1980 price for the procedure. In 1980, about 40 percent of hip replacements required a remedial operation within ten years to correct problems arising from wear and loosening of connections between the implant and the bone. Today, most patients can expect a lifetime without problems.

Of course, these quality improvements come at a price.

Medical cost indices don’t account for the benefits that accrue from advances in technology. Since health insurers are not allowed to recover the cost of new procedures in rates, they no longer have an incentive to contract with doctors able to offer innovative treatments.

The end result is that price controls stop the advance of medical technology cold. Patients will not have access to new treatment options. That’s the high cost of Governor Patrick’s health insurance price controls.

James Bohn is an economist and a Carlisle resident. He is working on the book Generational Theft: How the Policies of the Obama Administration Harm the Economic Interests of Young Americans.

“Arts Festival at Rolling Ridge: Celebrating the Natural World”

Featuring Open-Air Painting, Poetry, Music, the Environment and More

Rolling Ridge Retreat and Conference Center will host its second annual “Arts Festival at Rolling Ridge” on Sunday,

June 6, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The festival celebrates the beauty of the natural world, featuring open-air painting by local artists, poetry, music, and environmental and arts themed activities for families and adults. Admission is \$5 per car.

Rolling Ridge is a “Glimpse of Europe” in the midst of the Merrimack Valley, featuring a 38-acre European-styled landscape on Lake Cochichewick and a grand estate built for Ethan Allen in the 1920s. Artists can find inspiration in the historic architecture of the main house and spectacular lake views. Guests can watch artists at work and stroll serenely along wooded trails, rolling hills, an outdoor labyrinth, and a peace garden with



meditation benches.

Artists are welcome to enter the grounds and begin painting at 9 a.m.

Activities for the public begin

at 11 a.m. with Gayle C. Heney, Poet Laureate of North Andover, teaching ekphrastic poetry inspired by works of art. Other scheduled activities include North Andover poet Karen M. Kline presenting “A Poetic Walkabout at the Ridge” nature walk at 1 pm; and Nature Origami workshop taught by young artist Sam Wright of North Andover at 1 p.m.; and a “Found Art Nature Walk” at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. presented by the North Andover Cultural Council.

Rolling Ridge will present an a la carte lunch and dessert menu, and musicians from the North Andover High School Bands will perform from noon to 1 p.m. in the Lake-

RiverBank is committed to helping small businesses grow with accessible lending Program

Friendly neighborhood bank invites the community to an educational seminar on SBA 504 Lending

Massachusetts unemployment fell in March 2010 for the first time in nearly 3 years, with the addition of 7,600 new jobs to total employment. Have you been thinking, “is now the time to move to a larger facility, hire new employees or invest in new equipment?” If so, RiverBank can help by offering lower cost Small Business Association loans through the SBA 504 Lending assistance program. This program provides qualified small businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for the acquisition or improvement of major fixed assets, such as owner-occupied real estate, land, machinery and equipment.

For over 20 years, RiverBank has teamed up with Bay Colony Development Corp. to provide these new lower cost loans to small businesses in the Merrimack Valley and southern New Hampshire. SBA 504 Loans secured through RiverBank feature financing with as little as 10% down for loans of \$250,000 to \$10,000,000. Even with the uncertain economy last year, Bay Colony saw a 93% increase in small business loan volume in New England in 2009, which was recognized with two national awards for growth.

According to Bay Colony, 98% of businesses in New England meet the basic eligibility requirements for SBA 504 financing. To ensure small businesses are aware that these funds are available, RiverBank is offering a free educational workshop for small business owners in the communities served by the bank. The workshop will be held Monday, May 10th at RiverBank Headquarters in North Andover, 30 Massachusetts Avenue, on the 4th Floor, from 5:30-6:30 P.M. The educational seminar will guide small business owners through the process of applying for this loan program. Mike Topalian, Loan Specialist of Bay Colony Development Corp., working in partnership with RiverBank, will be the featured speaker. “Small business owners are vital to the health of our local economy and we look forward to helping these businesses grow and thrive.” said Gerald Mulligan, President and CEO of RiverBank.

Space is limited. To attend the workshop please RSVP to Cynthia Milne at 978-725-7553 or email at cmilne@riverbk.com.



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More information on the RiverBank SBA 504 Lending educational seminar and other RiverBank programs available for both small businesses and individuals can be found at www.riverbk.com.

Typically, a 504 project includes a loan secured with a senior lien from a private-sector lender covering up to 50 percent of the project cost, in our case RiverBank, a

ROLLING RIDGE, page 31

RIVERBANK, page 31

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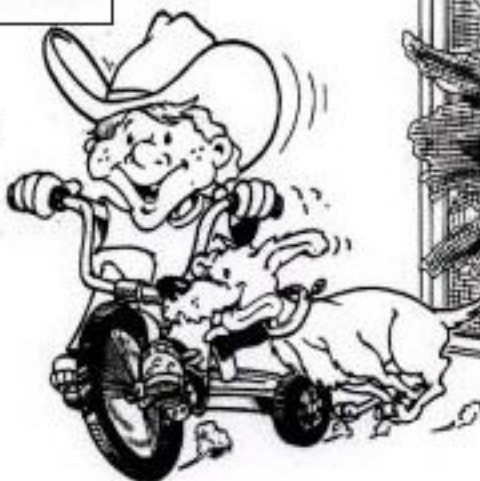
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A New England tradition continues with a fresh new take at Smolak Farms!

Smolak Farms Opens to the Public on May 7th

The trees are pruned and the grounds have been prepped for the thousands that will soon roam the many acres of Smolak Farms in North Andover, MA. Opening to the public on Friday, May 7, 2010, for its 35th season, the farm can trace its history back some 300 years. Today, the 160 acre multipurpose property boasts 107 acres of preserved land that the Smolak family set aside in cooperation with the State of Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program, insuring that the area would forever remain open land, never to be developed.

“Smolak Farms means so many things...to so many people. Whether a family was introduced to the farm picking fruits in the Summer, picking pumpkins, taking hayrides and enjoying warm cider donuts in the Fall, or grabbing fresh baked pies, gingerbread houses and their Christmas trees during the holidays; we’ve been so lucky to be part of so many people’s traditions and memories,” said Michael Smolak, the farm’s owner and developer for some 35 years.

This year the farm will continue its traditional activities with their Pick Your Own (PYO) seasons for strawberries, raspberries, sweet purple & tart red cherries, blueberries, currants, gooseberries, heirloom tomatoes, peaches, apples, pumpkins, squash and Christmas trees, along with celebratory festivals to celebrate each crop (visit www.smolakfarms.com for PYO dates and schedules).

Customers can also look forward to the newly renovated Farm Stand, now celebrating its 25th anniversary, providing customers with not only fresh produce and daily-made baked goods and new lunch items, but Smolak’s world famous cider donuts, pies and gingerbread houses! (*Gingerbread houses handmade to order and available only during the holiday season)

“This is my first year with the farm and I am extremely excited for the season,” said Smolak’s new

SMOLAK, page 31

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AS SEEN in "O" Magazine!



NAYRS Carnivals presents a plaque to Orit Goldstein of Ozzy Properties in appreciation for the use of the 1600 Osgood Street front lawn and parking lots for the 20th Annual North Andover Youth and Recreation Services carnival fundraiser to fund the Summer programs for the youth of North Andover (l. to r.)Tom Cleslewski NAYRS Board member, Rick Gorman Director NAYRS, Evan Goldstein, Orit Goldstein, President Ozzy Properties, Carrie Crouch Carnival, Chairperson for NAYRS, Ellen Keller, Vice President Commercial Real Estate, Ozzy Properties and John Flynn Owner, Fiesta Shows.

N. Andover Youth and Recreation Fundraiser

By: Josie McCarthy

This past weekend was the 20th Annual Carnival Fundraiser to raise money for the North Andover Youth and Recreation Department for their Summer Program. Thanks to the generosity of Orit Goldstein, owner of Ozzy Properties, who allowed the use of the front lawn on the property of 1600 Osgood St., North Andover. The North Andover Youth and Recreation Department Summer Programs allow children from grades elementary through high school to participate in summer field trips, fun, educational opportunities, trust building, and other special events. The year's carnival had a great turnout of children and families. The carnival takes place annually the week following

CARNIVAL, page 41

Senior Events in North Andover

Tax Deadline for Flood Victims: Victims of severe storms and flooding in Massachusetts may qualify for one form of tax relief from the IRS. Some tax deadlines in some counties have been moved back to May 11, (including the April 15th deadline for filing income tax returns.) Declared disaster counties include, Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk and Worcester. These counties qualify for individual assistance and also qualify for the extension to May 11th, call the IRS with any questions. We need Volunteer Medical Transport Drivers: Call the North Andover Senior Center for more information. Speak with Barbara at 978-688-9560 for an application and assistance. Senior Center Recognition Day May 12, 2010: The month of May was designated as Older American Month at the 2006 North Andover Annual Town Meeting. It was unanimously voted to declare the second Wednesday in the month of May as Senior Center Recognition Day. To celebrate this day, please stop in for a FREE coffee hour from 9:00-10:00 am. FREE PASS: During the month of MAY we are offering a one-time free fitness pass for one of the following programs. Stop by the reception desk to pick up your free pass for one session of

Tai Chi, Yoga morning and evening, Joy of exercise, walking group or beginner's Zumba. We also have an evening Ballroom dancing class that you are welcome to come in and observe. MVNP Luncheon: Tuesday, May 18, 2010, build your own Italian sub, served with lemonade, sun chips and chocolate chip cookie. The cost is \$2.00. Reservations required by calling 978-975-3884. The Senior Center needs donations of gently used jewelry, knick knacks and other small items for our Mini Boutique. Please leave your gently used treasures at our reception desk anytime. Seniors on the Go! AAA Air Trip to TWO Red Sox Games, June 5 – 7, 2010 at Camden Yards between the Red Sox and the Orioles plus a day of sightseeing in Washington D.C. This trip includes Airfare, 2 nights hotel, and Red Sox tickets for 2 games. \$549.00 Adult Double Occupancy, (2 to a room) \$449.00 Children 2 – 17 years sharing with 2 adults. Call Barbara at the Senior Center for a complete itinerary, 978-688-9560. Foxwoods: Next scheduled trip, Tuesday May 18, \$25 includes lunch buffet, transportation and Keno. Bus leaves from St. Michael's parking lot at 6:30 a.m. ZUMBA: Three classes available:

SENIORS, page 31

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Lawrence DPW caught illegally dumping

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

A Valley Patriot spotter tipped us off last month informing us that Lawrence DPW workers were illegally dumping construction material and road waste on the banks of the Shawsheen River on Mass Avenue in North Andover. The city workers dumping the materials just one day after the Earth Day cleanup at Costello Park.

The City of Lawrence was ordered to clean up the riverbank after The Valley Patriot published a series of photos on line showing the city workers caught in the act of illegally dumping.

“Under no circumstances can material like that be placed, even temporarily, on land subject to flooding or within 100 feet of a resource area like a wetland without the approval of the Conservation Commission,” said Tennis Lilly, Chairman of the Conservation Commission.

When The Valley Patriot spotter called a few days later to say that the city was in the process of cleaning up the dump site at the Shawsheen, a Valley Patriot reporter took it upon himself to follow city trucks to see where they were dumping additional material.

That’s when we stumbled upon another illegal dumping site within the city limits.

Just ten yards or so from the Lawrence Police Memorial at the St. Mary’s Cemetery on Tower Hill, and just yards away from the sacred ground where Lawrence’s Veterans are buried; we discovered that city workers had been dumping trash, sewage pipes, construction debris, yard waste, asphalt, curbing, rebar, and so much more.

The illegal dump site at the cemetery is gated by the city and is accessible only on foot without a key to the gate.

Lilly was surprised at the amount of garbage and other materials dumped at the cemetery when saw photos taken by The Valley Patriot. “The city may have a right to store material like construction waste temporarily on city property but at some point storing becomes dumping.” Lilly said the conservation commission would be addressing the issue at St. Mary’s Cemetery at their meeting on May 18th.

1) Lawrence DPW workers illegally dump road waste and construction debris at the banks of the Shawsheen River on Mass Ave in North Andover.

2) The seal of the City of Lawrence on one of the city trucks caught dumping illegal materials at the Shawsheen River.

3) The license plate of one of the Caterpillar trucks used by city workers to illegally dump at the Shawsheen River.

4) Mountains of trash on the backside of the hill in front of the Police Memorial at Duggan Way inside the cemetery. The 300 yard lot that is gated off by city workers just a few short yards from veterans graves. The pitched roof in the background of this photo shows the small building that directly abuts the Lawrence Police Memorial.

5) Trash bags filled with garbage, yard waste, and unknown environmental hazards are out in the open with piles of concrete and construction waste.

6) Lawrence DPW sewage pipes from a city road construction job. The pipes are imbedded into the ground amid a pile of waste packed down so tight it was impossible to remove any of the rocks from the pile, indicating that the waste had been at that location for a long period of time.

7) The stench from this pile of rotting garbage was so overpowering that it was difficult for our photographer to take the photo without having a physical reaction.

8) Leaves, tree branches and yard waste sits atop a mountain of asphalt with a ripped American Flag sticking out of the debris.

9) Sidewalk material and curbing from a city road construction job with rebar sticking out and mountains of asphalt from previous construction jobs in the background that have been there so long it was not possible to remove any of the items from the pile. In the background an empty chemical drum with the warning labels removed. There were several of these blue drums on the dumpsite.

10) An American flag sadly sits near the top of a pile of construction debris.

11) The Valley Patriot found so many piles of gray colored material packed onto the cemetery site that we unearthed a small patch to see the color underneath that had not been worn by weather.

12) Ground up asphalt piled more than 30 feet high.

13) More DPW sewage pipes, concrete, rebar and bricks and other hazardous materials.

14) More piles of garbage



ALL PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN





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**-Mike Gagliardi,
Local 175 Laborers' Union
of North America**

State Representative **16th Essex District, Lawrence**

Lantigua reposts jobs, even with qualified applicants

Martha Leavite
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

As a twenty plus year resident of Lawrence, I have always tried to serve this community in both my personal and professional life, while also trying to balance the needs of my family. My father did the same and I hope to instill that responsibility in my children as well by continuing my volunteer work for this city whenever possible.

Recently, the Mayor's office issued a call for applicants to fill the more than thirty open seats on the various boards and commissions that make up the backbone of city government, through the zoning process, the historic commission(s), the retirement board, the planning board and many other critical volunteer and paid positions that help guide the direction

of the future of our city. The previous administration left many positions vacant, or in some instances left people serving in expired terms, so clearly there was a need for the new administration to act on these - and quickly.

Rumbo News posted an advertisement for an open position on the Board of Registrars, a board charged with duties and responsibilities related to election and voter registration issues, with a stated deadline of Friday, April 16, 2010. I submitted my application accordingly, and received a time/date stamped copy as confirmation of receipt, at my request. I thought this particular board would be a great fit for me, as I have a BA in Political Science, a graduate certificate in Politics and Government, twenty years of volunteer campaign experience AND have been

a candidate for elective office myself.

Much to my surprise, when the April 22, 2010 edition of Rumbo News was printed, there was again an advertisement for the open position on the Board of Registrars, with a new deadline of May 7, 2010. I never received an acknowledgment from the Mayor's office of receipt of my application, nor was I ever interviewed for the position. My contacts have told me I was deemed "not a good fit" for the position. I'm not sure how they came to that decision, as I have never had a conversation with the Mayor or his administration, about my application.

In addition, last Thursday, the city council's sub-committee on Personnel met to discuss and vote on the Mayor's recommended applicants being nominated to fill the vacancies or expired terms. There

were approximately twenty-nine names sent down to the Personnel sub-committee, and each was asked to speak to the committee, describing their background(s) and interest in serving the City. It became abundantly clear that many of these applicants had not applied for any specific board or commission and when asked, many could not even articulate the role or responsibility of the board he/she was being considered for. Many of these volunteer boards and commissions (the paid ones as well) are guided by very complex statutes and regulations, or have strict standards which must be applied to their decisions. If a board member or commissioner does not fully comprehend what it is he/she is responsible for determining, where will the decisions they make lead this City? Only time will tell.

People who care to make a difference do not just "go away"

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Dalia Diaz, the Answer is No! I will not Go Away and I will not Stay Away! Thank You.

This is the United States of America and I have the right to comment on the Public Schools in the City of which I reside and own a home in. Just who in God's creation do you think you are?

As a brief explanation of what is going on here, I wrote an article in last month's Valley Patriot entitled, A Five Prong Approach to Fixing Lawrence Public Schools.

These were my thoughts and opinions that I have arrived at after 8 years of observations and discussions with teachers and administrators. Five years at the PTA level and three years of being a Lawrence School Committee member. As a courtesy I sent a copy of the article to each member of the current Lawrence School Committee. Well one of the members, (I believe it was one of Dalia's inner circle of friends Mr. Frank Bonet), thought it was a good idea to send it to Dalia Diaz, editor of the sorry excuse for a newspaper called, Rumbo News. That wasn't the part that

bothered me; it was what she wrote in her last edition that I found offensive. She got on her soap box telling everyone that I was a rubber stamp for Dr. Laboy and that I lost the last election (shocking!). Then she again brought up my past transgression of being involved with the LPS printing scandal by receiving campaign materials printed in the LPS print shop at no charge. She also went on to say that my opinion doesn't count and that nobody is interested in it and that I should go away and stay away! Well Mrs. Diaz, I can't change the past, but I know one thing for sure and that is I am done

apologizing for my past sins, enough is enough. The most offensive part to me was when she wrote that if I was ever given the opportunity to do it again that I probably would and that I would purposely abuse the public trust. Dalia, I am not asking to be put into that position again but if I ever were to find myself in that position, I would never make that mistake again. However, going forward I am thankful to the Editor of the Valley Patriot for allowing me the privilege to write a column expressing my thoughts and opinions every month

LAROCQUE, page 12

Northern Essex Community College to Expand in Lawrence this Fall

This coming fall, Northern Essex Community College will continue its expansion in Lawrence, opening a new facility that will offer additional educational opportunities for residents as well as local businesses.

"We are committed to the city of Lawrence," said David F. Hartleb, president of the college. "Our goal is to provide a full range of educational opportunities there, programs that will meet the needs of individuals who are preparing for careers or further education and businesses that want to educate their employees."

At its April 7 meeting, trustees of the college voted unanimously to approve a new five-year contract for leased space at Riverwalk Properties, which is located at 360 Merrimack Street, just off of Route 495.

"The addition of Northern Essex is the most significant thing to happen at Riverwalk," said Sal Lupoli, president and CEO of Lupoli, Companies, owners

of Riverwalk Properties. "The college will complement the wide range of businesses already located there and help us drive economic development in the city."

When renovated, the approximately 26,000 square foot mill space will feature 20 classrooms, five computer training rooms, a conference room, and staff offices, and will house the college's Corporate & Community Education Center, which is currently located in North Andover, and adult basic education programs, now located at the college's Louise Haffner Fournier Learning Center on Amesbury St. in Lawrence. In addition, the college will expand courses offered in the city, giving students the opportunity to earn certificates and associate degrees in business, hospitality, and computer science at the newly leased facility. Some of the programs offered will be accelerated programs which combine fully online and hybrid

courses with traditional face-to-face courses so that students, even those with full-time jobs, can complete their coursework quickly.

The college has outgrown its space in Lawrence, according to Hartleb. "We've simply run out of space in Lawrence. The last few semesters we've moved Lawrence classes to Haverhill as a result."

The state's Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) released a request for response for leased space in Lawrence last fall. They received multiple proposals and decided to select the Riverwalk because it offered the best combination of price, location, and parking facilities, according to Hartleb.

Lane Glenn, the college's vice president of academic affairs, was closely involved in developing the new programs that will now be available. "With the collection of programs we'll be offering

at our new facility, we will be providing new degree and career options for students, and a better location for corporate training and adult literacy and English as a Second Language classes. It's a wonderful opportunity for the college and the community."

The college currently has two buildings at its Lawrence campus, the Dimitry Building at 45 Franklin St. and the Louise Haffner Fournier Education Center at 78 Amesbury St. The college is also in the process of building an Allied Health & Technology Center on the site of the city's former In Town Mall.

In the fall of 2009, there were 2,666 students attending classes in Lawrence and close to a quarter were enrolled in one of the college's 18 health care certificate or associate degree programs.

The college will move into its new space September 1 and fall courses will begin September 8.



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GEORGETOWN TODAY

‘Anyone but a tax increaser’

Lonnie Brenan
GEORGETOWN COLUMNIST

“Anyone but Phil” (Trapani) was the call that went out prior to election week. By the time this column is printed, you will have read the election results. Chances are, Mr. Trapani will return to the board of selectmen where he will continue to support increased spending for what he repeatedly calls a “shoestring” budget for our fair Town.

Let’s start this column off right: Phil is a nice guy. Well liked, very friendly. I’ll be the first to admit I like the guy. But one must remember, Mr. Trapani ran for the board of selectmen three years ago as co-chair of what became known as the ‘Believe in Georgetown’ proposition 2 ½ override committee.

They sought to saddle the town with greater than \$1 million in new taxes, and to use that number as a base for future increases. And, they subjected the taxpayer to endless guilt trips and analogies to ‘cup of coffee a day’ and other such rationalizations to support the increase.

Even without the proposition 2 ½ override, we saw tremendous growth in school salary spending, with Mr. Trapani boasting recently that he helped to increase spending by more than \$600,000. Meanwhile, our town clerk and assistant town clerk, as well as many town hall employees, have seen scraps only, while others in town bask in high salary increases.

We love our schools. We love our teachers. We love our schools even more than our fire department, police department, and highway department, and we certainly love each of these. But, there’s a limit.

However, for some reason there remains

a dedicated group hell-bent on raising salaries and increasing spending, and putting the squeeze on the common Georgetown, or retiree. And they are organized.

One good note: Mr. Trapani earlier this year actually spoke against his tax-raising rabble, and used a simple analogy to question their desire to increase spending when he injected that the price one spends to have his lawn mowed by a lawn service doesn’t necessarily equate to worth (just because a neighbor spends \$60, doesn’t mean someone has to spend the same amount). I hope he thinks someday about those of us, the little people, who can’t afford lawn services to begin with!

Moving over to the Housing Authority, by now, you’re either intrigued, scared, or chuckling over the actions of the Georgetown Housing Authority and its Executive Director Diane Jodoin. There have been outbursts. There have been allegations (on all sides), there have been hysterics, and there has been drama. Now, we have Ms. Jodoin reportedly pushing and shoving a board member who reportedly closed Ms. Jodoin’s door, and blocked her exit. A charge of ‘kidnapping’ is rumored in the works.

I’ve seen the board member accused of initiating this action. She’s one of two apparently about to be charged with ‘kidnapping’ Ms. Jodoin. With no offense intended, the ‘instigator’ Bertha Foster perhaps weighs 120 lbs soaking wet, and all outside appearances would put her in the feather-weight wrestling range. One would think she would present less than a borderline physical threat against Ms. Jodoin, but who knows. Let’s hope things settle out. This has been a strange year.

LAROCQUE: FROM PAGE 12

in his paper. For your information, I did receive wonderful feedback from some of the other School Committee members, albeit, we didn’t agree on every point but I was grateful for their taking the time to respectfully respond and now we have an open dialogue.

By the way, since you brought up the label of “Rubber stamp”, isn’t that exactly what you’re doing with the Lantigua Administration? It seems to me when it was Mr. Greg Morris on the Lawrence School Committee and him being an employee of then Mayor Sullivan, you never hesitated to write column after column on how wrong this was. Now that one of your inner circle of friends, Mr. Frank Bonet is doing the same thing there is no mention of it, why? When past elected officials under the Sullivan Administration took city jobs after they left office without waiting the proper time, (per the City Charter) again you

spared no ink. But now under the Lantigua Administration where this is going on now, you are silent. Thousands of tax payer’s dollars were spent for curtains in the Mayor’s office, where is the column on the Mayor’s abuse of the public’s trust? Why do you allow the Mayor to bring a City Attorney into an Executive Session of the School Committee when they are already paying for their Attorney to be in attendance? Now that Mr. Sal Petralia, Human Resource Director for LPS has announced his resignation, does this now open the door for your buddy Mr. Frank Bonet to take over Sal’s position? Of course this would be in addition to his running for State Representative. Will you allow him to remain as a member of the Lawrence School Committee and run two city departments and be a State Representative all at the same time? Wow, what a Country!!!

In conclusion, please drop the act of

An Open letter to the Haverhill Council

Dear Councilors,

I am not one of your constituents, but I am a frequent customer of restaurants in Haverhill. I entertain business associates and have numerous dinners with family members each week ... probably averaging 3 to 4 times per week. At least half of these meals are in Haverhill (Evenfall, Joseph’s, The 99, Chinese Buffet, etc.).

I am appalled that you are even considering raising taxes ... I could say “in this climate,” BUT there is no need to qualify the outrage. Doesn’t Mayor Fiorentini get it? TAXES ARE WAY TOO HIGH ALREADY!! PERIOD!

Didn’t he notice that we just celebrated Tax Freedom Day in Massachusetts ... one of the latest in the nation?

Isn’t he aware that the legislature has not reduced the income tax to 5% as demanded by the voters?

Did he miss the fact that the sales tax is now OVER 6% with a 0% sales tax in NH?

Should I mention the Excise Tax (is the Spanish American War over yet?)? How about our ridiculous property taxes? Not to mention Federal taxes, fees, fines, etc.

Scott Brown’s election and The Tea Party Movement should be a wake-up call ... In case you haven’t noticed, PEOPLE

ARE MAD. Too much government and too much intrusion in our lives.

Businesses in Haverhill (not to mention the town itself) must compete with surrounding towns and, heaven forbid, with NH. Do Haverhill businesses need to operate at a competitive disadvantage? Is that the road to success for Haverhill and its citizens?

If Haverhill imposes an additional tax on meals, I will no longer dine out in Haverhill. In fact, I will encourage others to also avoid restaurants in Haverhill. Yes, this initially hurts the owners of those businesses, but that may be the only way to put pressure on elected officials to stop this madness.

My vote may not be at risk in this decision, but my dollars are (and those of my family members and associates).

Burden your businesses and your community at your own risk. If you do impose this tax, don’t wonder why Haverhill enters a downward spiral.

Dr. Charles C. Ormsby, Prof. of Mathematics at UMass Lowell, Resident of No. Andover (Right on the Haverhill border)
64 White Birch Lane; 978 682 8569

Part owner and Columnist for The Valley Patriot newspaper

What is most amazing is that Ms. Foster had, until recently appeared to be a supporter of the executive director in many areas. Why do some board members appear to continue to jump ship against Ms. Jodoin? And will the new tenant’s association help to stabilize the Housing Authority (I hope it does)? Or was some of this ‘association’ just a backdoor political action committee set up by some insiders? Any why so many rumors and so much unrest?

Perhaps it’s time for all to take a breath.

We have a very nice lady who has served as chair of the committee, and one would hope that somehow, she will find a way to mend this situation.

Let’s hope things move forward in a positive manner. The Housing Authority meetings, or lack thereof, have gone from amusing to concerning to downright disturbing. The Trestle Way residents, and all in our town, deserve better. Let’s hope, together, they find a way.

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AMESBURY

Officers bike to Police Memorial in Washington D.C.

Amesbury Officer Jason Kookan rides in honor of slain Lawrence Police Officer Tom Duggan Sr.

This month, Federal, State and Local Law Enforcement Officers will bicycle from Chesapeake, Virginia to Washington, DC to participate in National Peace Officer Memorial Day services.

Every year the National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) and Concerns of Police Survivors host a candle light vigil for every police officer killed in the line of duty in America.

The names of every officer killed the year before are read aloud among thousands of police officers and family members at the Memorial. The names of officers killed the previous year are engraved on the memorial wall to honor their ultimate sacrifice.

The bike ride is a 250 mile, 3 day ride from Chesapeake VA to the 911 Memorial at the Pentagon, each of the riders is a Sworn LEO (active or retired) or the survivor of a fallen officer.

Each officer must raise \$1,250 to ride. The ride leaves Chesapeake on May 10th and arrives at the Pentagon on May 12th.

There are 250 registered riders with police motor escorts that make the journey as a formed movement to honor officers. It is Law Enforcement United's mission to honor the service and sacrifice of all law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty and support the survivors left behind.

Jason is an Officer with the Amesbury Police Department. He has been a police officer since 2001 and himself was shot a few years ago. Jason is also a 19 year veteran of the Coast Guard where he is a Chief Petty Officer with Sector Boston's Enforcement Division.

"I started Team New England in 2008 and this will be my third year making the ride with a team of eight riders from the Northeast," Koogan said.

Koogan said he was listening to the Michele McPhee radio program on 96.9 FM Talk, when he learned that the City of Lawrence refused to lower the flags to half staff on the 20th anniversary of slain Lawrence Police Officer Tom Duggan's murder.

"I was sickened when I heard that, so I decided to ride for Tom Duggan, Sr. this year," Koogan said. "I remember being told about Duggan's death at the hands of a man with a baseball bat when I was in



PHOTO: COURTESY

the academy and I never forgot that. Since then, police officers are specifically trained on how to deal with vehicle stops and what to do when there is a bat in the car."

This year Koogan's team will be honoring 3 Massachusetts Officers that fell in 2009, Ptl. Michael Davey (EOW 8/24/09), Sgt. Mike Townner (EOW 4/7/09), and of course Capt. Cashin (1/28/09). From Law Enforcement United riding in Honor and in Memory of Capt. Rick Cashin is Officer Lacey Blizek of the Roseville MN Police Department. Lacey serves with my friend John Jorgenson who grew up in Canton MA, Jorgey was shot executing a warrant in December 2008. "Jorgey endured numerous surgeries and was able to ride in 2009, he returned to duty a few months back. I tell this story as these are the types of officers that ride. They are Cops Cops, dedicated and motivated."

Money raised goes to Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) and Officer Down Memorial Page (ODMP.org). "I can not express the feeling to be making this ride side by side with survivors. At one point in 2008, I was next to Mary, when the procession stopped on US 1 in Stafford County VA. It was at this point we gave honor to the memory and sacrifice of her son Deputy Jason Mooney (EOW 10/19/07), who was killed the year before. Mary is a real motivator and I look forward to riding with her again this May."

The webpage is www.teamneleu.com please visit and make any contribution you could toward our ride.

Bicycling toward Bankruptcy

John McCormack
VALLEY PATRIOT BOXFORD COLUMNIST

The Board of Selectmen held a public meeting at Lincoln Hall on April 29 to discuss the proposed reconstruction of Route 133 in Boxford. This road has issues; the Parker River culvert on the Willow Road section and the Porter Brook culvert near Paisley's need replacement; the intersections with Main Street and Spofford Road have design and safety issues. West village residents are very concerned with drivers speeding through the village.

The pavement appears in good condition; there are no potholes; the edges are not crumbling. The town spent \$350,000 in late 2006 repaving from the west village to the Georgetown line. In contrast, a few feet into Georgetown the pavement is rough and potholed; the roadway in North Andover is even worse. The road surface by Lake Cochichewick has been repaved numerous times to counter disintegration.

Alright, you say, appropriate some money and fix the problems. The town could, but unfortunately the perverse incentives of state transportation funding and paternalism complicate things. The state may pay for the road reconstruction if it includes certain "improvements." The town must foot the engineering costs which would be about \$800,000 plus any land or easement acquisition costs. The town would also have to wait its turn as funds are appropriated for road reconstruction. This could take five or six years. The project and its carrots remind me of another state sponsored coercion, the library project.

The improvements the state likes to see are bicycle lanes on both sides of the entire road and curbs and sidewalks in the village. In the worst case, this would add

twenty feet to the paved roadway width in the west village. Each bicycle lane is four feet wide and each sidewalk is six feet wide. This would result in numerous land takings and the loss of trees, fences, etc. in the areas taken. The state would construct retaining walls and mitigate problems

caused by the project. There is a waiver process which might reduce the improvements required but also likely reduce the chance of funding.

If your land is taken, you won't retire on the damage payment. My experience went like this. The taker hires an appraiser who says your property before is worth \$X; your property after is

worth \$X. You have no loss. But (ignore the contradiction) you've lost something, so you should get \$Y. Mirabile dictu, everyone on the road deserves the same small \$Y. Of course the addition of the bike lane and sidewalk may improve your property, making your loss \$0. It is a very political process.

Sidewalks are a political third rail in Boxford. Sidewalks, street lamps, and other suburban fixtures clash with our rural self image. This image requires minimizing formal landscaping and the impact of roads on the environment. Route 133 is classified as a "rural major collector" which means that speed will remain an enforcement issue. West village traffic cannot be made to resemble east village traffic.

About 40 people attended the meeting. Some expressed a liking for bike lanes; others thought the reconstruction went too far; most did not speak. Taking a broad view, road repairs come out of one taxpayer pocket or another. The state is willing to rip up miles of perfectly good pavement and spend a large amount of additional taxpayer money, probably in the millions,

BOXFORD, page 31

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Dr. Michael Provenzano

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

METHUEN – The Methuen Democrat City Committee held an event last month where they took a straw poll. Methuen Democrats returned the following results: Governor Deval Patrick 73 votes, Grace Ross 30 votes. State Treasurer: Steve Grossman 71 votes, Steve Murphy 30 votes. State Auditor: Suzanne Bump 23 votes, Guy Glodis 67 votes, Mike Lane 7 votes. Governors Council: Mary-Ellen Manning 47 votes, Jason Panos 53 votes.

DRACUT - The Scott Brown coat-tail rides continue. In Dracut this week, Cathy Richardson topped the selectman race beating incumbent George Malliaros and knocking out incumbent James O'Loughlin. Richardson is chair of the Dracut Republican Town Committee and her mother is Mass GOP state committeewoman Sheila Richardson. Also in the selectman race were Brian Bond and Pete Wilde. According to Dracutforum.net, Selectman Zimini seemed to be the big loser on election day, as his slate of three candidates all lost: Brian Bond for selectman, Phil Thibault for housing authority and May Paquette for school committee. Sadly, these were also the three candidates endorsed by Valley Patriot Columnist D.J. Deeb in last month's edition. Sorry D.J.

METHUEN - State Representative Linda Dean Campbell deserves praise for supporting the her constituents and voting for their interests. She took two big votes last month, going against the status quo Democrats on Beacon Hill. I commend Linda her for those votes. First was her vote against the Lawrence bailout bill (which allowed the City of Lawrence to borrow \$35 million dollars without and oversight board). Linda understands that if Mayor Lantigua defaults on the loan payments, the state taxpayers are on the hook for bailing them out. The second was her vote for Rep. Jeff Perry's amendment to the state budget calling for proof of legal residency before anyone can receive state services and benefits. Unfortunately, Campbell lost both measures but, Linda was on the right side of both issues and voted the right way. Thank you Rep. Linda Dean Campbell!

STAND FOR FREEDOM! – A Face-book group has been set up to support the creators of South Park who are under death threats for depicting the Muslim "prophet" Muhammad. After a Danish cartoonist was brutally murdered for drawing the "prophet" of the terrorists, and the threats against the South Park Creators, the threat of losing our "right" of free speech in America is very, very real. The fact that the spineless cowards at Comedy Central censored the Muhammad episode in response to such threats means our rights (your rights!) are in danger now more than ever before. To show solidarity with Matt and Trey (see editorial, page 2) I am asking all Valley Patriot readers on Facebook to display the Danish cartoonists' drawing of Muhammad as their profile picture on May 20th. We must stand together and prove that we

won't bow down to terrorism, especially here at home. We cannot back down to the intimidation and threats of death for exercising our American rights. The more Americans there are who defy the satanic Muslims the harder it is for them to target us and pick us off separately. Stand up for free speech before it is too late!

NORTH ANDOVER - Unlike Representative Linda Dean Campbell, North Andover State Rep. Dave "Where is he" Torrisi was more concerned about the interests of illegal aliens than he was about his North Andover constituents. Several years ago he voted for in-state tuition for illegal aliens and last month he voted against the Jeff Perry amendment calling for a cut in state services to illegals. The amendment that Torrisi voted to "kill" by sending to study, rather than to become part of the budget, would have required Massachusetts residents to show proof of legal status before receiving state benefits, like welfare. According to Rep. Perry, this amendment would have saved the state millions and freed up money to give to towns like North Andover, open Lawrence's fire stations, fund benefits for mentally ill and mentally retarded and restored state aid for police and essential services. But it is clear that Dave

cares more about illegals than he cares about American citizens who are paying the freight and I only have to wonder what his constituents think about that. I guess we will find out on election day when he faces either Begley or Novak. Hey, maybe he will come on the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP and explain his vote. I guess I'll have to send him an e-mail invitation. LOL.

NORTH ANDOVER – speaking of David "Where-is-He" Torrisi, last month North Andover's invisible man on Beacon Hill was asked via email if he would be willing to appear on the Michael Graham radio program on 96.9FM Talk. But when the producer sent the invitation to Dave asking him to discuss his vote in favor of illegal aliens he shot back in true Torrisi

form, telling Graham to go "fuck himself" calling him an "asshole". For days, callers on the radio talk show theorized as to why

Torrisi would be so stupid as to personally attack Michael Graham the way he did. But, knowing Dave as well as I do I can tell you that this is his typical m.o. when Dave doesn't have a reasoned, logical defense for his actions. You see, Dave is tight with Willie Lantigua (da chief) and depends on Willie securing votes from illegals and family members of illegals in Lawrence when he runs for reelection.

HEALTH -

Volunteers are needed to inform local cancer patients of programs, services, and resources available to them through their American Cancer Society Cancer Resource Network. Volunteers will work with patients in hospitals and cancer centers throughout the community. Schedule for volunteers is flexible. For more information or to volunteer please call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

YE GAY OLD VALLEY - This month we start a new feature in the Valley Patriot called "Ye Gay Old Valley", featuring our first ever lesbian columnist Dani, (YAY!). Dani will be writing about issues of concern to the gay and lesbian community here in the Valley and I am thrilled to have her on board, though I know we aren't going to agree on much. My hope is that this will lead to healthy and constructive debates about these issues in a civil and productive way so that people can better understand both sides of every issue. Let's face it, gays and lesbians are sorely under represented in the arena of public opinion when discussions come up about gay marriage, the bathroom bill, adoption and other issues that directly their lives. Instead of discussing and debating gay issues with heterosexuals who claim to represent gays, I would rather give a voice to gays and lesbians themselves to share their opinions on such issues. After all, what good is free speech if you have no vehicle to express and share your views?

HAVERHILL - Ray's Auto Service on Broadway in Haverhill will be collecting diapers for the entire month of May to honor Moms and their babies in the Greater Haverhill Community. All dona-

tions will go to the Pregnancy Care Center in Haverhill. "Diapers can cost upwards of \$100 per month these days, and it's not something that a new, needy mom can go without," said Mark Lapointe, president of Ray's Auto Service. Ray's Auto will give each customer a unique thank you gift and a coupon for a future service as a thank you for participating in the Diaper Drive. Ray's Auto Service is located at 1457 Broadway (Rt 97) in Haverhill, MA. Founded in 1965 by Ray Lapointe, Mark's father, Ray's Auto services all makes and models of cars, trucks and minivans. Call 978-372-9611 to schedule your service appointment.

METHUEN - Forest Street Union Church, Ham & Bean Supper (Co-chairs Trudi & George Driscoll) For the Ham & Bean Supper May 22nd 2010 your help is needed. To keep the tradition of great suppers on track, Homemade pies/desserts are being solicited to be served for dessert. They are expecting to serve 100+ people. All bakery should be at the church in the 'pie room' by 3:00pm. (Sat May 22nd) See Mary Hilderbrandt. The following volunteers will be needed on Saturday May 22nd: 6 people to set-up/set tables from 9:00-11:00AM. Kitchen help from 2pm - 4pm. Servers for dinner from 4 - 6PM. A clean-up crew from 6pm until finished. Please let Trudi or George know how you can help and or sign up on Sunday mornings - in the vestry. Tickets are available see - Barbara Lewis, Barbara Leonhardt, Mary Hilderbrandt, Trudi or George. Adults \$7.50, Seniors \$6.50, Children \$4.00, MAY 22, 2010, 4:00PM-6:00PM, Continuous Serving HAM & BEAN SUPPER. The more hands we have the lighter the task.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE VIOLATIONS - According to the Mass. Office of Campaign Finance, the Haverhill Democratic City Committee did not comply with campaign finance laws and made prohibited campaign contributions; The committee did not file reports for 2006, 2007 or 2008 until November 2009, disclosing more than \$10,000 in activity during the three-year period. The report failed to itemize \$5,908 in contributions, and the committee accepted two prohibited contributions from candidates running for Congress. To resolve the matter, the committee made payments of \$500 to the state's general fund and \$500 to charity.

WANTED: Volunteers to help take water samples. As the weather turns a bit nicer each day, the MRWC inches closer to kicking-off the Merrimack River water quality monitoring season - and they need your help! Most of their monitoring is conducted

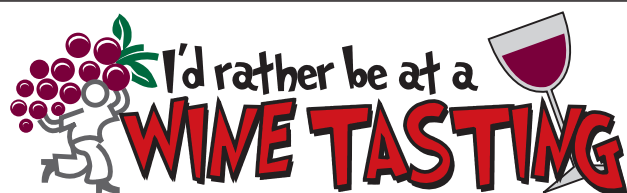
by teams of 3 to 4 trained volunteers who spend one morning a month on a motor boat collecting data. If you have time to help, contact Tracie at tsales@merrimack.org or 978-275-0120 for more information about how to get trained. The monitoring you do will help us find pollution sources and keep our thumbs on the pulse of the river. No experience necessary!

PETS - Join other dog lovers for a day filled with family and canine fun while



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

State Senator Richard Tisei, (candidate for Lt. Governor) with his running mate Charlie Baker (candidate for Governor) hold up their April edition of The Valley Patriot in North Andover last month.



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helping us raise money for homeless dogs! Some of the activities that will be running throughout the day include an Agility Try-out ring, Demonstrations, Parade of Adoptable Dogs, Doggie Games, face painting for the kids, a silent auction, food, Pet Photo Sessions, Pet Massage, exhibitors, and more. Registration begins at 10:00am

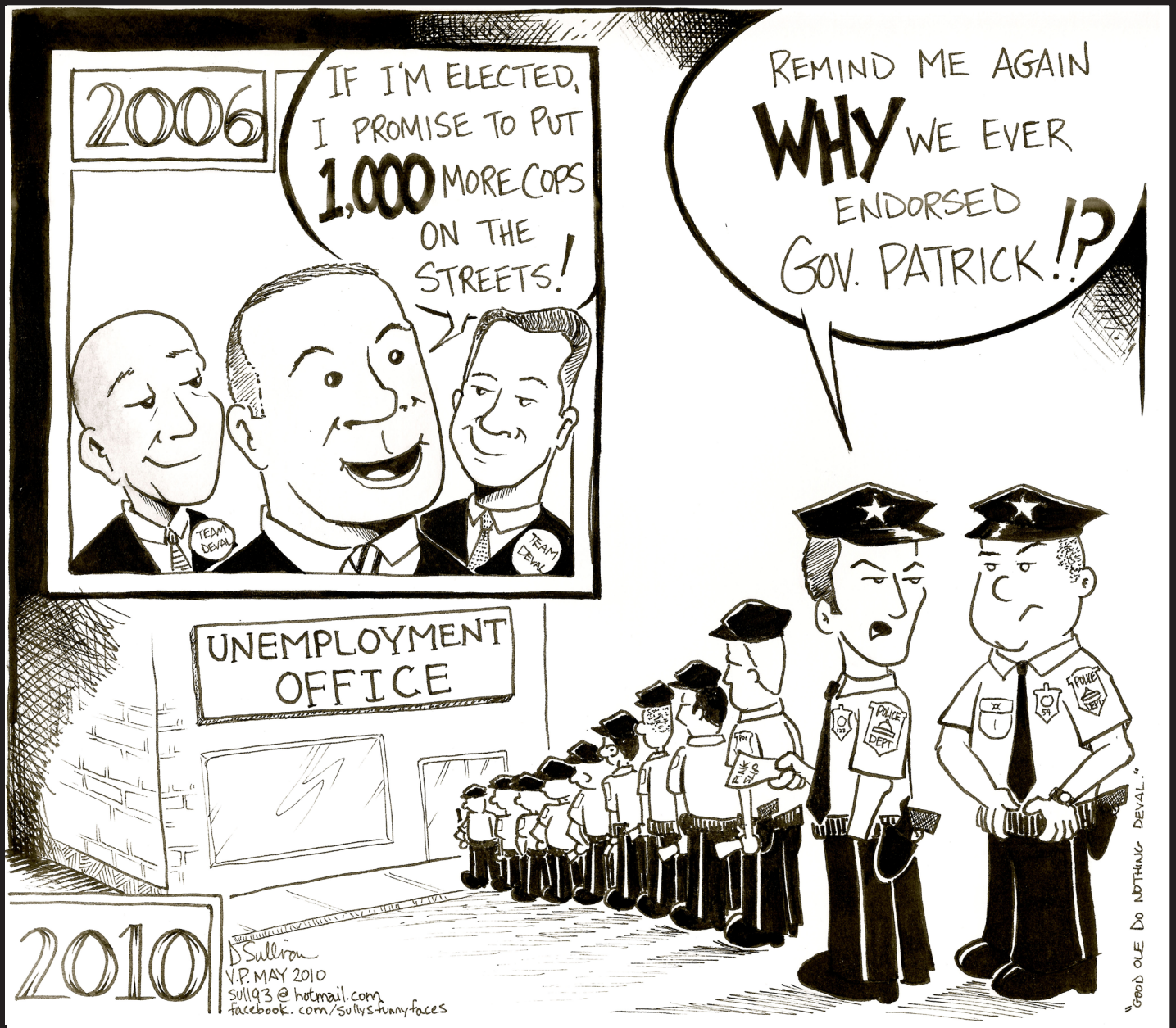
Group Walk: 11:00pm - 12:00pm. Admission is \$10 (waived if you have pledged minimum \$10). Children under 12 are free.

LAWRENCE – The Lawrence Chess Club will meet Thursday, 13th May 2010 from 6-8pm at the Lawrence Public Library, on the corner of Lawrence and Haverhill streets. Also, on Friday, 21st May 2010 from 6-8pm at the Bashara Boathouse, One Eaton Street on the banks of the Mighty Merrimack River. All ages, all languages and all levels are welcome to play, learn and help teach. It takes about 20 minutes to learn and a lifetime to master. As always, it is FREE. If possible, please bring a chess set and a friend. Feel free to share this invitation with anyone. Remember, you really do not know how to play chess until you have lost 500 games. Contact Frank O'Connor, Jr., Community Development Dept., Office of Economic Development, 147 Haverhill St., Lawrence, MA 01840

AUDITIONS - The Treble Chorus of New England is currently scheduling auditions for the 2010-11 year. TCNE, a youth choir for children ages 6-18, is dedicated to exposing children to fine choral music of all periods, Openings in 3 choirs for the 2010-2011 school year. The Audition dates are Monday, May 10th, 17th and 24th, 2010. For more information, please go to www.treblechorus.com or call 978.837.5461 or email tcnemanager@treblechorus.com.

LAWRENCE - Greater Lawrence Community Boating kicks off its summer season May 22, 2010 with the First Annual Concrete Regatta, with boating games, activities, demos and prizes at the Methuen LOOP from 11am to 2pm. Come join the fun and enroll in summer programs in sailing, rowing, and canoe kayak.

Spring programs include: Middle school rowing April 27 to May 27, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5pm to 6:30 pm. Cost is \$150. Adult Learn to Row: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-11 am. Learn proper rowing technique, rowing fitness, and team rowing in this 4-week session geared toward the total beginner. Start on land on our indoor rowing machines and progress into our sleek racing shells in just a few sessions. Swimming ability required, but no other experience necessary. \$150. Erg-Spin class. This 4-week session is geared toward improving fitness and efficiency using our 20 Concept II indoor rowing machines. Indoor rowing offers one of the best total body workouts, and you can track your progress with calories burned,



NEWS ITEM: Four years ago, police unions endorsed (then candidate for governor) Deval Patrick who promised he would put 1,000 more cops on the streets. Since then, Deval has cut MILLIONS in aid to local communities resulting in thousands of police layoffs. He also replaced police road jobs with flag men who have criminal records.

distance, and power output. Class meets from 12-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so it is perfect for your midday workout. Drop ins OK. \$10 per class for drop ins; \$50 for all 8 classes. For more information visit www.boatingprogram.com

LAWRENCE - Step out this spring! Take a walk along Lawrence's North canal with Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation interpreter, Jim Beauchesne. Discover the power potential of the Merrimack River, historic textile mills, and the formative history of the industrial revolution that lives on through thoughtfully assembled interpretive exhibits and preserved artifacts.

Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care
Providing Paw-sitive Pet Care to the Merrimack Valley

We begin at the restored boardinghouse, now home to the Lawrence Heritage State Park Visitor Center. Follow Jim's lead along the esplanade of a nineteenth-century canal, past giant mills, in the footsteps of the Bread & Roses strikers, to the base of



Tracey Zysk
Bonded & Insured
wigglegalk@comcast.net
978-697-6571
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is limited and reservations are required. Event is FREE to Essex Heritage Explorer subscribers; non-members \$15. Proceeds generated from this event will be pooled and contributed to Friends of Lawrence Heritage State Park and the Essex Heritage Explorers Program. Register online at www.HeritageExplorers.org. For more information or to reserve a space, call the ENHC at 978-740-0444, email explorers@essexheritage.org or visit www.HeritageExplorers.org.

DRACUT - How can women know

exactly how men think? Will women ever truly understand male thoughts? Is it possible for women to think from male point of view? Be careful what you wish for as the all male comedy show "How Men Think (or Do They?)" a hilarious peek inside the male mind. The comedy returns at The Parker House Grille in Dracut, MA on Saturday, May 15th. Doors open at 5 pm, first show starts at 7 pm and second show doors open at 9 pm, show starts at 9:30 pm. The show line up includes Dave Rattigan from XM Satellite radio and Olympia Sports ad, Mike Prior from the Boston Comedy Festival, Dave Decker, winner of the 1975 Betty Crocker Award, Mike Scalia, a two time finalist in the Boston Comedy Riots and Doug Blay, comedy host at the Rusty Hammer in Portsmouth. The show content is so glaringly clear, as the comedians share their points of view on wives, mothers, friends, kids, and careers, neighbors, growing older, love, lust, and internet dating. Women will appreciate it coming from guys who have no ulterior motives and is just honestly making them laugh. The Parker House Grille is located at 101 Broadway Road, Dracut, MA. Phone: 978-854-4285. Show times are 7 PM with a late show added at 9:30 pm. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased

NOTEBOOK: PAGE 41

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Republicans rally in Andover

Republican candidates rallied at La Rosa's Deli on Barnard St. in Andover last month (which has GREAT food)! (l-r) Bill Hudak candidate for Congress, Brett Schetzle candidate for Congress, Mario Marchese candidate for State Rep. in Wilmington, Sal Tabit, candidate for State Rep. in Andover, Jim Baldwin Candidate for State Senate, Mary Connaughton candidate for State Auditor, Jim Lyons candidate for State Rep., Paul Adams candidate for State Rep, Jamison Tomasek candidate for State Senate, Bill Campbell candidate for Secretary of State, Kevin Begley candidate for State Rep in North Andover and Pat Rahilly for State Senate.

PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN



PHOTO: COURTESY

The American Legion's John Lenotte at a fundraiser last month for his campaign to be commander. Lenotte is The Valley Patriot's American Legion Veteran columnist. See his column on page 53!

Valley Patriot, Tribune team up for charity



PHOTO: GEORGE SCIONE

Valley Patriot Editor Tom Duggan and arch rival Gretchen Putnam, Editor of the Eagle Tribune put aside their differences to raise money for charity in the first charity poker tournament on MCTV's Politically Active. For the record Gretchen Putnam came in 2nd, Duggan came in 3rd, Jamie Atkinson came in first. The tournament raised \$150 for the Patrick Connolly Foundation.

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ALL PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

Scenes from the Mass Republican Convention

1) Back stage at the convention these young Polito supporters listen to Karyn's acceptance speech as the Republican nominee for Treasurer **2)** Charlie Baker, the Republican nominee for governor takes in the celebration at the end of the State Republican convention, **3)** Jen Nassour, Chairman of the Massachusetts Republican Party gives our Valley Patriot photographer a thumbs up as the confetti begins to fall, **4)** former Lt. Governor Kerry Healey waves to the delegates, **5)** Woburn State Rep. Candidate Kara Fratto, Valley Patriot editor Paula Porten, and Reading School Committeeman Karen Errichetti, **6)** North Andover Selectman Dan Lanen, Kevin Begley, candidate for State Rep. in North Andover and Lawrence and Paula Porten, vice-chair of the North Andover Republican Town Committee, **7)** Jim Rappaport, Holly Robichaud and Paula Porten, **8)** Convention Secretary Christina Bain, State Senator Bruce Tarr of Newbury, and Jen Nassour GOP state Chairman, **9)** Christy Mihos did not get the required 15% of the delegate vote to have his name placed on the ballot but his speech drew loud applause, **10)** Mary Connaughton candidate for Auditor, **11)** Melrose Alderman and candidate for State Rep. Monica Medeiros looks on as votes are added up, **12)** Congressional candidate Marty Lamb of Boston, Ron Kauffman, from the National Republican Committee, and Tom Duggan of The Valley Patriot **13)** Andover's Jim Lyons was said to be one of the GOP's best candidates to unseat an incumbent this year. Lyons is running against Andover's Barbara L'Italien, **14)** Charlie Baker with North Andover Selectman Rosemary Smedile and N.A. School Committeeman Karin Rhoton, **15)** Congressional candidate and former State Treasurer Joe Malone who is running against Jeff Perry, **16)** Charlie Baker gets the crowd of MA republicans cheering, **17)** Andover State Rep. candidate Paul Adams with his girlfriend, Patricia **18)** Haverhill' Dot Early looks over the vote totals, **19)** Charlie Baker with his wife and daughter, **20)** Methuen's Jack Fitzpatrick with his lady friend, Charlie Baker and Jennifer Wineicki of Lawrence , **21)** Republican U. S. Senator Scott Brown endorses Charlie Baker for Governor, **22)** convention chairman Bruce Tarr shakes hands with some of his constituents, **23)** Charlie Baker hugs his wife while his mom and dad make their way on stage, **24)** Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins introduces Charlie Baker, and **25)** Senator Richard Tisei, the unanimous nominee for Lt. Governor enjoys the festivities.

Hampton Beach Activities

19 Special Fireworks Displays - Sun., May 30, 2010 - Sat., October 10, 2010, Every Wednesday night, starting June

23rd and Holidays at 9:30 p.m., Rain day for Wednesday shoots will be the following Friday. Memorial Day Weekend, May 30th, June 23rd, June 26th, Saturday Sand Castle Fireworks, June 30th, July 4, a spectacular shoot, July 7, 14, 21, 28, August 4, 11, 18, 25, and September 1, Labor Day Weekend, September 5th.

Sat., September 11th - 21st

Annual Seafood Festival

Special Shoots (at 8:15 pm), October 9th Harvest Festival weekend, New Years Eve December 31 at 8 PM

SeaShell Stage Line Up 2010 Events - Sunday, May 30, 2010 - Monday, September 6, 2010.

10th Annual Sand Sculpting Competition - Sat., June 19, 2010 - Wed., June 30, 2010. Come watch 15 Masters of the Sand Sculpture Universe compete for over \$15,000.00 in prize money. Demo June 19 - 23, Competition June 24 - 26. Awards Saturday night, June 26, 8 p.m. at the Seashell Stage. Followed by a Fireworks shoot at 9:30, All for FREE!



The fun starts Friday, June 18th when 300 tons of imported sand is dropped on Hampton Beach and the "Grady Bunch"

starts pounding up the demo site. The entire area is illuminated for night viewing through June 30th. Watch Greg Grady and "The Grady Bunch" build a mammoth Sand Demo Site. View all entries on line at this website. The competition is by invitation only. Interested Master Sand Sculptors may contact event co-organizer: www.GregGrady.com The event is funded by the Hampton Beach Village District and Sponsors, in coop-

eration with The Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce and The NH Division of Parks. Interested sponsors or volunteers should contact us at hamptonbeachinfo@comcast.net

Miss Hampton Beach Pageant, Sun., July 25, 2010. The 64th Miss Hampton Beach Pageant at the Seashell Stage July 25th at 2 p.m. Free Event! Contestants should contact Stephanie Lussier at 603-512-5257. Check out the Miss Hampton Beach website at www.misshamptonbeach.webs.com.

Email: Princess50@yahoo.com



PHOTO: COURTESY

COME SING WITH US ALL SUMMER LONG AT THE SINGING CHURCH!

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.

SALISBURY BEACH PARTNERSHIP, INC. AND THE SALISBURY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENT:

"Sun, Fun & Families: Summer Sizzles in Salisbury 2010"

Summer-long free events return featuring the SAND & SEA FESTIVAL, 4TH OF JULY WEEKEND FESTIVITIES & SURFSIDE LIVE! CONCERT SERIES & FIREWORKS, plus THURSDAY NIGHT BONFIRES ON THE BEACH

The Salisbury Beach Partnership, Inc. and the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce are pleased to announce dates for the exciting 2010 return of the Salisbury Beach Summer Celebration. From free weekly live concerts and fireworks, pirates, Thursday night bonfires on the beach and many other activities designed to entertain young and old alike, this summer-long series of events celebrate the unique beauty, history and recreation of Salisbury Beach and the surrounding area.

This year's events include the fourth annual Sand & Sea Festival: "A-Pirating We Go!" June 26th and 27th and 4th of July Weekend Spectacular July 1st through 4th. In addition, the Saturday night SurfSide Live! Concert Series & Fireworks returns each week June 27th through September 4th. A new event for 2010 is Thursday night Bonfires on the Beach. Salisbury Beach Summer Celebration events are FREE with a small fee for some activities.

"Salisbury Beach has even more to offer this summer," says Wayne Capolupo, Salisbury Beach Partnership president. "As this challenging economy continues, we are pleased to carry on the tradition of these free outdoor events for local residents and for the hundreds of thousands of people who travel to this beautiful coastline for their summer vacations."

"The success of these events would not be possible without the support of our local businesses," adds Maria Miles, Salisbury Chamber of Commerce president. "The Salisbury Chamber of Commerce is excited to be a part of this special summer line up and looks forward to welcoming visitors from near and far to Salisbury Beach."

The Summer Sizzles in Salisbury 2010 schedule of events includes: SAND & SEA FESTIVAL: "A-Pirating We Go!", Saturday and Sunday, June 26 & 27, 2010

The fourth annual Sand & Sea Festival features a brand new theme, "A-Pirating We Go!" Back by popular demand from last year's Maritime Festival, the Pirates

of the Dark Rose will stage "beach invasions" with cannons and sword fight demonstrations and set up their pirate encampment for visitors to tour and participate in hands-on activities. The Festival will again feature activities for all ages including a spectacular fireworks show, day-long entertainment on a beachfront stage, the ever-popular Beach Pizza Eating contest and Pet Parade. Street performers, marine aquatic programs, beach sports demonstrations, booths at Beach Center, and more will be a part of this perfect summer kick off. The Festival is FREE with a small fee for some activities.

THE PIRATE'S BALL - A FUNDRAISER FOR SALISBURY BEACH PARTNERSHIP, June 25, 2010, 8pm - midnight

Kick off the summer festivities on Salisbury Beach and support the Salisbury Beach Partnership, Inc. Enjoy an evening of pirate-themed fun and live music at this waterfront cocktail reception at the Blue Ocean Music Hall. For tickets and more information please visit beachfests.org or call 978.462.7274.

4th of JULY WEEKEND SPECTACULAR, Thursday-Sunday, July 1 - 4, 2010

Celebrate the Fourth of July with a weekend full of fun at Salisbury Beach! In addition to free beachfront concerts and fireworks, visitors are encouraged to enjoy the surf and sites of Salisbury Beach, play games of skill in an arcade, relax at deck side establishments overlooking the ocean, or enjoy a slice of "beach" pizza from popular eateries. More activities to be announced soon.

SURFSIDE LIVE! CONCERT SERIES & FIREWORKS, every Saturday, June 27 - September 4, 2010

FREE live music concerts and fireworks return to Salisbury Beach every Saturday night. Bring a beach chair or blanket for the beach and enjoy free live outdoor concerts performed by popular regional and nationally recognized bands followed by a spectacular fireworks display launched



PHOTO: COURTESY

from a barge on the ocean.

NEW! BONFIRES ON THE BEACH, Thursdays 7pm, beginning July 1, 2010

Why not enjoy the beach at night too? Bring a chair or blanket, and your family and friends for an old-fashion bonfire on the beach with marshmallow roasting and sing-a-longs. FREE.

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. Salisbury Beach Summer Celebration 2010 event updates and schedules as well as sponsorship information can be found at www.beachfests.org. To contact Festival staff, please call (978) 462-SBPI (7274).

ABOUT THE SALISBURY BEACH PARTNERSHIP, INC.

Salisbury Beach Partnership, Inc. (SBP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to making Salisbury Beach Center a welcoming destination for the regional

community and visitors. Working closely with the Town of Salisbury, Salisbury Chamber of Commerce, Salisbury Beach Betterment Association and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, SBP members include elected officials, local residents, community advocates and business leaders. They are active partners in fostering and promoting initiatives to revitalize Salisbury Beach Center and realize the vision of a new Salisbury waterfront slated to include a lively blend of residences, restaurants and retail offerings.

ABOUT THE SALISBURY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Salisbury Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit membership based organization. With over 350 members, the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce works in conjunction and collaboration with civic, regional and business organizations to create and develop a strong business atmosphere and presence. For more information please visit www.salisburychamber.com.

Courts Rule in favor of The Valley Patriot ... again!

Massachusetts Appeals and State Supreme Court reject Thompson Aagain!

Valley Patriot Staff

The Massachusetts Court of Appeals and the State Supreme Court have dealt a final defeat to Kevin Thompson of Methuen who unsuccessfully sued The Valley Patriot newspaper for libel and defamation of character stemming from an opinion piece published in 2006 (Father's Priorities are out of Whack: <http://www.tommyduggan.com/VP050406hyatt.html>).

Thompson filed his lawsuit against the newspaper and it's owners individually. Thompson first claimed that Valley Patriot owner/editor Tom Duggan was the author of the offending piece (credited to freelance writer Tom Dunham). But, after weeks of harassing Duggan and sending crass and abusive emails, Thompson then changed his story and blamed Valley Patriot co-owner Paula Porten when he learned that Porten was also an attorney who has cases in family court.

A Public Figure - Thompson wrote a book claiming he was a victim of conspiracies in the family court. The book was banned by Judge Manzi during his custody battle with his ex-girlfriend. The ban further fueled his conspiracy claims which he used to gain sympathy from local fathers who also felt (some legitimately) that they had been treated unfairly by the family court.

Thompson began to engage in long, rambling rants on his website and on local blogs accusing Porten and Duggan of being part of the "conspiracies" against him. Conspiracies that apparently included Judge Manzi, his ex-girlfriend and oth-


ers to deny him custody of his child, ban his book and cover up the "family court conspiracy".

He also accused dozens of bloggers (who ridiculed him) of "being Duggan" or "his ... family court girlfriend Paula Porten".

Porten and Duggan contended all along that Thompson had a history of frivolous lawsuits and "because he had always enjoyed positive press before we came along, he just couldn't handle it when one of our writers took him to task," Duggan said.

The Valley Patriot had previously given Thompson and his friends in the "Fatherhood Coalition" positive, free publicity including an "interview" that editors later found out Thompson had written himself and conspired to publish under someone else's name.

Judge Marita Hopkins said in her initial ruling: **"One cannot be so prominent and vocal a partisan in a public debate, particularly when one has**



"He's just a disgruntled father who was trying to blame his numerous failures in life on everyone else but himself. I know he's looking for some kind of redemption after losing his kid but he's not going to use us to get it." - **Tom Duggan, Valley Patriot Editor**

had a hand in creating the debate in the first place, and then cry foul at the rough and tumble of the marketplace of ideas. Thompson cannot establish that any of the claims in the op-ed are anything other than opinion or, if they are fact, that they are false. Therefore, he cannot, a fortiori, prove that they were made with "actual malice." Consequently his claim must be dismissed."

to Paula Porten, Tom Duggan and The Valley Patriot. (see order on left).

Valley Patriot editors estimate that they have shelled out more than \$11,000 defending against Thompson's "frivolous suit".

As he did in his failed attempt to gain custody of his son, Kevin Thompson represented himself in the initial lawsuit against the Valley Patriot as well as the numerous failed appeals that followed.

In court papers, the disgruntled father accused Judge Hopkins of conspiring with the Valley Patriot, his ex wife, her lawyer, judges and members of the press. Thompson even personally attacked Judge Hopkins on his website (<http://www.thompson4justice.com/hopkins.html>).

He also has a list of judges on his site whom he claims have committed "crimes" against him.

"Clearly we are dealing with someone who has issues," said Valley Patriot owner/editor Tom Duggan.

"I feel bad for Mr. Thompson, I pity him really. He has lost his kid, his wife, his job, his election and every lawsuit he has ever filed. If you think about it, the poor guy has convinced himself that I,

DISGRUNTLED: PAGE 30

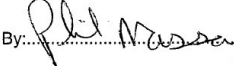
JUDGMENT ON MOTION TO DISMISS
(Mass.R.Civ.P. 12b)

This action came on for hearing before the Court, Merita A. Hopkins, Justice upon the Defendant's, Valley Patriot Inc, Tom Duggan Jr, Paula Porten, motion to dismiss pursuant to Mass. R.Civ.P. 12(b), and upon consideration thereof,

It is **ORDERED** and **ADJUDGED**:

That the Complaint of the plaintiff (s), Kevin M Thompson is hereby dismissed against the defendant (s), Valley Patriot Inc, Tom Duggan Jr, Paula Porten, and the defendant(s) recovers its costs of action.

Dated at Lawrence, Massachusetts this 5th day of January, 2009.

By:  Assistant Clerk

Judge Marita Hopkins rules in favor of The Valley Patriot and orders disgruntled father Kevin Thompson to pay The Valley Patriot's legal fees and court costs

Judge Hopkins also ruled that Thompson had to pay legal and attorney's fees



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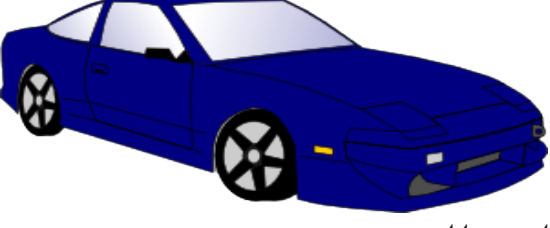
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RiverBank Hosts 4th Annual Shred Day

METHUEN – Identity theft is a very serious issue. According to the Federal Trade Commission there were 1.2 million identity theft and fraud complaints received in 2008, costing consumers over \$1.8 billion, which is an average of \$1,500 per person. RiverBank, a local community bank providing “friendlier, easier, and better service” is offering a free public service to help protect the residents of Methuen and surrounding towns from becoming a part of this statistic.

On Saturday, May 15th from 9:00 a.m. –12:00 p.m. at the RiverBank Methuen branch, 20 Jackson St., residents of Methuen and surrounding communities, (no businesses, please), are invited to do some spring cleaning and visit the onsite mobile shredding truck with their unwanted sensitive documents at Shred Day. Residents attending the event will enjoy refreshments, giveaways and have the opportunity to enter to win a personal shredder. For details about Shred Day, please visit www.riverbk.com or call 978-725-7500.

“Identity theft is a very serious issue that can affect every age group. Contrary to popular beliefs, the elderly are not the only ones affected. For instance, 43% of all identity theft and fraud complaints are from people between the ages of 20-40. Identity theft is a serious concern for everyone, and at RiverBank we are committed to helping residents of our communities avoid this serious problem,” said

Stephen B. Jones, Executive Vice President of RiverBank. “The Bank’s annual Shred Days are a fun opportunity for us to open up to the community the industrial strength document destruction capability we have, enabling residents to have their personal and sensitive documents safely destroyed in bulk, in front of their own eyes”.

In 2009, RiverBank shredded over 3 tons of paper alone at the Methuen Shred Day event, in addition to 4.5 tons at the two other Shred Day events.

About RiverBank

RiverBank, (www.riverbk.com) headquartered in North Andover, MA, has been providing Southern New Hampshire and the Merrimack Valley with “friendlier, easier and better” banking service for over 142 years with \$805 million in assets, and a localized, personalized approach. A subsidiary of LSB Corporation, a publicly held company, the common stock is traded over the counter on the NASDAQ National Marketing System under the symbol “LSBX”. Sales prices of the stock are reported in the Wall Street Journal as “LSB CP.” RiverBank is a member of FDIC and DIF, with all deposits 100% insured. RiverBank has seven branches in Massachusetts Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire.

Media contact: Tom Racicot, Assistant Marketing Manager, RiverBank
tracicot@riverbk.com 978.725.7601



PHOTO: COURTESY

Left to right Kristen, Joy Santoro, Jayan M Landry CEO/Executive Director TIP, Joe Santoro, and Geri McGuire TIP volunteer who assisted in the Methuen Angels TIP call.

TIP receives generous Donation

The above photo of Joe and Joy Santoro, (parents of Kristen Santoro), is one of Methuens Angels.

For the past 12 years, the Santoro’s have had a fundraiser in their daughters honor to raise money for worthy local causes.

This year the Santoro’s again donated \$1,000 to the Trauma Intervention Program of Merrimack Valley (TIP).

A memorial bench in Kristen’s honor will be placed at the TIP healing garden and Brenda Waller Way at Schruender Park this coming week.

Additional donations from the event went to Methuen High School Scholarship Fund and the IMSuRT team (International

Medical and Surgical Response Team). Donation will go toward the Haiti relief fund.

TIP is looking for anyone with gardening or mason skills as we enter phase 2 of the garden design. The garden is open to the public and is located on Riverview Boulevard in Methuen. All are invited to help on Methuen’s Town clean up day May 8th! We are expecting over 100 helpers. Anyone interested in donating to the garden can contact TIP at 978 975 8471.

For more information about TIP or the garden go to :

www.traumaintervention.org

www.tiphealinggarden.org



PHOTO: COURTESY

Central Catholic senior Shanna Wiggins sang the National Anthem at opening day for Methuen Little League. Shanna is headed to Harvard next year. She is seen here with Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi and State Representative Linda Dean Campbell.



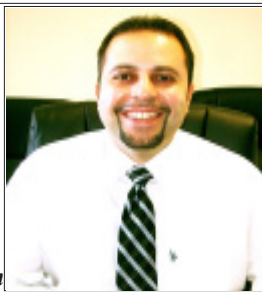
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POLITICALLY ACTIVE

Slimming Down for Seniors in Methuen

Sometimes a person has to reach within themselves to help others. From now through July 20, that is exactly what we at Politically Active and Latitude Sports Club Methuen are attempting to do.

Budget slashing is happening across the board at every city department, and it's time for people in the community to help out wherever and whenever possible. With a limited budget to work with, the Methuen Senior Activity Center is one of those city departments in desperate need of help. It's a lifeline for senior citizens in our community.

With that in mind, Slimming Down for Seniors was born.

With the help of Latitude Sports Club we've decided not only to help ourselves by working out and bettering our own lives, but to also do our part in raising money to help fund programs at the Methuen Senior Activity Center.

When approached with the fundraising option, club marketing director Sue Mag-

aletta embraced the idea and ran with it. Under the guidance of licensed trainer Dan Hart and aquatics director Alexa Christakos we started this lifestyle change on April 20 weighing in at 5 feet, 11 inches and 448 pounds (George) and 5-8, 268 (Jamie). Over the first week we've already combined to lose 17 pounds.

While we change our lives, we are hoping other individuals and businesses in the community will join us in this endeavor.

We are asking businesses to donate \$1 per combined pound lost over the three month program, while individuals can pledge .25 or .50 cents. Pledges can be capped at a certain dollar amount.

If you would like to sponsor us in this mission e-mail politicallyactivebroadcasting@yahoo.com or call 978-394-7912.

HAJJAR LOOKING FOR BIGGER POLITICAL POSITION

Whether Jim Hajjar likes it or not, the questions will continue to surface with every passing day. Is this first-term City

Councilor and resident of West Methuen listening to the whispers that seem to be urging him on to a bigger role in local government?

"Can I just get through my first year of my first term as a City Councilor?" Hajjar asked.

"I think it's just so far out there for me or anyone to even think about down the road. I like my (private sector) job and don't have any plans of leaving that any time soon."

His "look-at-this-city-like-a-business approach" won over a lot of voters. That platform coupled with his level-headed conversational style and seemingly easy grasp of the numbers catapulted him over former City Council Chairwoman Debbie Quinn on the final ballot and had people starting to look at Hajjar as a potential mayoral choice in the coming years.

As if that wasn't enough gossip for him to deal with, a recent trip to the statehouse opened a new door for the rumor mill.

Hajjar took part in the spring session's Citizen's Legislative Seminar at the Statehouse.

"No, I don't see myself running for Senate or the House," Hajjar said. "It was an eye-opening experience for me, but as I've said before, I think working at the city level as a councilor and maybe someday looking at an executive job like mayor would let me do more for Methuen. But again, I'm not looking at anything more than being the best City Councilor I can right now."

Sessions begin with a presentation to the Seminar given by two faculty members, usually a Senator and a Representative, on the topic of the day. After a brief intermission for coffee and conversation, participants break up into small groups led by a legislator faculty member for informal discussion.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The topic of the day for Hajjar's seminar was distracted driving. A bill which State Senator Steve Baddour (D-Methuen) fought for. Hajjar, who was actually nominated for the program by Baddour spoke to the assembly against the bill with the basic premise that we cannot legislate common sense. His words did the trick, as the mock group of legislatures from across the state changed their vote from a strong majority for passing the bill to a 50-50 tie.

"Even the Senate president joked with me that I helped kill Senator Baddour's bill," Hajjar said. "She said this was the first time they ever had a 50-50 split in one of these seminars."

His success in this situation still hasn't made him think of advancement to the Statehouse.

"I don't know who else aside from you is even thinking about me going to the Statehouse," Hajjar said. "I know I'm not."

Jamie Atkinson and George Scione host Politically Active Monday nights at 6 p.m. and Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. on MCTV (Comcast 22, Verizon 33) and can be heard every Tuesday from 10 a.m.-noon on WCCM 1110-AM. They can be contacted at politicallyactivebroadcasting@yahoo.com.





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RONNIE’S RANTS

Son’s of Italy are at it again

Ronnie Ford
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Italian people by their very nature and heritage are known for their knowledge, production, retailing, and scientific ability. Not the least of these qualities is raising money and contributing to people in need, regardless of whom they are or their station in life.

Well the Sons of Italy in Lawrence is at it again! They are holding the 21st Annual Road Races to be held on Memorial Day weekend, Saturday, May 29, 2010. These races were formerly held on the 4th of July. They will be held at Veterans Memorial Stadium, Lawrence, Mass. The schedule is as follows:

5K&5M Road Races 9:00 AM
5K Health Walk 8:45AM
1K Youth Run 8:30AM

These races are held to Honor our Armed Forces and Veterans. It is to benefit Veterans Northeast Outreach Center, INC serving the Merrimack Valley. They encourage the runners to run or walk in honor of a veteran or armed forces person they may know.

Entry forms are available at various local health and fitness centers. You may also register at the stadium on the morning of May 29th after 7 AM, or go on line www.coolrunning.com or call for more info at 617-548-9877. So all you runners come on down and honor our service men and women and veterans. Get in some good running practice. Cash prizes will be given.

God knows the service men and women and veterans get little or no recognition from the media! Let us show them we care! Good luck to the Son’s of Italy and John Mele and his committee.

Flomax, generic is Tamsulosin, can be bought in Canada for \$44.00 for 90 0.4 mg pills.

However, here in the good old US of A, the same prescription costs \$95.00 to \$150.00 without insurance depending on which pharmacy you go to! How terrible is this?

How are the elderly who are on a fixed

incomes able to cope with that amount of money? This is an outrage, and we continue to be abused by our government, drug companies, lobbyists, doctors, lawyers and legislators. By the time the Obamacare health plan goes into effect, we will all be dead.

The state of Arizona got a jump-start on immigration and illegal residents. All the states should follow suit. Especially Massachusetts, the give everything to everybody state! The poor legal working slobs just keep digging deeper into their pockets! Well, looks like the cookie jar is running on empty so there will be less and less handouts.

What is wrong with asking people for identification and if they are citizens? When we are born we get a certificate, when we are Baptized we receive a certificate. When we marry we have a blood test and a marriage license. We need a license to drive, we need to show identification to the bank, or to get an alcoholic drink.

So, why not have a citizen card? And if you are receiving public assistance, you should have to have a drug screen test and go in person to pick up your checks and food stamps. I do not want to be breaking my back supporting you while some of you sit on your backsides drinking, smoking and using!

The middle class has carried this nation long enough. We do not mind giving anyone a helping hand. But, at some point you have to help yourself. Public assistance is not supposed to be generational! It is time to get tough and start looking after ourselves.

What part of illegal does the government not understand?



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

The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

What you may find in your genealogy search

Jack Doyle, County Sligo
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Searching your family history may be exciting and rewarding. Just as I was giving up the looking for the cause of death of my great-grandparents I decided to search the newspapers of their era to see if there was any information that might give me a clue to my questions. I remember my mother telling me that my grandmother had scarlet fever when she was a child, but I didn’t pay much attention to that information at that time. I was in my pre teens at that time and not much interested in what she was telling me. I share this newspaper article with you from the 11/17/1883 edition of the “Sligo Champion”, County Sligo, Ireland. Although the story is serious, I find it also humorous at the ways health board of the county enforced the laws at that time.

Fever at Drumacool

“The relieving officer Brennan brought before the notice of the guardians, a serious case of fever which had broken out in the house of Pat Crann, at Drumacool which is about 13 miles from SligoTown, on the Ballyfarnam road, just at the edge of the Boyle Union. On Friday he received from Dr. Ross, the medical officer of that district, a certificate as follows:”

“I certify that Pat Crann, and his daughter, aged six years old, are suffering from fever. They are able to be removed to hospital, where I recommend they be sent immediately. There should be two nurses sent with the van, one to take care of the three children in the house, the other to accompany the patients in the van. There should also be a bed. It is necessary that they be removed tonight.” He (Mr. Brennan) acted accordingly. Two bottles of brandy was ordered by the doctor, for it was a most serious case, the wife having previously died of fever. He accompanied the poor man and his daughter to the hospital acting himself as nurse administering to the sufferers. The board highly recommended him for his humane and prompt conduction of the case.

Relieving Officer Brennan said he engaged a woman named Bessy House very to take care of the children left at home,

at the rate of 12p a week. Mr. Callery said he understood she was not a sober person. Relieving officer Feeney said he knew the woman very well; she had taken the pledge, she is steady now, and a good nurse.

Relieving Officer Brennan understood from the medical officer that there was little hope for the poor man or his daughter. Dr. Ross had sent a note to Dr. Murray inquiring if the three children could be taken to a safe ward in the hospital but he said they could not. He (the relieving officer) was looking after the disinfecting of the house and the destruction of the bed and clothing.

Mr. Walker - you must value the clothing of yours that you destroyed.

Mr Lynos - what kind of fever is it?

The Relieving officer - I think its typhus fever and I am told it was brought from Boyle Union, Cranns brother and sister-in law were ill of it at Boyle; his wife went to attend to them, and she brought it home with her. The husband acted as nurse to her until she died, and he also washed the clothes, and he supposed it was from that he caught the infection.

Mr. Walker remarked that there was a man died from fever from Dromore recently in 48 hrs, and it attributed to the fact of having bought second hand clothes in Sligo.

The relieving officer said he had to pay the car man 1pound for the two journeys of ten miles and back.

The chairman - then you must be re-couped that 1 pound. The board made an order accordingly.

The minutes of the Sligo Dispensary Committee having been read and approved

The relieving officers’ books were examined and approved, after which the board adjourned.” Sligo Champion, 17/11/1883



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

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- ★ Steve voted to curb the overly generous pension benefits at the MBTA.
- ★ Steve led the fight to save money by using civilian flaggers on roadway construction sites.
- ★ Steve is leading the fight to reduce excessive health care costs on small businesses.
- ★ Steve opposes granting drivers licenses to illegal immigrants.
- ★ Steve voted against giving the Governor the power to make a temporary appointment to the U.S. Senate.
- ★ Steve voted to limit state pension benefits.
- ★ Steve successfully fought efforts to charge \$5 for in-person visits to the RMV.

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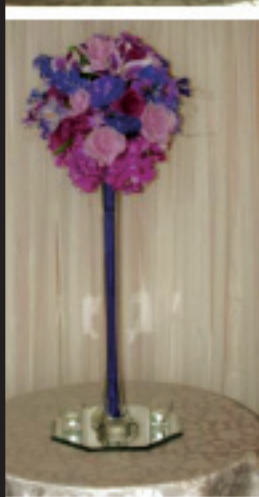


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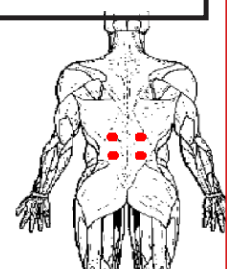
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Ye Gay Ol' Valley

Breaking Ground: A new voice in The Valley!

D. B. Langevin
VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

Yes, Virginia, there is a gay community in the Valley. There are mothers and fathers, teachers, lawyers, dog groomers, firefighters, policemen and women, mail carriers, hairdressers, custodians, lab technicians, veterans, and every other vocation under the sun. Just like the rest of the world, they put their pants on one leg at a time. Well, I know one man who prefers dresses and hello kitty coin purses, but I'll deal with that another time. How many of us are here? I can't say, but I'm hoping with this new opportunity to speak for them I will soon learn more about their lives, families, jobs, needs, dreams and desires. For the moment I can only speak for myself.

So, who am I? What are my qualifications to speak for the Valley's gay community? Well, I am a lesbian or is it I am lesbian? I have never been quite sure whether that word is a noun or an adjective. Nonetheless, it's a label that is a part of the many labels that have been assigned to me. My name is Dani B. Langevin. I was born the youngest of five children and raised in North Andover. My father was a dentist and my mother was a social worker. I have been living in Methuen for the past sixteen years, where I teach eighth grade social studies. For the past twelve years I have shared my home with my wife and our three children all of whom are young adults now. I have been 'out of the closet' for sixteen years. I was married to a very nice man for six years. My 19 year-old daughter is a product of that marriage. My two sons are from my wife's marriage. Ending my marriage and coming out was one of the most difficult times in my life. I hurt for my daughter and I was horribly frightened of what my family and friends would say. To make matters worse, my mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer. I struggled for months, watching the

life slip out of her day by day, wondering if I should tell her or not. I did, I cried and I apologized. She took me in her frail arms and said, "Don't ever apologize for who you are." Those words have kept me going during the most difficult events in my life. For 30 years I denied myself my true being. I worried, I lost sleep, at times I tried to drink it away and all of my fears were answered with complete acceptance from all of my friends and family. I had one casualty. My best friend from my childhood, we knew each other since birth, walked out of my life and never looked back. It turned out to be no great loss.

In the past sixteen years I've met my soul mate and have been blessed with her two amazing sons. I've had the pleasure to be walked down the aisle by my father one month after gay marriage became legal in Massachusetts with five more states following suit and enjoy knowing that we are becoming a more tolerant and accepting world. It is my hope in the coming months and possibly even years, to give those of you that are clouded by stereotypes of the gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual (GLTB) community some insight into just how much alike we all are. I hope, too, that I give a voice to the 10% of the population who may feel that they do not have one. To help do that I set up a blog at gltbmerrimackvalley.blogspot.com for anyone who would like to tell me topics they'd like me to write about or would like to read about. I hope you enjoy what I have to say.

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.



My Fellow Talking Animals . . .

Paul Murano
VALLEY PATRIOT CULTURE COLUMNIST

My Fellow Talking Animals . . .

I am increasingly confronted with signs that remind me we have crossed the Rubicon, the threshold of sanity, and our only collective hope is a deep conversion of mind and heart. Every semester I take an informal poll in my college Ethics classes and each time I am jolted into recognizing a basic fundamental shift in thinking. The poll goes something like this:

Suppose you are driving down a narrow country road too fast on a rainy slippery night, and up ahead you see two objects. You quickly realize one is your pet dog (that you love) and the other is a stranger walking. You also realize you're driving fast enough to kill them, and you must swerve your wheel to hit only one while saving the other. You've got several seconds to decide which way to swerve it: If you turn the wheel to the right you will kill your dog while sparing the stranger; if you turn it to the left you will save your dog and kill the stranger. No one would ever know what happened except for you. What do you do?

Almost invariably more than half of the students admit they would save their pet at the expense of the stranger. If it were a secret poll it would probably be even more than that. Curiously they all agree that if this poll were taken a generation or two ago it would have been lopsided in favor of the stranger. They realize this, but still choose to save the animal. The minority is often shocked, and after several years of doing this I should probably stop being surprised. But this is a serious problem: Why all of a sudden have animals become more popular than humans?

One reason I take this poll before we cover the topics of animal rights, abortion, and euthanasia among others is to let the students see for themselves how far our society has moved from respecting the sacredness of human life to viewing ourselves as equals with other animals. As the value of animals has ascended the value of human life has diminished; as we personalize animals we animalize persons. Speciesism is now part of the educational lexicon, supported by many professors and activists. Soon you may not only fear being called the regulars of racist or sex-


ist, but also speciesist.

Well, I'll say it right here and now: I am a proud speciesist. I still recognize that the human person is made in the divine image with the spiritual faculties of intellect and will within a soul that can survive bodily death. I still hold that, while we should never needlessly inflict pain on any creature, animals may be ethically used for our benefit. Today I ate one, I am wearing part of one around my waist, I cohorted with an enslaved one (a pet), and I wouldn't mind experimenting on one if it could help find a cure for cancer. One day such a statement might keep someone from being employed.

I was again confronted with this topic last night from one of my agnostic friends that I debate regularly on facebook. After telling him that as a human being he is a unique and unrepeatable creature of infinite value that would have left a gaping hole in the universe had he not existed or had been aborted before birth, he came back at me with this, verbatim:

"I see human beings as another species on this planet, with no more intrinsic value than any other. That's not to say I don't value life, but I find films of slaughterhouses just as disturbing as films of later stage abortions"

He was very serious, and so are my students. Underneath the surface we can see that we live in fragile, if not scary, times. When we stopped seeing humans as intrinsically good with infinite worth, not only for what they can do but in who they are, we lost our sense of identity. We became simply walking, talking animals that happen to be at the top of the food chain; and who discriminate against other species' because of the thickness of their fur. We became the white male of the animal kingdom. Animals are good, and there may be no greater dog-lover than me, but if we lose sight of our dignity as special and unique creatures on earth we will inevitably treat ourselves and each other like animals, as objects to be used rather than persons to be loved.

 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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What's wrong with Lowell?

R. Faith Morris

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Although Lowell is teeming with cheerleaders about its wonderful ongoing renaissance, anyone who dares utter a contrary word is considered a purveyor of hate speech...a naysayer...a malcontent, however the truth remains that Lowell aka destiny city has failed.

Exhibit One: the Double Tree Hotel now under the ownership of Umass Lowell was originally built to house the vast amount of tourists that were slated in anticipation to visit Lowell. But this never came to be and it is now a college dorm. A tourist that can't sleep here won't stay here. Exhibit Two: the Tsongas Arena, one of the city's attractive venues is now also a property of Umass Lowell. The city in its efforts to attract tourist has not got it right. There lies the problem and what can be done?

The late Senator Paul Tsongas was the chief architect in Lowell's early revival. His insight that the city needed the collaboration of private and public sector cooperation to grow was an important vehicle in the city's early revival. New structures such as the Tsongas Arena, LeLacheur Park, and the Double Tree Hotel were evidence of the city's initial success. But now the city flounders with marketers that show no results, projects which get no revenue. The river walk, a \$7 million boondoggle, where in truth, no one really ever goes. That is a shiny example of the city's failure to get it right.

The overemphasis of a downtown area with its musical cheers of here today and gone tomorrow businesses lack of a steady stream of revenue and the glut of martini style restaurants is indicative of a narrow minded one sided marketing perspective. What downtown really needs are businesses that the people want,

places they can shop and afford to go to eat. The people want life. The explanation that Bertucci's, Starbucks, Legal Seafoods or any other flagship enterprises has not come to Lowell is because there is little foot traffic. The city has gotten too sterile, everyone has to be bused to Gallagher terminal and hide there until the appropriate time. Although there are some really happening spots in downtown Lowell, the Hoity-toity atmosphere just isn't working.

With a city of countless ethnic restaurants, Lowell planners have overlooked this huge selling point. You would think they would highlight this unique restaurant Mecca, but no, the emphasis is always on downtown development. Here's a thought! Why not organize tours for senior centers throughout New England so people can enjoy coffee at one of our many wonderful breakfast shops, lunch at one of the numerous highly rated ethnic restaurants, attend a play at the MRT, take in a baseball game at LeLacheur park, and have a fine dinner here in fabulous Lowell. Get proactive in marketing our city. Let's make a kid friendly Lowell with a miniature trolley, an outdoor skating rink, and a really cool carousel. And finally make downtown more blue collar friendly because after all isn't that what Lowell really is? I'm not knocking historic Lowell but who wants to spend a whole day in a museum?



R. Morris grew up in Lowell, MA, now an undergraduate at Southern New Hampshire University she is finishing up her Bachelors degree double major in Accounting and Finance.

As a former resident of Lowell she feels it is missing the city atmosphere and a native's outlook in what real Lowellians want. Any comments please feel free to contact her at rosalitta.morris@snhu.edu.

Tsongas campaign raises than \$300K+

Nearly half are new contributors

LOWELL, MA – Congressman Niki Tsongas announced today that her campaign raised \$307,094 from 1,113 individual contributors in the first quarter of 2010. Over \$265,000 of that total was raised in the month of March alone. The campaign also announced a total of \$380,660 cash on hand.

"I'm very grateful for the support I've received this quarter, and to the thousands of people who have supported me over the past 3 years," said Congressman Niki Tsongas. "It is a great privilege to be able to represent the Fifth Congressional District in Congress, but we have much work left to do—we must stabilize the economy, create jobs, and reduce the deficit. I look forward to continue working on these issues on behalf of the working families of the Fifth."

The first quarter fundraising totals are comprised of contributions from 1,113 individuals, almost half of whom were first time contributors. Nearly 85% of the contributions were under \$500 or less, and 40% were under \$100.

"What these numbers reveal is that Niki Tsongas has a strong network of dedicated supporters that is expanding all the time," said campaign manager Nick Clemons.

"Niki is accessible, available and responsive to her constituents and they know that she is working hard on their behalf in Congress. She has authored legislation to protect our service members on the frontlines, is working to craft responsible, balanced budgets to reduce the deficit, and has made protecting the rights of consumers one of her top priorities."



PHOTO: COURTESY

5th congressional candidate Sam Meas (at podium) with former New York Governor George Pataki, former State Treasurer Joe Malone and former Mass. Lt. Governor Kerry Healey

Congressional candidate Sam Meas: charge "home" countries for illegals!

Congressional candidate Sam Meas sat with Valley Patriot editor Tom Duggan and his WCAP co-host Paul Murano for an on-air interview about his life escaping the killing fields of Cambodia and how his experience with communism and socialism shaped his political ideology about freedom, capitalism and the Ameriican way.

MEAS: I came to this country about 24 years ago from the land of the killing fields, Cambodia, where about 2 million Cambodians were slaughtered like animals by the Khmer Rouge. I came to this country by the sponsorship of Catholic Charities of Richmond, Virginia. I was placed in a foster home and I was, 2 or 3 years later, adopted by an American family, who provided me with everything that

I have gotten today.

Paul: Were your parents killed?

MEAS: My father was taken out by his own students back, probably in 1970 to 1971, to be re-educated and he was never to be seen again. Of course, I guess that's a pseudonym that they use in the Khmer Rouge, when you were considered to be the enemy of the state. You had to be taken out to re-education camp and 99.9% of the time, they were to be executed almost instantaneously. I got separated from my mother back in, probably some time in 1983 or 82, when we were living in a refugee camp, more like a resistant camp, where there were resistant fighters who were fighting against the Vietnamese government, [who] were communists. At some point during that time, the camp

KILLINGFIELDS, page 30

Meals' tax, another bite at the wallet

Joe Mendonca

VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

Revenue from the optional 0.75% meals tax was included in the proposed budget for the current year (FY2010), but was never brought before the City Council for approval. Now as we begin the preparation of the FY2011 budget, the City Manager has brought the adoption of the meals tax before the Council and a public hearing has been scheduled for May 11th. Public Hearings begin at 7PM.

The City Manager is making the case for adopting the new tax with the following revenue reductions and increased costs:

Chapter 70 cut \$3,000,000
Other aid cut \$1,000,000
MSBA Reimbursement cut \$500,000
Health Insurance Increase \$2,800,000
Pension increase \$1,000,000
Rooms tax loss \$200,000
For a total of: \$8,500,000.

That seems like a large shortfall, but as the City Manager acknowledges; with

a normal 2.5% increase in Real Estate Tax plus new growth and not replacing the Chapter 70 cut (which has never been done before) produces \$7,300,000 to offset the projected shortfall. That leaves a projected shortfall of only \$1,200,000.

The City Manager has suggested that cutting funds to the Auditorium, Merrimack Repertory Theater, CVB, marketing development, LTC, COOL, park maintenance, street sweeping, and youth recreation would have to be made to balance the budget This has caused these organizations to lobby for the meals tax to protect their allocations. The lobbying is based on a false premise.

The State estimates that the optional meals tax would bring slightly under \$750K to Lowell. Is the new tax needed to balance the budget? At first glance, it would appear that it would help to reduce the shortfall. However, that does not consider possible savings from this budget.

MEALSTAX, page 37



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Zimini leads charge to eliminate health perk in Dracut!

D.J. Deeb
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

Dracut residents will have an opportunity to eliminate a costly benefit offered to elected officials in Dracut, health insurance. Health insurance for elected officials in Dracut can cost the Town up to \$18,000 per elected official. In light of current financial constraints and skyrocketing health care costs, Selectman John Zimini is offering a warrant article to eliminate this costly expense at Dracut Town Meeting on Monday, June 7th. This is a good proposal that has angered the ‘Good-Ole-Boy’ network in Dracut, but it is a win for the taxpayers!

Members of the Dracut School Committee receive a \$2,000 per year stipend while members of the Board of Selectmen receive a \$2,000 stipend along with a \$940 annual gas allowance. The gas allowance should be eliminated altogether since the \$2,000 stipend more than compensates these elected officials for the costs and expenses associated with their respective offices. The health insurance is an added benefit that the Town has been giving to its part-time elected officials. The Town currently pays 80% of Blue-Cross Blue-Shield health care premiums for its employees. This is certainly understandable for full-time Town workers, but why should part-time elected officials be offered the same benefit? Selectman George Malliaros recently confessed that

he works about 10 hours per week as a selectman. Well, with all due respect to Mr. Malliaros this benefit is outrageous. It is high time that this perk be eliminated and the current dismal economic situation has forced the issue to be considered.

The plan to eliminate the health insurance benefit has drawn criticism from some notables in Town. One such notable beneficiary is former Selectman Warren Shaw. Shaw continues to have his health insurance paid by the Town because state law permits municipalities to provide health benefits to retired elected officials if they have served for at least 10 years. It should be noted that a part-time Town employee who works less than 20 hours per week is ineligible for this benefit. It is ludicrous that elected officials, who serve as part-time employees, receive this full-time benefit. It is high time that this be phased out as well. Selectman John Zimini should be commended for leading the charge. Maybe this is why Warren Shaw has called Zimini the “most polarizing” figure in Dracut. It is not surprising that The Dracut Good-Ole-Boys, led by Shaw et. al are working overtime to defeat Selectman Zimini’s initiative.



On another note, I need to address a point of personal privilege. In an April 23rd editorial for a competing newspaper insinuating that the hiring process used in selecting Dracut’s Superintendent was skewed, Warren Shaw wrote about yours truly: “During the process that brought in [Dracut Superintendent] Mullen, Deeb appointed Housing Authority member Ken Martin to the search committee, and Martin appointed Deeb to the search committee for the new housing director.” Well, this is certainly not the first time, Warren Shaw has printed falsehoods. The fact is that Dracut School Committee Chairman Ron Mercier appointed Ken Martin to the Search Committee, not yours truly. In addition, Ken Martin later had asked for a representative from both the School Committee and Board of Selectmen to serve on the search committee for a new housing director. Ron Mercier asked me to serve as the School Committee’s representative as he did not have the time and I was Vice-Chair of the Dracut School Committee at the time. Dr. Spencer Mullin was the unanimous choice of both the School Committee and the Screening Committee, which included a Dracut teacher, a Dracut

administrator, and a parent representative, in addition to Ken Martin (the community representative). The process used in selecting Dr. Mullin was done out in the open with public televised interviews. This was above board unlike the process that was used in hiring the current Interim Superintendent. In the latter process, discussions were held behind closed doors and none of the applicants who applied were even interviewed. I guess there was no need since Dracut School Committee Chairman Matt Sheehan (now a candidate for State Rep in Dracut) announced on Warren Shaw’s radio show before even the application deadline had passed that the job was to be given to former Dracut Superintendent Elaine Espindle if she applied and she did.

On June 7th, at Town Meeting, Dracut voters will have the opportunity to do the right thing, eliminate the costly full-time health insurance perk for part-time elected officials. Get out and vote. Your influence counts, use it.

D.J. Deeb is a of the Town of Dracut Committee on Government Rules and Regulations, served on the Dracut School Committee from 2005-2008 and the Gr. Lowell Regional Voc-Tech School Committee from 1997-2009. Deeb is an Adjunct Professor of History/Government at Bunker Hill Community College and an Adjunct Political Science Instructor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. He teaches Social Studies full-time at Reading Memorial High School.



DEVINE MILLIMET

WELCOMES

PETER J. CARUSO, SR.

Devine Millimet is pleased to announce that Peter J. Caruso, Sr. has joined the firm as a shareholder in our Andover office. Attorney Caruso brings extensive experience in all facets of the law, including family and business planning, real estate, asset protection, estate planning, as well as in media law--newspaper, privacy, defamation, advertising, media, internet copyright, and publications. He is the former managing partner of Caruso and Caruso, LLP and now joins the firm’s 80 attorneys in offices in Manchester and Concord, New Hampshire as well as in Andover. Established in 1947, Devine Millimet has served the Merrimack Valley for more than 25 years.



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KILLINGFIELDS:FROM PAGE 28

was overran by the Vietnamese Advancing Force, so I got separated from my mother, sisters and the rest of the family and I tagged along with my older cousin, who subsequently brought me to another refugee camp inside Thailand called Kawidan, where, after two weeks of living in the camp, my older cousin left me there all by myself.

Paul: How old were you then?

MEAS: I don't know my own age. Officially, I am listed as 38 years old, was born in 1972, December 31, but those days were just picked by me.

When I was living in the camp, instead of living in an orphanage, I lived from family to family with fellow Cambodian refugees. In order to survive and in exchange for them sheltering me and providing me clothes and a living atmosphere, I did all sorts of work for them. I babysat, I cooked, I cleaned, I sewed, I shined shoes, I carried water, I chopped wood, pretty much anything to survive.

Tom: Why are you running as a Republican for congress?

MEAS: Well, I think there were 3 criteria that [made] me want to be a Republican. One, is that I have always thought that I came to this country as a result of President Reagan. The Reagan Doctrine allowed a lot of Asians, a lot of those people who were fighting against the communist to come and resettle in America.

Remember, after the Vietnam War, America left this country and the Democratic party abandoned Southeast Asia.

They let them fall under communism and in particular in my country Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge took over and they killed a lot of people and under the Democratic government, Jimmy Carter stood by, idly by. Even though, with the information that Khmer Rouge were committing genocide, they did nothing.

Tom: Come on, though, Jimmy Carter was having subcommittee meetings.

MEAS: [Laughing] So, to me, I wasn't aware of that, because I was eating bugs and insects and everything else I could find to survive, I mean there was nothing for us to eat and there was no information, so thanks [to the Democrats] that they had some sub-committee meetings and hearings, but you know what? It was President Ronald Regan that actually did something. He went out there and supported

the people and gave the resistant fighters military support and financial support.

Tom: How are you going to go up against a powerhouse name like Niki Tsongas, she is very good at constituent services?

MEAS: Thank you for asking that question, I think it's important, but as much as I like you, I would beg to differ. Based on my conversations with a lot of the constituents that I have been meeting ... remember, I've been campaigning for this office for over a year now and I have met so many people who have a different perspective about what you said. Based on what I am hearing and based on my personal experience, anytime when a constituent e-mails or calls the congresswoman's office, they get a form letter. Even, when they got something back, the answer was totally different from the question that was asked, so I am not too sure that congresswoman Niki Tsongas has been serving in the way that you have described. On another note, if she is serving the constituents the way that you have described, she would have not voted for the healthcare bill, which I believe she had not read at all, which is wrong. How could you pretend to represent us, our interests, when the vast majority of the people in this district oppose the healthcare bill. I believe that Niki Tsongas and all of us should not be in agreement 100% of the time, otherwise, we'd be living in communism.

Paul: Don't you think that sometimes being a leader means to take a position that you want to lead on, rather than follow the constituents?

MEAS: Based on her record, congresswoman Niki Tsongas ... based on her record, she has voted with her party line with Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reed, almost 100% of the time. Now, if you were representing the people of your district, there are 650,000 of us. I am sure at some point you will be deviated from your party line and agree with the people whom you are representing. But remember, her job, or my job should be to represent the interest of the people of the district and the interest of the USA, not a party line, not for the Democratic or the Republican party line, but she has always been representing the interest of the Democratic Party, which is wrong.

DISGRUNTLED:FROM PAGE 19

Paula Porten, judges, lawyers, the entire Methuen School System, the teachers union, court clerks, police officers, members of the press, and anyone in his line of sight are all part of some secret plot against him."

A History of Failed and Frivolous Lawsuits

After being warned several times not to discuss his "book" or his personal issues concerning his ex-girlfriend and son, Thompson repeatedly discussed his personal issues with high school students at Methuen High. After disciplinary actions failed to stop his behavior, he claims he was fired from his teaching position.

Thompson sued the City of Methuen, the superintendent, members of the school committee the principal, his superiors and the teachers union for failing to defend his actions. Thompson lost every single one of those lawsuits after he had admitted on CNN's Tucker Carlson that he spoke to his students about his book and his custody battles with the court.

Lawrence Superintendent of Schools Wilfredo Laboy brought Thompson on board to teach science at Lawrence High School two years ago. He is still employed

by the Lawrence Public Schools.

Thompson ran for Mayor of Methuen in 2009 but finished third out of three candidates in the primary. He was called a "loon" by fellow candidates and ostracized by political activists for his outrageous behavior on the campaign trail and his bombastic, angry and sometimes incoherent blog postings on the Eagle-Tribune website.

The Valley Patriot is represented by Andover Attorney, Peter Caruso of Divine Millimet.

"We never took this guy seriously," Duggan said. "He's just a disgruntled father who was trying to blame his numerous failures in life on everyone else but himself. I know he's looking for some kind of redemption after losing his kid but he's not going to use us to get it. There was never any doubt that Mr. Thompson would lose at every stage of this, and we're just glad we can now start recovering fees, court costs and damages from this frivolous suit," Duggan concluded.

2nd Suit Pending

The Valley Patriot still faces a second lawsuit by Attorney William DiAdamo



"My thinking is that instead of just letting them go free, we will require hospitals and clinics who treated those illegal immigrants to get their names, addresses, nationalities and the country of origin. That way, we can bill their government or subtract the money that is earmarked to their country in foreign aid to reimburse local hospitals and clinics for the treatment of their nationals."

- Sam Meas, Candidate for Congress

Tom: Where do you stand on illegal immigration?

MEAS: Well, I believe that illegal is illegal. When my guests come to my house I prefer that they come through my front door, not the back door. Now, the way to solve the illegal immigration issue, first and foremost, is to lock down our borders. No matter what you do in this country, if our borders, both the northern part and southern borders are porous, we will continue forever to have this illegal immigration issue.

Tom: So, what do we do with those who are already here?

MEAS: I think we can send them home. Here are a couple of solutions that I've been thinking about and I don't believe our congresswoman, Niki Tsongas, has thought of yet. Every year the USA spends billions of dollars to foreign aid - giving it to foreign countries through USDA, basically. Now, we have a lot of illegal immigrants who are utilizing Emergency Rooms, our hospital system, they don't pay for it and Federal tax dollars ended up subsidizing their medical treatments.

My thinking is that instead of just letting them go free, we will require hospitals and clinics who treated those illegal immigrants to get their names, addresses, nationalities and the country of origin. That way, we can bill their government or subtract the money that is earmarked to their country in foreign aid to reimburse local hospitals and clinics for the treatment of their nationals.

We are giving foreign aid to Guatemala, I don't know what the exact aid is to Guatemala. Say we give the country of Guatemala 300 million dollars and foreign aid, but it just happens that 150 million dollars

are being used to treat [their citizens] with healthcare. This president will never allow it, but if I am in Congress, I will co-sponsor a bill to make this happen.

We need to make sure that immigration rules and regulations are enforced, at the Federal level as well as the local level. So that when local law enforcement officers stop someone and that person happens to be an illegal immigrant, we should arrest that person and report it to ICE and have ICE take care of it and send them home.

But there are also 26 million other Latino and Hispanics who are living in this country *legally* who tend to be conservative socially, fiscally conservative as well... we want two things from this demographic. One, is that if they don't vote for us, let's hope that they don't give money or voting support to the Democratic Party. Now, if we are not careful about our own rhetoric, we will alienate these people. We want that vote in the future and if you want to grow the Republican Party, we need to also, make sure that we be very inclusive. We have to be able to use the same strategy as the Democratic Party to grow our party.

Paul: Being an immigrant yourself, from a very difficult situation in Cambodia, do you have sympathy for illegal immigrants in this country?

MEAS: No. And this is the reason why: See, in Cambodia or Southeast Asia, it is a country that is full of corruption. Likewise, in a country of Latin America, like Mexico or these Central American countries. Now, if we allow our country to be as corrupt as they are by acknowledging that someone breaking the law is Ok, then there is something wrong. As a law abiding citizen, as a legal immigrant, I came to this country in a legal way after surviving the killing fields, but I also wanted to make sure that the principal, the values that were founded in this country is upheld and that is the rule of law. When we cease to uphold the rule of law, we cease to be a civil society, we cease to be the America that I know of. I do not want America to become Mexico, I do not want America to become one of those Southeast Asian corrupt countries.

I want immigration reform that allows people who wish to come to this country in a legal manner who apply at the consulate or the embassy of the USA and their respective countries. There are millions of people who are waiting in line every day all around the world to come here legally. I want to make sure that those people who are doing it in a legal way have an opportunity to come to this country, because remember, they will come here and know how great this country is.

Let's face it, Americans need jobs as well. Americans need government assistance. I am all for helping people, poor people in foreign countries, but first and foremost, I want to have Americans helped. Then, after the needs of the Americans are satisfied, then I want to help other people.

SENIORS: FROM PAGE 7

ZUMBA Basic on Mondays, 3:30–4:30 p.m. ZUMBA Fitness on Mondays @ 4:30-5:30 p.m. and ZUMBA Fitness on Wednesdays, 3:30–4:30 p.m. Come and exercise to the beat of Latin Music with Zumba Instructor Tallie Abernathy. Walk-ins are welcome for \$6 per class. No dance experience necessary. Ditch the work out and join the party. 6-weeks for \$24.00

YOGA/PILATES: Tuesdays 3:35-4:30 p.m. with Cheryl Cronin. Blending both yoga and Pilates in a 55-minute workout, we will strengthen and tone muscles while we increase flexibility& balance. Please call to register.

BEGINNER BALLROOM DANCING CLASSES: Next Session starts: April 29, Thursday evenings 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – 6 weeks. Learn the Salsa and the Waltz. This class is open to all ages. Each week has a review of the basic steps, so you can sign up anytime. Call Barbara at 978-688-9560 to sign up. This is not a difficult class, come and join the fun. You can

miss a class and still catch up without any trouble. There is still time to sign up for this class!! The cost is \$90.00 per person or \$150.00 per couple for 6 weeks. Drop ins welcome for \$30.00 a class.

Support Services and Programs
Better Days Ahead: A free six week program on managing chronic disease, Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. This class starts on May 6, and runs thru June 10. Please contact Rita at 978-552-4674 to reserve a space.

Lecture Series: Every Monday at 10 a.m. Monday, May 3, A Representative from Social Security will be here to discuss many issues. May 10, Judy Tymon Town Planner will speak on the responsibilities of the Planning Department.

Stress Reduction: Fridays, 12:00 -2:00 p.m., 20 minute treatment for a \$5 donation. Call for an appointment.

Attorney George White: Available to meet with you to discuss your legal issues. Please call the Senior Center to make an appointment.

SMOLAK: FROM PAGE 6

Bakery Manager, Roberta Tarsia. Tarsia brings some 25+ years of experience, knowledge and innovation in the food & beverage industry as a baker, caterer and former Director of Catering at the Museum of Science and Marriott® Hotels, as well as, Food & Beverage Manager for Sheraton Hotels & Resorts. Customers can look forward to the farm stand providing all their traditional favorites, with the addition of new lunch items, a new “dining in the rough” area complete with Smolak’s newly installed free Wi-Fi for those that may want to “work from home” for the day!

“With numerous PYO crops, a bakery and farm stand, an extensive play area for children and a petting zoo and greenhouse, you would think that would be enough to keep Smolak Farms busy. Not so explains the farm’s marketing director, “I think people know about our PYO seasons, various kids’ activities and

our farm stand, but there’s so much more to experience at Smolak Farms. We do beautiful weddings and private events, corporate and team building outings, group tours and even have an educational nature and crafts program for children in the Summer,” said Kelley Small, Marketing Director for Smolak Farms.

With all that Smolak Farms has to offer it is the perfect place for children of all ages, or just those who are young at heart. Come experience a true New England tradition with the farm’s opening on Friday, May 7, 2010. In celebration of the farm’s opening free hay rides will be available all day as well as free bags of feed for the petting zoo for children 7 and under (limit on per family, first come first serve). Smolak’s world famous cider donuts will also be available for only 25 cents in celebration of the farm stand’s 25th anniversary!

BOXFORD: FROM PAGE 13

to obtain bicycle lanes on a highway. Projects like this in every town contribute to the billions in state deficit spending and trillions in federal deficit spending.

This is the road to default or vastly higher taxes and a lower standard of living. We’d better tune up our bicycles because we will need them.

Meanwhile, DPW chief John Dold is just trying to do his job and present options to the town. Project information is available from the DPW and comments, which will be considered, may be sent to John Dold at 7B Spofford Rd, Boxford MA 01921. Information may be available on the town website. Despite this project’s long time horizon comments should made as soon as possible.


Town Meeting is May 11 and we will have a decision on the competing Haynes land proposals. The intriguing idea floated by Laura Grabski to buy the bankrupt Georgetown Club for playing fields has been muddled. Apparently the April

28 Georgetown Club auction was cancelled “due to note sale.” I have no hard evidence, only scuttlebutt that one of the original investors formed “Georgetown Golf Club and Resort Inc.” on April 14. Did it buy the note?

Please vote in the May 18 town election. There will be override questions and an important Selectman contest. Pat Morris deserves your vote as the candidate with years of Conservation Commission experience who has shown personal courage and strong ethical principles in resisting the Haynes Land Committee steamroller.




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



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ROLLING RIDGE: FROM PAGE 6

side Gallery dining room.

A reception featuring a “People’s Choice Art Award” for paintings painted that day will begin at 3 p.m. A silent auction featuring works of art by area artists and items donated by local merchants will also be held.

“Rolling Ridge is a hidden gem, a true oasis of quiet beauty and gracious hospitality,” said Rev. Larry Peacock, executive director of Rolling Ridge. “We look forward to a day to make art, create poetry, listen to music, and enjoy life at this historic estate. We are eager to show the community this grand estate and an enjoyable arts festival.”

“Excitement for the “Arts Festival at Rolling Ridge” is building up amongst the artists of the Andovers Artists Guild and other art organizations. The estate is an incredible back drop for creative minds, its European flair couples with the

natural environment to transport you to a place of inner peace and contemplation,” said Nella Lush, president of the Andovers Artists Guild.

“Our first Glimpse of Europe open house was a spectacular cultural showcase, bringing together local artists and residents in the beautiful setting of Rolling Ridge,” said Edward Wang, chair of the North Andover Cultural Council. “This year, we hope to reinforce the theme of “Art of the Natural World”, celebrating the environment and its inspiration on artists, poets, musicians and area residents of all ages.”

The event is co-sponsored by the Andovers Artists Guild and the North Andover Cultural Council.

Rolling Ridge Retreat is located at 660 Great Pond Road in North Andover next to the North Andover Country Club. Visit <http://www.rollingridge.org>

RIVERBANK: FROM PAGE 6

loan secured with a junior lien from the CDC (backed by a 100 percent SBA-guaranteed debenture) covering up to 40 percent of the cost, in this case Bay Colony Development Corp., and a contribution of at least 10 percent equity from the small business being helped. To be eligible, the business must be operated for profit and fall within the size standards set by the SBA. Under the 504 Program, the business qualifies as small if it does not have a tangible net worth in excess of \$8.5 million and does not have an average net income in excess of \$6 million after taxes for the preceding two years.

About RiverBank: RiverBank, (www.riverbk.com) headquartered in North Andover, MA, has been providing Southern New Hampshire and the Merrimack Valley with “friendlier, easier and better” banking service for over 142 years with \$805 million in assets, and a localized, personalized approach. A subsidiary of LSB Corporation, a publicly held company, the common stock is traded over the counter

on the NASDAQ National Marketing System under the symbol “LSBX”. Sales prices of the stock are reported in the Wall Street Journal as “LSB CP.” RiverBank is a member of FDIC and DIF, with all deposits 100% insured. RiverBank has seven branches in Massachusetts Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire.

About Bay Colony Development Corp., Bay Colony Development Corp. is a private non-profit Certified Development Company (CDC) whose purpose is to stimulate economic development through the creation and preservation of jobs by providing healthy companies with fixed asset financing at affordable rates and reasonable terms. Bay Colony has funded quality loans in excess of \$380 million to well over 700 growing businesses throughout Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont representing over one billion dollars in total project financing. Bay Colony has grown to be one of the larger certified development companies in the nation. Bay Colony was formed in 1981 and was one of the first SBA Accredited Lenders (1991) and Priority Lenders (1996) in the country. In addition to providing Section 504 Loan Program financing, Bay Colony works with lending institutions and the SBA to assist small businesses with loan guarantees under the Section 7(a) Guaranteed Loan Program.

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**THE DOCTOR IS IN**

How to deal with headaches, Part (1)

Rami Rustum, M.D.
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

Having a headache is one of the reasons to visit the pain clinic which seems to be on the rise lately!!!

With all the stress around us on different fronts, it seems like an understandable problem.

Patients give different descriptions to the problem but the common thing is experiencing "Pain in/ around the head or neck region".

Such problems could be either a disorder in its own right or a symptom of an underlying medical condition or disease. The medical term for headache is cephalalgia. Headaches are one of the most common and universal human ailments, described in the Bible as well as in medical writings from ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, India, and China. Severe chronic headaches were once treated by the oldest known surgical procedure, known as trepanning or trephining, which the surgeon drilled a hole as large as 1-2 inches in diameter in the patient's skull without the benefit of anesthesia. Evi-

dence of trepanning has been found in skulls from Cro-Magnon people that are about 40,000 years old.

Demographics

Headaches in general are very common in the adult population in North America. The American Council for Headache Education (ACHE) estimates that 95% of women and 90% of men in the United States and Canada have had at least one headache in the past 12 months. Most of these are tension headaches. Tension headaches may begin in childhood in some patients, but most commonly start in adolescence or the early 20s. The gender ratio for episodic tension headaches is about 1.4 Female: 1 Male; for chronic tension headaches, 1.9 Female: 1 Male.

Migraine and cluster headaches have distinctive demographic patterns. Migraine headaches are less common than tension headaches, affecting about 11% of the population in the United States and 15% in Canada. Several studies done in the United Kingdom and the United States, however, indicate that doctors tend to under-diagnose migraine headaches;

thus the true number of patients with migraine may be considerably higher than the usual statistics indicate. Migraines are a major economic burden; it is estimated that the annual cost of time lost from work due to migraines in the United States alone is \$17.2 billion. Most people who experience migraines have their first episode in childhood or adolescence, although some experience their first migraine after age 20. Migraines occur most frequently in adults between the ages of 25 and 55; the gender ratio is about 3 Female: 1 Male. Although migraine headaches occur in people of all races and ethnic groups, they are thought to affect Caucasians more often than African or Asian Americans.

Classification

Doctors divide headaches into two large categories, primary and secondary, according to guidelines established by the International Headache Society (IHS) in 1988 and revised for republication in 2004. Primary headaches are those that are not caused by an underlying medical condition. There are three types of primary headaches: migraine, cluster, and tension headaches. More than 90% of all headaches are primary headaches. Secondary headaches are caused by disease or medical conditions; they account for fewer than 10% of all headaches.

I- PRIMARY HEADACHE:

* MIGRAINE HEADACHES Migraine



headaches are characterized by throbbing or pulsating pain of moderate or severe intensity lasting from four hours to as long as three days. The pain is typically felt on one side of the head; in fact, the English word "migraine" is a combination of two Greek words that mean "half" and "head." Migraine headaches become worse with physical activity and are often accompanied by nausea and vomiting. In addition, patients with migraine headaches are hypersensitive to lights, sounds, and odors.

The two most common types of migraines are known as classic and common

HEADACHES, PAGE 37

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We walk because we can't walk away

Sean Manion

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

It was just a normal Friday night in January 2007, when my good friend Charlie Bradbury and I were sitting and talking over a beer. Shortly after our conversation started I realized something was bothering him. Charlie just did not seem to be his normal outgoing self. He went on to tell me that a mutual friend of ours had been diagnosed with breast cancer. We were concerned for her health and well being. However what could a couple of guys like us do to help? The feeling we shared was one of helplessness, derived from the fact that neither of us really knew anything about breast cancer. We both were unsure of what the diagnosis meant, how sick she would get and what kind of treatment, if any, was available. Consumed with sadness, neither of us could speak the unthinkable possibility that our friend could die from this horrible beast they call cancer.

We decided at that point that we wanted to do something to help her. The following days we kept very busy researching breast cancer. The biggest resource we found was on the Avon Foundation for Women website. It took just one week and one more discussion to decide that both Charlie and I would register and walk in the 2007 Avon Walk for Breast Cancer. We would together raise \$1800.00 each and prepare our bodies and minds to walk 39.3 miles over two days. It seemed like a simple way to honor our friend, while raising money for awareness and treatment. We certainly were not prepared for what we were about to get ourselves into.

Just a short two weeks after learning about the diagnosis, Charlie contacted our walker buddy (an Avon Representative) letting her know that we would be walking six miles Saturday morning in Methuen. That information was shared on the Avon website and we were soon contacted by other local walkers wishing to meet up and walk that day. That Saturday we walked with two women, the four of us shared stories of friends and relatives and the reason for our walk. In the weeks that followed Charlie and I had the pleasure of meeting dozens of other Avon Walk for Breast Cancer participants and making friends with each of them. What started out as a way to honor our friend, had just turned into something nobody could have predicted.

After countless training walks, and hun-

dreds of stories shared, the day had finally arrived. A quick ride to Boston at 4:00 am Saturday morning proved to be something totally unexpected to these two simple guys. Opening the door to a sea of pink shirts in the University of Massachusetts parking lot to our amazement were three thousand walkers and volunteers assembled for just one reason, the eradication of breast cancer. After a stretching session and



some words of encouragement you could feel the excitement in the air and the crowd had grown even larger. Charlie and I set out on our way. Looking at each other in awe, we

then started our adventure. One by one the miles accumulated. Always encouraged by the sight of other walkers and the people who had assembled along the route. I was a little worried for Charlie as he was a bit older and the journey we were embarking on could quickly take its toll. We finished the day at 26.2 miles at the wellness center. A hot shower and good meal later we set up our tent and reflected upon the days events as our aching bodies finally let us sleep.

It was then for the first time, that Charlie and I felt the enormity of the last thirteen weeks, that had followed our original conversation. The conversation that in which we decided we would simply raise some money and walk in honor of our friend. One could never expect for two men to be drawn so close to this cause. I'm not sure when it happened, if it was the first story of a survivor or if it was the stories of the ones who had lost their courageous battle with breast cancer. Right then we both realized that our job wasn't done, as a matter of fact, it had only just begun. Charlie and I would become advocates for breast cancer care, the male voice for early detection and awareness. We went on to sleep that night and proudly walked the 13.1 miles the following morning. Closing ceremonies were filled with emotions. Feeling very proud of our accomplishments we were still saddened by the realities of what this cancer can do to peoples lives. The fact that during the time we walked so many lives had been lost. Reminded that each year nearly 41,000 people will have their lives taken by breast cancer. That's one every thirteen minutes, a thought which is unbearable to these two men.

They say that you will never know a man, until you have walked a mile in his shoes. I haven't walked in his shoes, but I did walk 39.3 miles right beside this man.

CANCER, PAGE 44

Twilight Wishes for Seniors

Terri Crow Mercier

VALLEY PATRIOT HERO COLUMNIST

Twilight Wish Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that desires to bring smiles and joy to our elders. It is their way of giving back to seniors who gave of themselves throughout their lives. This foundation also brings awareness to the younger generations that there are many seniors in need of help to fulfill lifelong wishes in their final years. The foundation has programs in place to help educate others to gain a higher level of respect to our most deserving senior generation. It inspires people to show kindness towards needy seniors with random acts of kindness.

Cass Forkin is the true angel behind this incredible foundation. She was inspired to start this program for senior wish granting back in 2002. One day Cass and her daughter were having dinner together at a restaurant. They noticed three elderly ladies digging out enough one dollar bills and change to

pay for their meal. Their thoughts were that perhaps something as simple as a meal out might be such a special event to these ladies that they gave the waitress a twenty dollar bill to cover the ladies tab. Even though they had asked to remain anonymous the waitress told the ladies who was paying for their meal. The ladies approached Cass and her daughter and one of them asked them to stand up. This lady reached out and gave them both a very deep hug. This woman went on to say "We did not know there were people like you still out there in the world. We thought you had forgotten us." This very profound moment changed their lives forever.

By 2003 Cass had Twilight Wish Foundation up and running. She had been able to recruit a special team of everyday people to help start making wishes come true. Although granting wishes from one coast to the other has certainly been no easy task this wonderful team of people have been able

MERCIER, PAGE 50

The Girl With The Grandmother Face

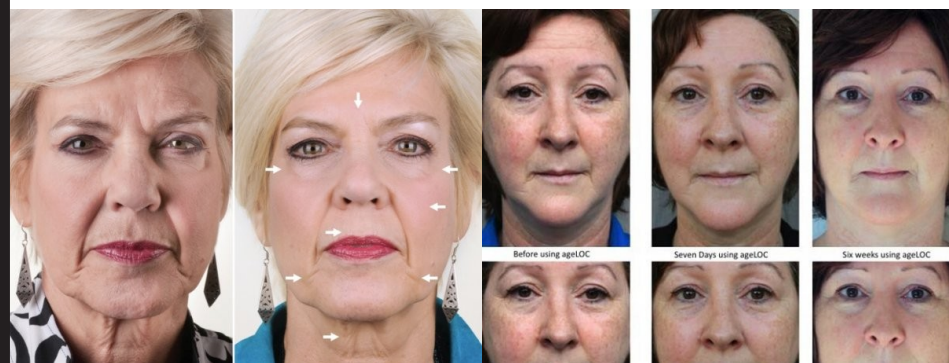
By Gail Van Kleeck

Once in a store window, I happened to see
The reflection of someone familiar to me
She was older and grayer than the person I knew
And if truth be know, she was heavier too

The skin of her hands, I was shocked to discover
Was as veined and translucent as that of my mother
I remembered the dreams the girl had once had
And the lives who had touched hers,
How that made my heart glad.

I thought of the friendships, the laughter the tears.
The loving and caring, the impossible years.
With respect and compassion I stood in that place
And gazed at the girl with the grandmother face.

If you or someone you know honors the years you have lived
and yet wishes to look and feel more youthful, I'd be happy to talk with you.
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Jeff Ghaemaghamy... I can't believe it... This new ageLOC product has just blown me away..

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Back Pain and Herniated Discs

DR. Jin Sung

VALLEY PATRIOT CHIROPRACTIC COLUMNIST

Back Pain and Leg Pain

Much more commonly, when lower back pain is accompanied by radiating pain, the radiating pain only travels into the buttock and thigh, and doesn't travel below the knee.

And, most commonly, the thigh pain is found in the back of the thigh, rather than in the front of the leg.

Most of the time, this radiating pain does NOT come from a herniated disc, and does NOT mean the problem is sciatica (caused by an inflamed sciatic nerve, likely caused by a disc herniation).

This type of pain that travels into the buttock and the back of the thigh is usually caused by mechanical changes in the sacroiliac joint and the spinal joints of the lower back. These mechanical changes relate to tight spinal muscles and inflamed spinal ligaments and tendons, with resulting loss of full mobility.

The good news is such problems are treatable with chiropractic health care. The underlying problems are structural, related to the joints and surrounding soft tissues and chiropractic treatment is designed to restore balance and function. Symptoms typically begin to improve quickly.

In addition to treatment, your chiropractor will likely recommend stretches and exercises to help solve the problem and maintain physical health.

A 30-year-old mom bends over to pick up her four-year-old and feels a sharp stabbing pain in her lower back. A 60-year-old man bends over to pick up his five-year-old grandchild and feels an electrical shooting pain in his lower back. For both, the pain is so severe they need to sit down.

The next day, both the mom and the grandfather notice they now have pain and numbness radiating down one leg, and they are having trouble walking.

What's going on, how did it happen, and what can be done about it?

First of all, a little basic anatomy is useful. Spinal discs are weight-bearing shock absorbers. They contain a gel-like ball-bearing center, which is surrounded by tough fibrous cartilage, arranged in concentric, criss-crossing circles.¹

As a person gets older, the discs natu-

rally lose some of their water content, and cracks and fissures naturally develop in the fibrous cartilage. If a weight-bearing stress is unusual and unexpected, the gel-like material in the center of the disc can push through one of the fissures and possibly irritate a spinal nerve.

If enough of this material pushes through, the nerve can become inflamed and cause symptoms such as radiating pain and/or numbness, and possibly weakness, in one leg.

Typically, such pain and/or numbness radiates down the leg, traveling below the knee and possibly into the foot.

Such symptoms, with or without back pain, are highly suggestive of an inflamed spinal nerve. In fact, the person will usually say the leg symptoms are much worse and of greater concern than any back pain that may be present.

If the MRI confirms the disc herniation and suggests an inflamed nerve, the diagnosis is complete. What's next?

In the best scenario, conservative treatment may be sufficient and the nerve inflammation improves with time.^{2,3} Anti-inflammatory medication may be helpful. Chiropractic conservative therapy may include physical therapeutic modalities and gentle trigger point therapy to relieve associated muscle spasms.

A spinal surgeon should be consulted to provide an additional opinion and input. If pain is severe and there is neurologic loss, surgery may be the best option.

Of course, the best management, as always, is prevention. Pay attention to safe lifting procedures. Exercise regularly and get sufficient rest. Your chiropractor will be able to provide guidance and recommend effective protocols to help you achieve and maintain good health and wellness.

¹Postacchini F: Lumbar Disc Herniation. Springer, 2004, Chapter 2.

²Rothoerl RD, et al: When should conservative treatment for lumbar disc herniation be ceased and surgery considered? Neurosurg Rev 25(3):162-165, 2002.

³Lumbar Disc Herniation. New Engl J Med 347(21):1728-1729, 2002.

Dr. Jin Sung is the owner of Functional Chiropractic, Inc. located at 126 Merrimack Street in Methuen, MA 01844. The office is located behind Heavenly Donuts. He can be reached at 978 688 6999. Web-site: www.DrJinSung.com

Allergy Update!

Dr. Thomas Johson

VALLEY PATRIOT ALLERGY COLUMNIST

It's officially springtime again. This means pollen exposure and hay fever if you have allergies. These seasonal allergies can seem like a stubborn cold. They share many of the same symptoms. One of the easiest ways to separate a cold from allergies is the seasonal nature of the symptoms. So if it seems like you get a "cold that won't quit" at the same time every year, chances are it's a seasonal allergy.

With this year's unusually warm and wet March and April the trees are getting their springtime cloak of greenery, but some are still flowering. The unusual start to allergy season this year also produced higher than normal mold. All told this "Triple Whammy" of tree pollen and mold and now grass pollen have people running to see their allergy doctors weeks before they have had symptoms in former years.

It seemed everywhere you turn people are clearing their throats, sniffing, and finding it harder to breathe.

Before you head to the backyard and start chopping down trees remember that pollen can travel for hundreds of miles so you can be sneezing and wheezing due to

trees that may be pollinating in New York City.

If you exercise outdoors you may consider taking all or some of your workouts indoors. If you must do your running outside it's a good idea to shower when you return home to wash off the pollen grains. Another good idea is to wash your exercise clothing and bedding more often. Try to stay in air-conditioned environments.

Be sure to keep your doctor well informed regarding changes in your level of

discomfort. And it's a good idea to also keep the doctor in the loop regarding any changes in your approach to dealing with your allergies. Be sure to check out herbal remedies to be sure there are no bad side effects.

Remember there is no reason to suffer from allergies. There are a number of effective medicines and treatments that can make living with allergies easier this time of year.

Finally if you have just had enough see your local allergist and discuss allergy shots.

Dr Thomas Johnson is a regular contributor to the Valley Patriot. For more info go to NewEnglandallergy.com



PHOTO: COURTESY

The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) of Massachusetts recently honored the staff of Healthy Families Lawrence as "Faces of Prevention" in recognition of their commitment to creating safe and healthy communities every day for children. Shown are: (front, left to right) Carmen de Jesus, Yaritza Lopez and Edna Robles; (back) Rosa Quinones, Christine Nesbit, Maria Avila, Johannie Almonte and Kristin Green. CTF provides funding to Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, of Lawrence, to provide home visiting services for first-time parents under age 21 in Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, Middleton and North Andover.

Local 'Faces of Prevention' honored for work to prevent child abuse

BOSTON – Employees of Healthy Families Lawrence, which provides services in North Andover, recently received honors as "Faces of Prevention" in recognition of their work to prevent child abuse and neglect in the local community.

The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) of Massachusetts, the state's leading child abuse prevention agency, presented the honor as part of its observance of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. The "Faces of Prevention" campaign showcases hundreds of community leaders who are committed to preventing child abuse everyday throughout the Commonwealth.

The employees are: Rosa Quinones, Christine Nesbit, Maria Avila, Johannie Almonte, Kristin Green, Carmen de Jesus, Yaritza Lopez and Edna Robles.

CTF provides funding to Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, of Lawrence, to provide home visiting services for first-time parents under age 21 in Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, Middleton and North Andover.

The program is part of Healthy Families Massachusetts (HFM). Research shows that families who participate in HFM learn to become nurturing parents, and their babies are more likely to be developmentally on target.

Child abuse is a severe problem in Massachusetts, which ranks highest in abuse rates compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The number of children confirmed as abused each year by the Department of Children and Families would fill Fenway Park.

"Raising children is joyous and challenging," says Suzin Bartley, executive director of the Children's Trust Fund. "Research shows that when parents and families receive education on parenting, child development, and other important resources, they are less likely to abuse or neglect their children."

About The Children's Trust Fund
The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) of Massachusetts leads statewide efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect by supporting parents and strengthening families. CTF funds, evaluates and promotes the work of more than 100 agencies statewide. Supported by private, state and federal funding, CTF invests in Massachusetts' most precious resource-children and their families. For more information about the Children's Trust Fund, access www.mctf.org or send an email to info@mctf.state.ma.us or call toll-free (888) 775-4KID.

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Live the WOW!

Shake Things Up a Bit! No Wait! Shake Things Up a Whole Lot! Take the Words Mundane and Boring Out of Your Life and Start Right Now to Live the WOW!

Thomas Connors
VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Words like Excitement! Fulfilled! Satisfaction! Those are the words people Living the **WOW!** use to describe what their Lives are all about. Those words also describe how they SEE their lives when compared to the average person out there.

There is no reason, no excuse, why YOU, too, can't use those words to not only describe your life but words to actually live by and motivate you to get out of the rat race from here-on-in.

Wake Up Your Life! Banish the word mundane and boring forever. Get so much more out of Life with just a little effort. Get a whole bunch more out of it by Shaking Things Up!

Ask yourself. Is your Life mundane and boring? Well, Buckaroo, You made it that way. Don't ever forget. It's your life and YOU make the Choices. You also have the Choice to take that first step and make the changes necessary to Live the **WOW!**

If your life is mundane and you want something more out of it, guess what? Do things and take action that is the exact opposite of what you have been doing all these years. Pay attention to what you actually do in life.

Your spouse doesn't seem to respond to you like before? Shake Things Up. Buy her roses instead of those cheap carnations. Vacations not quite what they used

to be? Shake Things Up and splurge. Go to one of the Islands in the Caribbean this summer instead of taking that same old vacation to Hampton Beach. Kids don't seem as close as they once were? Shake Things Up and spend time doing what they want to do, instead of what you always want.

Get that bull by the horns and ride him all the way to a Life filled with Purpose and Excitement as you Live the WOW on a daily basis!

Don't make it a once-in-a-while thing. Make it how you Live your Life from this moment on! Pay attention to your daily routine. Avoid getting in that proverbial rut and get lost in ways that make you feel fulfilled. It makes Life so much more rewarding and meaningful.

Life was meant to be an enjoyment and pleasure. Sure, there are periods of difficulties thrown into the mix, but that is so we will fully appreciate what we do have. The trick is to absorb the down times, but always work toward the kind of Life that makes you say **WOW!**

If you need examples, start with Mom. She could really Shake Things Up a bit! Sometimes I think she did it just for sport.

And when she did decide to Shake Things Up a bit, you usually did two things. One, you got out of her way and didn't say a word. And second, you thought to yourself ... "**WOW!**, what Did I do?"

The bottom-line is, Mom could Shake

Things Up better than any human being was ever supposed to be able to. In fact, few people on earth could even compare to her talents in this area.

And worse, she'd do it without any warning. I remember eating at the table and out of the blue she'd announce that from here-on-in we'd all be going to bed early. And that includes my father! Case closed. Didn't matter the reason. You'd try to figure out what you did wrong, but, that was useless. She just had that knack of Shaking Things Up.

Or how about the times when she would announce that all of a sudden we all had to focus on our manners. Where did that come from? So, for the next few days everyone was going around being polite to everyone you met ... including the dog and the neighbor's cat. And although these 180 degree turns made you scratch your head, they also made you say, "**WOW!**" When you look back, boy, they did Shake Things Up a bit in Life and added an excitement that got your heart pumping and certainly made Life less boring.

Maybe Shaking Things Up is a Gift from our Lord. He certainly had His way of Living the WOW! and Creating that special buzz among his disciples.

Those money changes in the Temple? Whoa, did He ever Shake Things Up with them. Can you imagine the expressions on their faces when He began tipping over their tables and throwing them out of the Temple for desecrating it?

How about the Disciples who were out fishing and not catching a thing. Jesus

simply told them to go back out and drop their nets. They caught so much fish they feared their boats would capsize.

The past and the present. Well, they too have their examples of Shaking Things Up a bit.

Think about the Music Industry going back 50 years ago. The mellow sounds of Sinatra and Bennet. Then **WOW!** Things were really Shaken Up. Literally. Elvis, Chuck Berry. Then came the Beatles and Rolling Stones. Talk about Shaking Things Up?

Get out of the Rut you find yourself in. Add the Excitement and Thrill of Living that makes life anything but ordinary.

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



*Tom Connors is President/CEO of American Training, a diverse collection of companies committed to "Bringing Out the Best in Everyone They Touch". He believes in living life to the fullest by making the **WOW!** a regular part of your personal, spiritual and working life. You can reach Tom at Tom@American-TrainingInc.com or by writing to him at Tom Connors, American Training, 102 Glenn Street, Lawrence, MA 01843 © 2009*

SIMPLE WISDOM

Anti-Oxidant Protection

Gail Van Kleeck
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The week before Thanksgiving Parker and I loaded up the car, fixed a bed for our dear dog Katie and began our trip of 1000 miles to visit my siblings in the upper part of Michigan.

Parker and Katie and I like the long trips we sometimes take together. Parker drives most of the way because he says my driving scares him. Katie, who likes nothing better than being in a pod with her family, sleeps. And I spend the first several hours compulsively making to-do lists for when we get back.

Parker and I talk intermittently. Sometimes we listen to the radio. Sometimes we sing the old songs we remember from our childhood. Parker knows the melodies and I remember the verses as well as the chorus. We laugh. Mostly though we're quiet, lulled by the sound of the tires on the pavement and the farms and factories we pass.

It was dusk by the time we reached Erie Pennsylvania and the snow had begun to fall. The weather forecaster predicted a lake effect, when the snow falls sideways with such velocity and vengeance that the road becomes completely invisible. It wasn't bad yet, so we decided to drive a little longer. Parker lowered our speed to about 50 and I opened a plastic container filled with blueberries and held it out for him.

Parker has a closet filled with shirts that have a spot on the front, from the times the food he's eating doesn't quite make it to his mouth. The blueberries were no exception. He took his foot off the accelera-

tor for a moment so he could concentrate on locating the one he'd dropped.

In that instant a beautiful, full grown female deer leaped gracefully in front of us, less than eight feet ahead of the car. We could see her eyes and the white fur beneath her tail. If Parker hadn't dropped the blueberry and taken his foot off the accelerator this story would have had an entirely different ending.

It was all over so quickly, we didn't have a chance to feel afraid. All we felt was gratitude. We were alive. Katie stood up and nuzzled our necks, Parker took my hand. We knew without saying the words that life held something more for us to do.

In today's challenging and sometimes frightening times, there is a growing temptation to look to the future with a sense of apprehension or dread. Yet the more we focus on the unknown, the less we are able to see the gifts and blessings that are in our lives today. What if our mission in life is to see and acknowledge those gifts, to love and appreciate each other more and to live with a greater sense of compassion for both ourselves and others?

Here is the test to see if your mission in life is complete. If you're alive it isn't. **WHAT WE FOCUS ON IS TRULY WHAT WE SEE**



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

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HEADACHES PART (1):FROM PAGE 33

migraine, respectively. Classic migraine, which accounts for 10–20% of the cases of migraine, is distinguished by a brief period of warning symptoms 10–60 minutes before an acute attack. This prodrome, which is known as an aura, may include such symptoms as seeing flashing lights or zigzag patterns, temporary loss of vision, difficulty speaking, weakness in an arm or leg, and tingling sensations in the face or hands. Common migraine is not preceded by an aura, although some patients experience mood changes, unusual tiredness, or fluid retention shortly before an attack. An attack of common migraine may include diarrhea and frequent urination, as well as nausea and vomiting.

Less common types of migraines include hemiplegic migraine, characterized by temporary paralysis on one side of the body; ophthalmoplegic migraine, in which the pain is felt in the area around the eye; basilar artery migraine, which involves a major artery at the base of the brain and primarily affects young women; and headache-free migraine, which is characterized by the gastrointestinal and visual symptoms of classic migraine, but does not involve head pain.

* CLUSTER HEADACHES Cluster headaches are recurrent brief attacks of sudden and severe pain on one side of the head, usually most intense in the area around the eye. Cluster headaches may last between five minutes and three hours; they may occur once every other day or as often as eight times per day.

The pain of a cluster headache is excruciating; some patients describe it as severe enough to make them consider suicide. Patients with cluster headaches are restless; they may pace the floor, weep, rock back and forth, or bang their heads against a wall in desperation to stop the pain. In addition to severe pain, patients with cluster headaches often have a runny or congested nose, watery or inflamed eyes, drooping eyelids, swelling in the area of

the eyebrows, and heavy facial perspiration. Because of the nasal symptoms and the relative rarity of cluster headaches, these episodes have sometimes been misdiagnosed as sinusitis.

* TENSION HEADACHES Tension headaches are the most common headaches in the general population; other names for them include muscle contraction headache, ordinary headache, psychogenic headache, and stress headache. The IHS classifies tension headaches as either episodic or chronic; episodic tension headaches occur 15 or fewer times per month, whereas chronic tension headaches occur on 15 or more days per month over a period of six months or longer.

Tension headaches rarely last more than a few hours; 82% resolve in less than a day. The patient will usually describe the pain of a tension headache as mild to moderate in severity. The doctor will not find anything abnormal in the course of a general physical or neurological examination, although sore or tense areas (trigger points) in the muscles of the patient’s forehead, neck, or upper shoulder area may be detected.

* REBOUND HEADACHES Rebound headaches, which are also known as analgesic-abuse headaches, are a subtype of primary headache caused by overuse of headache drugs. They may be associated with medications taken for tension and migraine headaches.

II- SECONDARY HEADACHE:
Secondary headaches, which are caused by diseases or disorders, are categorized as either traction or inflammatory headaches. Traction headaches result from the pulling, stretching, or displacing of structures that are sensitive to pain, as when a brain tumor presses on the outer layer of nerve tissue that covers the brain. Inflammatory headaches are caused by infectious diseases of the ears, teeth, sinuses, or other parts of the head.

Major causes of secondary headaches

include the following:

* Brain tumors. Headaches associated with brain tumors usually begin as episodic nighttime headaches that are accompanied by projectile vomiting. The headaches may become continuous over time, and usually get worse if the patient coughs, sneezes, bears down while using the toilet, or does something else that increases the pressure inside the head.

* Meningitis. Meningitis is an inflammation of the meninges, the three layers of membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord. Meningitis is usually caused by bacteria or viruses, and may produce chronic headaches.

* Head trauma. Patients may complain of headaches as well as memory problems, general irritability, and fatigue for months or even years after a head injury. These symptoms are sometimes grouped together as post-concussion syndrome. In some cases, a blow on the head may cause some blood vessels to rupture and produce a hematoma, or mass of blood that displaces brain tissue, and can cause seizures or weakness as well as headaches.

* Temporal arteritis. First described in 1890, temporal arteritis is an inflammation of the temporal artery that most commonly affects people over 50. In addition to headache, patients with temporal arteritis may have fever, loss of appetite, and blurring or loss of vision. Temporal arteritis is treated with steroid medications.

* Stroke. Headaches may be associated with several conditions that may lead to stroke, including high blood pressure and heart disease. Headaches may also result from completed stroke or from the mini-strokes known as transient ischemic attacks, or TIAs.

* Lumbar puncture. About 25% of patients who undergo a lumbar puncture (spinal tap) develop a headache from the lowered cerebrospinal fluid pressure around the brain and spinal cord. Lumbar puncture headaches usually go away on



their own after a few hours.

* Sinus infections. Acute sinusitis is characterized by fluid buildup inside sinus cavities inflamed by a bacterial or viral infection. Chronic sinusitis usually results from an allergic reaction to smoke, dust, animal fur, or similar irritants.

* Referred pain. This type of pain is felt in a part of the body at a distance from the injured or diseased area. Headache pain may be referred from diseased teeth; disks in the cervical spine that have been damaged by spondylosis (degeneration of the spinal vertebrae caused by osteoarthritis); or the temporomandibular joint, the small joint in front of the ear where the lower jaw is attached to the skull.

* Idiopathic intracranial hypertension. Also known as pseudotumor cerebri, this disorder is caused by increased pressure inside the skull in the absence of any abnormality of the central nervous system or blockage in the flow of the cerebrospinal fluid. In addition to headache, patients with this disorder experience diplopia (seeing double) and other visual symptoms.

References: 1- Medicinenet.com, 2- The National Headache foundation, 3- The Journal of Headache and face pain, 4- The American Headache Society, 5- Headaches By Robert S. Kunkel, Cleveland clinic press



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

MEALS TAX: FROM PAGE 28

The current budget has \$700,000 for the operation of the Tsongas Arena that is no longer needed now that the Arena has been transferred to the University. That reduces the shortfall to \$500,000. The current budget also has \$1,026,000 for unemployment costs. If we do not have the 49 layoffs that occurred in this fiscal year, then we don’t need to budget such a large amount and could reduce that amount by as much as \$700,000. That changes the shortfall into a \$200,000 surplus!

Given the above, we can have a balanced budget without the new meals tax. To be fair there may be additional costs to be covered in the budget. The above does

not consider the deficit in the snow & ice removal costs that may not be covered by unexpended funds in other line items.

The conclusion of this writer is that adding the meals tax is not necessary to maintain current City services.



Joe Mendonca is a newly elected councilor in Lowell. He is a former Lowell School Committeeman (1999 - 2006) and former Lowell City Councilor (2007) who is familiar with Lowell’s City and School Department Budgets.

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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

New Local Dog Boutique to Host Adoption Days

Kate Whitney

VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY COLUMNIST

Spring is finally here! It's time to do some spring cleaning and get our dogs out and about to enjoy the fresh air. When you do your cleaning, don't forget to take unwanted items like sheets, towels, blankets, and newspapers to your local animal shelter. Instead of throwing away clothes or brick-a-brack, bring them to a thrift store, or donate them to the Salvation Army. I'm all about reusing and recycling whatever I can. Remember, what is one man's junk is another man's treasure.

In the past I've written about where and where not to get dog food, treats and toys. This month I'd like to spotlight a new location in our area that has truly caught my attention. A few weeks ago two sisters from Georgetown, Carla and Nikki, emailed me (by the way, I love getting emails from people who read my column) about their new adventure in Georgetown: they are opening a dog boutique on May 1st called Under One Woof. This dog store is going to be the first and only type of retail store in town. As I've said in past articles, I'm against any food or treats that you can buy at your local grocery store. Instead, I encourage people to buy better quality foods at specialty pet stores, such as Under One Woof. The better ingredients may make for a more expensive food or treat, but trust me, it's worth it in the long run...big time. I will highlight the ingredients in those cheap pet foods in a future article (I know I've already written about it before, but it's such a huge issue it deserves another turn).

So why should all you dog owners shop at this store? Besides the fact that it's convenient, moderately priced, and has a great selection of food, treats and accessories, the owners are what will keep customers coming back for more. Carla and Nikki are full of smiles and energy, and are always eager to please pooches and their owners. When I first walked in the store I noticed how neatly organized it was. Everything had a place and was displayed nicely. The selection

of food, treats, dishes, crates, travel bags, toys, spa and grooming items, bedding supplies, and collars and leashes is exceptional. This is truly a one stop shop for dog owners (there's a limited amount of cat supplies as well). If you don't see something that you would like, just ask and Carla and Nikki will do their best to get it for you. One of my favorite things was the big antique chest that was filled with tons of cool dog toys. I thought this was a different approach to displaying toys, and I really liked it (not to mention I loved the actual chest, it's beautiful). I also loved the cute packaging for some of the treats. These will make adorable gifts for a birthday party, holiday party, or just a play date! In retail, packaging is key and I have a feeling these adorable treat packs are going to be a big hit.

Another reason I like these girls is that they are pro-rescue and adoption. Anyone who supports adoption is on my "good" list. What immediately drew me to Carla and Nikki in their email was their suggestion to host adoption days at the store. I always jump at the opportunity when someone wants to help promote rescue and help us achieve our goal: to get dogs adopted and placed in their forever homes. Carla and Nikki are dog owners themselves and simply just love animals. Their vision is that by opening up the boutique to host adoption days, needy dogs can be showcased and hopefully adopted. They also offered to hang pictures of dogs that need homes on a cork board and also to put a donation jar on their counter...did I mention that I love these girls?

I think this store is going to be a huge hit for Georgetown and the surrounding areas. A store can be great because of its contents, but if its employees are sub par, it will not survive. This is not the case for Under One Woof. This boutique has everything going for it. Better get there early during the holiday season, because those cute boxes of treats are definitely going to be a hot item. Please check out this store and support local small businesses. Under One Woof is located in the Eagle Building (next to Sedler's Antiques) at 37 West Main Street Suite



The Valley Patriot's PuppyGirl, Kate Whitney with Honey. Kate and Honey rescue puppies from abuse and neglect. 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

#4 Georgetown, MA. Contact them at 987-352-WOOF (9663) or underone-woof@verizon.net. And don't forget to come by and take a look at dogs that are up for adoption on May 29th from 9 am-12 pm and take advantage of some great discounts! The Valley Patriot will be there taking pictures and supporting this event and of course Puppy Girl will be there. Come stop by and say hi! Hope to see you there!

I also wanted to highlight a local restaurant and tell you about an amazing special that they have been running for a few months now. Evenfall Restaurant in Haverhill is giving customers two choices. When guests buy two dinner menu entrees, they can either take \$10

off their bill, OR (the best option) they can tell Evenfall to donate \$10 to One Tail at a Time Rescue. How amazing is this? I've always loved this restaurant, but I love it even more now that they are supporting dog rescue. So what are you waiting for? Head to Evenfall one night for dinner and support this great place and a great cause.

Evenfall is located at 8 Knipe Road (Rt. 125) Haverhill on the N. Andover Line 978-521-7550.

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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MSPCA Introduces New Humane Education Lesson Plans for Mass. Schools

METHUEN – Students at the Hill View Montessori Charter Public School in Haverhill are learning kindness and care for animals thanks to a new Humane Education effort introduced by the MSPCA-Angel, the country’s second oldest animal welfare organization. The MSPCA recently introduced a series of prepared lesson plans that address a variety of humane themes for elementary, middle school, and high school students. The free lesson plans are available online, are aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Education’s curriculum frameworks, and are complete with an instructor introduction as well as related handouts.

Kathryn DeMarco, the Lower Elementary Lead Teacher for Hill View Montessori, has incorporated three of the lesson plans into her students’ routines during April, which is Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month. After learning about the lesson plans through the MSPCA’s newsletter, DeMarco and her colleagues, including fellow teacher Christi George, decided that the plans would be a natural fit for the school’s focus on peace education and concern for the environment and all living things.

DeMarco’s students spend Wednesday afternoons learning What an Animal Needs, Staying Safe and Smart around Dogs & Cats, and Learning About Wildlife. DeMarco says her students are enthusiastic about their lessons and eagerly share their own experiences with their family pets. The month-long series will culminate with a trip to the MSPCA at Nevins Farm, so the students can tour the facility and meet some of the animals who are currently awaiting adoption.

Jen Dussault, Humane Education Coordinator for the MSPCA, lauded Hill View for incorporating the lessons, and is encouraging other school administrators to review the plans for their classrooms as well. “Humane Education can easily integrate into the average classroom,” said Dussault, a former teacher herself. “The lesson plans are designed to be taught within a core discipline such as Social Studies, History, or Biology, or as a stand-alone activity, while teaching children to be kind to animals.”

The MSPCA considers humane education a priority for people of all ages, as a means of fostering compassion, responsibility and respect toward animals, each other, and the environment. In addition to the online lesson plans the MSPCA also developed a lending library of materials, including videos, books, software, and models. These materials are available to local educators to incorporate Humane Education into the classroom.

To learn more about the MSPCA’s Humane Education lesson plans and other programs, visit www.mspca.org/education, or contact Jen Dussault at (978) 687-7453 x6108. For more information on the MSPCA at Nevins Farm, visit www.mspca.org/nevins.

The MSPCA at Nevins Farm in Methuen cared for more than 7,000 animals last year. The MSPCA does not receive state or federal funding and continues its work based solely on the generosity of its supporters. The Noble Family Animal Care & Adoption Center at Nevins Farm is located at 400 Broadway, Rte. 28 in Methuen and is open to the public from 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays; 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Wednesdays & Fridays; 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. To contact the MSPCA at Nevins Farm regarding adoptions and programs please call (978) 687-7453 x. 6101 or on the Web at: www.mspca.org/nevins.

Mass. School of Law hosts Animal Rights Day in Andover

Tracey Zysk
VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

On Saturday April 3, 2010 I had the most wonderful opportunity to attend and to be a vendor at the Massachusetts School of Law fourth annual Animal Rights Day.

Being in the profession I am in, I travel all over New England to attend many different types of animal events. Some are focused specifically on adopt, some are fundraisers and some are educational to certain causes or organizations.

However, this event was a perfect balance of all aspects of an animal’s rights, health and wellness and general awareness. Not to mention there were tons of activities for children and a visit from the Easter bunny too!

Diane Sullivan, who is a Professor at the Mass School of Law created an Animal Law Program at the school and is a faculty advisor to the student chapter of Animal Legal Defense fund, decided to start this event after she helped organize a fundraiser for Shadow. Shadow at the time was a five year old yellow Labrador Retriever who belongs to Vietnam Veteran Robert Burke of Lawrence MA. Shadow needed a surgery that Mr. Burke was un-

able to afford. This caught the attention of Diane and of Dr. Lindsay of Andover Animal Hospital. Dr. Lindsay mentioned if the school could donate \$1000.00 he would be able to perform the surgery needed. Diane, being the animal lover she is jumped on this opportunity to form a fundraiser. Four years later the Shadow Fund is going strong and is helping animals in need all over the State. And for Shadow, he is doing fine too.

The event also included several guest speakers discussing a variety of animal topics which involved everything from bird intelligence, Paws and Pilot programs, Foster Parrots and NEADS (Dogs for Deaf and Disabled Americans). Kara Holmquist, Director of Advocacy MSPCA and Officer Martha Parkhurst of the MSPCA both were discussing current animal laws and the process of prosecuting animal cruelty cases. These seminars were not only extremely interesting but very eye opening. Massachusetts is by far one of the leaders in pro active animal care and I hope with programs like this other States will be able to follow with our protection laws.

The event wasn’t all lectures and seminars. It was family fun time too. There were children getting their faces painted,



PHOTO: TRACEY ZYSK

an Easter egg hunt and an arts and crafts room. But the highlight of this event was THE DOGS !!! Yes I know ...I’m bias but what can I say I LOVE DOGS !!

With the arrival of Bama & Nato, two very large Great Danes, that were larger than some of the children, kids got to interact with these gentle giants and have a little play time with them too. Then there was Julie Williams and her Agility Demonstrations. Her dogs were jumping through hoops and doing flips in the air and hamming it up for the kids in the audience. Those dogs really knew how to work the room. But the biggest crowd pleasure was the Essex County Sheriff’s K-9 Division. Sgt. Gikas came with his 22 month old Shepherd Gianni and Lt.

ANIMALRIGHTS, PAGE 40

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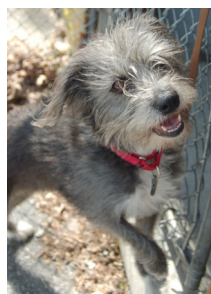
>>> Boo Boo is a 3 year old single, charming, tall, fawn and devilishly handsome Mastiff/APBT mix looking for meaningful long-term relationship. Must enjoy long walks on the beach and trails, frequent slobbery kisses, games of fetch, and ample snuggle time. Frequent fine dining (hot dogs) appreciated. Looking for no-nonsense training partner willing to share the spotlight. Only pet household required, prior breed experience necessary.



>>>Middie- Why, hello! I'm a gorgeous, young girl named Middie and I am the most beautiful cat in the world, if I may say so myself. (Of course, I'm not vain ... it's just a fact). If I could, I would look at myself in the mirror all day long. And of course, you can pet me as much as you want. I won't say no! Like all calicos, I can be independent sometimes ... but that's the cost of beauty!



Looking to do something special for the Lowell Humane Society? You can donate pet items that will assist us in caring for the thousands of animals who pass through our doors each year. Your support is greatly appreciated! The Lowell Humane Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization which receives no local, state or federal funding. Your donations are tax deductible and will greatly impact the lives of the animals we care for. For more information on volunteering or making a donation to The Lowell Humane Society contact Community Outreach Coordinator Chris Arnott at 978-888-4770 or chris@lowellhumanesociety.org. For a full list of adoptable animals visit their website at www.lowellhumanesociety.org.



<<< Ali is a sweet 3 year old Terrier Mix looking for a home! She is great with kids, cats and other dogs. She loves to run and will need lots of walks! Ali loves to play and is a well behaved sweet girl. She is housetrained and extremely sweet.

ANIMALRIGHTS:FROM PAGE 39

Caron had her 4yr old brown Lab Buddy. This was Gianni's first demonstration and he did absolutely wonderful. He ran all around the room, followed all his commands and when put into work mode he did what he is trained to do. The crowd went wild...they couldn't get enough of him! Gianni is a patrol dog with his partner Sgt. Gikas and by the crowds reaction I have a feeling we will be seeing him at more demonstrations. Buddy, who is little more submissive but just as lovable, is a narcotics dog with Lt. Caron. Buddy's story is a little different. When I was told this it really grabbed my attention. While most police dogs are from overseas and specific breeders, Buddy was a family pet that was given up for adoption. How amazing it that! A dog given up for adoption, rescued, trained and now a police

dog! WOW !!!

The Mass School of Law will be hosting this event next year and I highly recommend it. All monies donated and collected at this event are given to The Shadow Fund for the help of local animals. If you would like more information regarding this event, the Animal Law program or the Shadow Fund please visit the Mass School of Law website and contact Diane Sullivan.

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 wigglegewalk@comcast.net

TEENTALK:FROM PAGE 47

enough to have it, they get only warm water – as the water treatment plant on the island only produces water from the ocean that has been heated and cooled to fresh water, though it's really not that cool. In fact, I spit it back into the sink the first time I drank it – I thought I hit the hot water by mistake, but I hadn't.

Us teens forget the real problems in life. We forget about the fact that our country is at war. People are dying everyday because of war. We also forget that most of our parents struggle just to buy us our clothes. Most kids on St. Thomas don't even know what a Target is, never mind Abercrombie and Fitch.

I once heard that there are many things in life that make us angry, two of them being inconveniences and problems. Learn to know the difference. Look up the definitions. And the next time you get angry, ask yourself – is this really a problem? Or is it an inconvenience to my immediate want? The answer may surprise you.

Tyler Dumont is the Host of "Teen Talk with Tyler Dumont" on 980AM WCAP - Merrimack Valley Radio, LLC, 243 Central Street - Lowell, MA 01852, www.980wcap.com, (978) 621-6652 - tylerdumont@comcast.net, 5,000 Watts of the BEST In Local Radio!

JEWS:FROM PAGE 5

I understand that you're more concerned about a woman's unconditional right to abort her unborn child (which Judaism rejects) than you are about Israel. Fine. Understand that you have removed yourself from the vast river of Jewish history in favor of a chimerical morality that values libertinism over liberty.

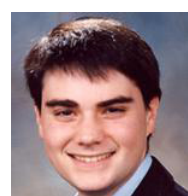
I understand that many of you — all of you above age 70 — still think FDR is alive. He isn't, but Jimmy Carter is.

I understand that some of you still think that conservatives and Republicans are the same folks they were during the 1950s, when they banned you from country clubs. They aren't.

The simple fact is this: There is only one mainstream political ideology in this country that asks you to check your principles and cultural history at the door in the name of the greater good — leftism, the same ideology that virtually exterminated Judaism in Russia and Europe. While the left exploits your adherence to bagel-and-lox Judaism by appealing to your watered-down and perverted "tikkun

olam" sensibilities, you are enabling your own destruction. The same people who urge you to reach out to terrorists will be the first to sacrifice you to those terrorists' tender mercies. The same people who urge you to worry about same-sex marriage rather than religious freedom will be the first to take your religious freedoms away.

I love you, my brothers and sisters. That's why I'm writing to you. Time is running out; the clock is winding down. Pick a side.



Ben Shapiro, 26, is a graduate of UCLA and Harvard Law School. He is the author of the new book "Project President: Bad Hair and Botox on the Road to the White House," as well as the national bestseller "Brainwashed: How Universities Indoctrinate America's Youth." To find out more about Ben Shapiro and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com. COPYRIGHT 2010 CREATORS.COM.

have exceeded the threshold: the Yankees, the Red Sox, the California/LA/Anaheim Angels, and the Deetroit Tigers. The Yankees have exceeded the threshold every year, paying a total of \$174.2 Million over seven years.

Sure, high priced talent can help you (see Yankees' Rodriguez, Alex). But it can also hurt you (see Rangers' Rodriguez, Alex). What the scheme fails to take into consideration is the capacity of human intelligence to overcome such monetary odds and, through the hiring of competent field and front office managerial talent and scouts and keen personnel investments, build championship caliber teams that do not depend on obscene amounts of money to succeed. A shocking concept — success based on hard work and intelligence, not hand outs with no strings attached.

According to various stat sources, including the aforementioned Mr. Brown, since 2000, eight different teams have won the 10 World Series, and 23 of the league's 30 teams have made the playoffs. And of those 23, the top nine in payroll were in 58 percent of the playoff slots. Now of those 7 non-playoff teams, five have some of the highest profit margins in the league.

About now you might ask, "What the heck does this have to do with politics?" Well, if you are paying attention to the world around you, and if you read this paper you certainly do, then the politicians in Washington are starting to set a similar course charted by the powers to be in Major League Baseball. Take from the successful, give to the feckless, hope that everyone can get a trophy in the end. But like baseball, the politicians do not realize that people succeed for any number of reasons, often times not because they received a handout with no strings attached. We are already to the point where there are more

people in the wagon than those pulling it. Every day we are getting closer to the point where over half of the people depend on some sort of government check, yet 50% of us have no skin in the game and pay no federal taxes.

So, for as long as Obama is president (hopefully for our sake that does not go beyond January 2013), I am hereby rooting vociferously for that dreaded Yankees baseball club from the city so nice they named it twice to tack on Championships #28, #29, and #30.

You may have missed it around Turkey Day last year but Red Sox owner John Henry went on a rant in The Boston Globe about this whole deal. Henry said, "Baseball has determined that the best way to deal with the Yankees is to take as much of their revenue as possible. I see that in direct opposition to the ideals this country was built on...Taxing their revenues...is simply confiscation on an order of magnitude never seen in any industry in America... It's amazing because owners, some of the most ardent capitalists in this country — who have all made their fortunes through capitalism, have imposed a tax system on baseball they would never sit still for in any of their industries."

Looks like Washington and the Obamacrats are trying to learn from the MLB "revenue sharing." We can only hope they fail. In the meantime...Go Yankees!



Robert O'Koniewski is an attorney in Boston, a former member of the Lawrence zoning board and is the former campaign manager for Marcos Devers. You can email him at: bobokesq@hotmail.com

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NOTEBOOK:FROM PAGE 15

at Parker House Grille today or visit the website www.drinkwaterproductions.com for more details and tickets!

HEALTH - Cancer doesn't affect only the diagnosed - it affects their family, friends, and caregivers as well. The American Cancer Society's We Can Weekend offers a program that allows cancer patients and their loved ones to take time out of their busy schedules and come together with others facing similar situations. Families from all across New England will join together for a three-day retreat where they learn stress management, relaxation, and nutrition while connecting with one another to better face their fight against cancer. Workshops will be held June 11 - 13 at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA. The cost is \$45 per family for the entire weekend, and scholarships are available. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about this program, please contact Arlela Bethel at (413)-493-2120 or e-mail Arlela.Bethel@cancer.org. For cancer information anytime, day or night, call the American Society at 1-800-227-2345 or log onto www.cancer.org.

VETERANS Phillips 66® Aviation announced it is launching a pioneering rebate program, designed to support Angel Flight pilots with a \$1-per-gallon rebate program beginning on June 1, 2010. A pioneering rebate program, designed to support pilots that volunteer their aircraft and time to fly seriously ill patients who need specialized medical treatments, is being launched by Phillips 66® Aviation. Starting June 1, pilots flying missions organized and approved by Angel Flight Northeast and Mercy Medical Airlift (which administers Angel Flight Mid-Atlantic and Airlift Hope America) will qualify for a \$1-per-gallon

rebate on fuel purchased using Phillips 66 Aviation Personal Credit Card at a Phillips 66 Aviation branded FBO. There are more than 713 Phillips 66 FBOs across the country. The program, a first for general aviation, will be initially exclusive to Angel Flight Northeast and Angel Flight Mid-Atlantic pilots. To learn more about this program, visit Angel Flight Northeast's website to read Phillips 66® Aviation's release which includes the program's components and eligibility requirements. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at (978) 794.6868 or by email.

MERRIMAC - You are cordially invited to Afternoon Tea. Who: Any All-American Girl & their favorite doll. Where: Merrimac Public Library, 86 West Main St. When: Saturday, May 15, 2010 1pm to 2:30 pm

Finger Sandwiches, tea, refreshments and dessert will be served. Wear your Sunday best girls. Reservations are \$10 per person, by May 8, 2010. All girls must be accompanied by an adult, dolls admitted for free. For more information contact: Ellen Miracle: 978-346-9887 or Rebekah Reynold.

MERRIMAC - Once again the Merrimac Old Home Days Committee will be holding a fundraiser at Flatbread in Amesbury. Please join us on Tuesday, May 11th from 5 pm until 9:30 pm. Eat in or take a pizza home; a portion of the proceeds will be donated to Merrimac's Old Home Days. 50/50 raffle tickets will be available at the door.

HAVERHILL, - Penacook Place Nursing and Rehabilitation Center hired a number of new employees during the past few months. A total of 19 people have joined Penacook's Nursing, Rehabilitative Services, Housekeeping and other

departments. The following employees were hired between January 18 and April 19, 2010: Special Care Program Director: Barbara Stricsek (Lawrence); Director of Staff Development: Donna Toothaker (Beverly) Registered Nurse: Adam Masse (Plaistow, N.H.); Certified Nursing Assistants: Amanda Tejada (North Andover) and Melissa Serrano (Methuen); Licensed Practical Nurses: Dorothy Mailloux (Haverhill), Elayna Shulman (Derry, N.H.), Karen Wilkins-Fitzgerald (Plaistow, N.H.), Cheryl DeRequito (Haverhill); Dining Services: Justin Green (Amesbury), Stephen Harden (Groveland), Eddie Santana (Haverhill), Dayram Bergvelich (Lawrence), Stal-lone Mujuru (Haverhill); Rehabilitative Services: Karen Everett (Amesbury), Julia Dorci (Hampstead, N.H.); Housekeeping/Laundry: Miguelina Pena (Haverhill); Housekeeping: Patrick Perkin (Derry, N.H.), Edward Brewster (Haverhill); Laundry: Maritza Vazquez (Haverhill).


METHEUN - The Fellowship Bible Church Electronics and Appliance Recycle Day, Saturday May 15, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm . Bring your item(s) to the church parking lot at 1 Fellowship Way, Methuen, MA. These items should be emptied, i.e. no gas, oil or water left in them. Keyboards-Free, Lead Acid batteries such as Car, Boat, Lawn Mower and UPS's- Free, Cell phones-Free, Monitors, Computers, Stereos, Radios \$5.00 each. Dishwashers, Stoves, Washer, Dryer, Water Heaters, Microwaves, Lawn Mowers, Snow Blowers, Exercise Equipment, AC Units, Dehumidifiers, Small Engine Items, Bikes, exercise equipment, etc-\$10.00 each. TV's< 20"- \$10.00 each. TV's>20"- \$15.00 each. Console and Wood TV's- \$20.00 each. All Towns welcome!

METHUEN – Annual neighborhood

spring cleanup TIP Healing Garden & Brenda Waller Way at Schruender Park, Saturday, May 8, 2010, 9AM - NOON at Riverview Blvd in Methuen MA. Lend a hand and get a Methuen T-shirt! Volunteer Cookout 12:30-2 PM @ Tenney School Playground. Take pride in your community, your street, your neighborhood, your city.. Email Donna @ dmmtabbi@verizon.net or visit tiphealinggarden.org/

VETERANS - Two Veterans' square dedications will occur on Saturday May 8th, at 10AM at Chestnut & Short Streets in Lawrence. Please add this date to your schedule. The 1st dedication is at Chestnut & Short Street in honor of the 7 Delmonaco brothers and then we will travel to General & Allen Street. The second dedication is in honor of Pvt. Girgenti KIA WWII. For more information contact: Francisco Ureña, Director, City of Lawrence Veterans' Services Department, 200 Common Street, Office # 2, Lawrence, Ma 01840 pr call: Tel: (978) 620-3282, or email: furena@cityoflawrence.com

VETERANS - Upcoming events: Saturday May 15th, 2010 Cemetery Decoration Day & Flag retirement ceremony 9:00 am – Noon starting at St. Mary's Mausoleum. Saturday May 29th, 2010 Son's of Italy Road Race Starting at Veterans' Stadium 8:30 am. Monday May 31st, 2010 Memorial Day Ceremony, w/ Key Note Speaker Tuskegee Airman Luther McIlwain. 9:30 Am Bellevue Cemetery Reservoir Rd.



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.

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CARNIVAL:FROM PAGE 7

April Vacation. The carnival offers special nights, in which colored wrist bands can be purchased to go on all rides during certain hours as many times as the individual wants. These wrist bands are great to purchase, especially for family value.

The Youth and Recreation Department are hoping to raise at least \$20,000.00 or more to make sure that these children have a safe, memorable and meaningful summer vacation. To make a donation, people

may contact Carrie Crouch, Chairperson of Carnival NAYRS at 978-683-3256.

Dean & Flynn who originated Fiesta Shows, which is now run by their sons, contracted with the North Andover Youth and Recreation Department to provide the festive and rides.

Every year this carnival is known to have the same rides as Topsfield Fair., which also has the rides provided by Fiesta Shows.



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VALLEY PATRIOT TV REVIEW

Parenthood - NBC – Tuesdays, 10 pm

Beth Daigle

VALLEY PATRIOT ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

NBC's new hit drama, "Parenthood," first aired in March 2010 and I have to admit I was unsure what to make of it. I opted to hold off reviewing it until I had a better sense of where it was going. I am glad I did because after pushing through some initial growing pains I am beginning to enjoy this show more and more.

As the title suggests, "Parenthood" deals with the many complexities of child rearing as it relates to the Braverman Family. Two brothers, two sisters, parents, spouses, love interests and children of varying ages come together to battle and overcome the day to day struggles of life, relationships, parenthood and societal expectations. They are one large family with conflicting personality types who collectively offer viewers every opportunity to connect, on some level, with at least one of the characters.

My upfront concern with the show was that it unloaded a plethora of family and parental issues all in the first few episodes. It left me with the uneasy feeling that "Parenthood" was going to be a heavy, possibly depressing, storyline that some might consider to be a little too close for comfort. Painfully familiar topics such as children with Asperger's Syndrome, infidelity, teenage rebellion, single parenthood and general parental stress were all covered early on and while this may indeed be more "real" than any reality show that I have ever watched it was a bit much to process all at once. Had the writers presented some of these situations in stages

it may have been less of an information overload so soon into the program's life cycle.

All that said; there was an undeniably gripping element to the show that persuaded me to continue to tune in. The characters are nicely intertwined through their family connection yet each has a unique set of life circumstances that is believable while adequately entertaining.

Well known actors, Lauren Graham of "Gilmore Girls" and Craig T. Nelson of "Coach," bring a valued level of skill and soft comedy to the table while lesser known supporting actors like Dax Shepard and Julia Christensen offer a refreshing style and genuine interpretation of their polar opposite, yet supportive, sibling characters.

"Parenthood's" well balanced, eclectic cast and relatable tales of domestic drama have successfully launched this new show toward a solid future. It has been renewed for another season.

For more television reviews and other blog-worthy topics from Beth, visit www.bdbuzz10.blogspot.com



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

Shawn Hansen's Music Corner with Apache Stone

Rescue Me star Michael Lombardi not only plays Mike Silletti on TV, but is lead singer of Apache Stone, developing the group a few years ago with Hank Woods. Taking on two huge roles at once, Lombardi said he works around his 12 hour filming days that take place 3-5 days a week.

Drumming from age 14 when he got his first drum set, Lombardi said he comes from a family of musicians.

"My mother grew up in New Haven, Conn., which is a very musical city, and both of her brothers are musicians. One is a guitar player, and the other one a drummer, so they played in bands their whole lives together, and my grandfather, and great grandfather on my fathers side were singers, so just growing up, we always had a piano in the house, so I was always around it. My parents were huge fans of all types of music like Bungee Loans, Stevie Wonder, Martin Gay, Michael Jackson, Rolling Stones, and the Beatles. I was always around it, and it was always a part of my life."

Going to music school at Drummers Collective in New York, Lombardi wanted to be a studio drummer because he really wanted to be in a band. At the time, Lombardi was getting interested in both music, and acting, and figured he wanted to get experience in all fields when going to school.

Lombardi said Apache Stone is a rock and roll band that was influenced by Pearl Jam, Guns N Roses, and Audioslave. "I like to think that the music is real. The lyrics tell a story, and there's meaning behind what we're doing. We just really like to rock, and put a lot of energy into it," said Lombardi. Woods said he always loved Slash, Stevesie, Joe Satriani, and

Eric Clapton.

In Apache Stone, Lombardi said Hank Woods is his right hand man. "He and I started playing a few years back together. We started doing our thing, and writing our first song, "Synthetic Self" and then we sort of put a band together," said Lombardi.

Auditioning a number of people for the two vacant spots left in the band, Bacon and Leatherwood fit the puzzle just right to make the band complete.

"We just have been having a blast! They're all great musicians, talented guys, and they're pros," said Lombardi.

Curious as to how Apache Stone's music comes about, Lombardi said he is in charge of writing the lyrics to every song.

"I'm responsible for the songs, names, content, and what kind of story I'm really telling with the lyrics," said Lombardi.

"I have a book that I write everything in, whether it would be poetry, or just observations on life. Sometimes I will get a melody in my head, and I just write these things down."

When the lead singer of Apache Stone catches a different tune, he will write them down, bring it to his band and piece it together.

Touring around the North East for the past year, Lombardi said his band loves performing in Boston, Worcester, Haverhill, Manhattan, Philadelphia, and Maryland. He said he always had aspirations, and dreams to play in Boston.

Switching gears to lead guitarist, Woods talked about meeting Lombardi for the first time in 2008.

"I got a call from a drummer friend that met with Mike, and we were talking about putting together a band, and from that point we were looking to get a few

Valley Patriot MOVIE REVIEW

Kickass, A movie Review

Ben Flagg

VALLEY PATRIOT MOVIE REVIEWER

Let me just start by admitting I went into this movie with a review almost written in my head. And again, preconceptions have led me wrong. The fact that it's the most fun movie I've seen in recent memory is something I predicted right, but I did not think that this movie would be serious in any way, and some parts definitely are. It also has some of the funniest, most over the top scenes you'll ever see.

This movie is based on a Mark Millar graphic novel, and if you've never heard of Mark Millar, put down this review and go get one of his books. He wrote many graphic novels, and Kickass was not one of his best ones. This movie is thankfully better than the graphic novel, because they radically changed the ending (which is considered to be the worst part of the novel). As for actors, this movie stars Aaron Johnson (who you may know as that kid who played John Lennon in Nowhere Boy) as Kickass, Nicholas Cage as Big Daddy (my personal favorite), Christopher Mintz-Plasse (who EVERYBODY knows as McLovin from Superbad) as Red Mist, and newcomer Chloe Martz as Hit-Girl (who absolutely steals the show).

The whole catch of this movie is basically the story. It's all about a young boy who wants to be a superhero "and really, haven't we all wanted that?" This movie says that if someone really wanted to be a superhero, it would be way harder, and way harsher than the comic books make it

out to be. So this young boy tries it, gets his butt kicked, but he's almost addicted to it by this point. So he goes again and becomes an internet sensation. It's around this time he runs into Hit-Girl and Big Daddy, who are pretty much professional crime fighters, so Kickass feels outdone, and its here where the problem starts. The rest of the characters are all so colorful and entertaining that Kickass is almost completely forgotten, despite being the main character. Basically, he takes a backseat to Hit Girl and Big Daddy. To some, this may be a good thing because as I said above, they are wildly entertaining to watch, so at least he took backseat to some interesting characters.

And that's pretty much my only complaint about this movie. For all I know, there could have been a ton of problems with it, but I was so thoroughly entertained by this movie that I never noticed, and you won't either if you go see it. It's just so full of ridiculousness (like an extended action scene in which Hit-Girl is killing a bunch of criminals with a children's television show song going on in the background) and just pure fun, it's worth every dime to go see. But be forewarned, it's extremely violent, so it's not exactly a "date movie."



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.



PHOTO: COURTESY

guys in there, and I had been playing with Mark Greenberg for about seven years at the time, so I gave him a call, he hopped on board, and the next thing you know is we had the Apache Stone album," said Woods.

First getting into the industry when he was 18 years old, Woods said he started off as a Jazz musician. Explaining that his godfather is Clarke Terry, a legendary trumpet player, Woods started playing Jazz.

"I sat in with him a few times, and played in all the Jazz groups I could play with, and right around 2002, I got really involved in rock and roll," said Woods.

Written into a few episodes of FX's hit show Rescue Me last season, both Lombardi and Woods were overwhelmed to have the band recognized on the show.

"It was cool to even have a couple of my real songs on the show, and the real band, whether it was made fun of, it was all in good fun, so it was a blast," said Lombardi.

Watching Rescue Me since it premiered in 2004, Woods said he had a phenomenal time performing on the show. "I have to thank Denis Leary and Peter Tolan for giving us an opportunity to play on the show. Walking in, it was my first television acting experience but they made me feel like I was at home, it was absolutely wonderful, and it was a great experience to do it."

For more information about Apache Stone, join their fan page on Face book, or go add them as a friend on Myspace.

Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner with *April Macie*

Growing up in Easton, Penn., April Macie reminisces about living with an aunt that was a paranoid schizophrenic, and her imaginary friends. She said her grandmother lost her speech, and only retained a few words that could baffle anyone’s mind. From her memories growing up in the Keystone State, Macie said her mother drinks every night, and paints pictures of Michael Bolton in the basement.

Breaking away from her childhood, Macie went to the University of Florida for two and a half years, and moved to Los Angeles around 1999. Starting a career in California as a nanny for Cousins World Child Actresses, Macie began her comedy career eight years ago.

Macie has traveled all over the United States, and has been to over 23 countries, performing in nine of them. Talking about performing in London, Guantanamo, and Korea, she said her favorite vacation spot is Hawaii.

“I just got back from Hawaii. I went to Hawaii for five days by myself, got a little weed off a fat Hawaiian man, and ate sand-wiches, and snow cones every day on the beach in Lani Kai. It was pretty awesome. I like Hawaii, Singapore” said Macie.

Comedian Macie is a fan of Wanda Sykes, Chris Rock, Richard Pryor, Eddie Murphy, Dave Chappelle, Jamie Foxx, Don Rickles, Lisa Lampanelli, Brian Regan, and Mitch Hedberg.

In her, “non-existing,” movie career as Macie describes it, she appeared in a documentary about comedy that premiered at the 2010 Slamdance Film Festival called, “I Am Comic.”



Phyllis Diller, Roseanne, Tim Allen, Jeff Foxworthy, Brian Regan, Margaret Cho, and Macie are all featured in the documentary, to name a few.

When Macie isn’t on the road working, she picks up extra money by filming videos.

“I did those for Babelgum.com,” said Macie, explaining the movie clip they shot where she talks about getting beat as a kid is her favorite. “You need a good beating to be a funny comic. I enjoy that one, and a friend asked me to do a few of them. They’re fun to do, and I get a little extra cash when I’m in L.A. I taped them twice. I mainly did a small run of them, just like an hour of my time, it was pretty simple.”

Going to Macie’s show at the East Providence Comedy Connection on April 10 was quite the night.

Joking about having a restraining order on her ex-boyfriend to fighting him while he was going the bathroom had the crowd in stitches.

Macie said he won’t be able to, “Chris

Brown you back,” because he is busy. “A man will not get up to chase you while on the toilet,” said Macie.

From restraining orders, to picking fights, Macie joked about adult relations to a phone call.

She said her friend was having problems with her boyfriend again, and wanted to pass his house, but didn’t want to use her car.

“Can we use your car? He knows my car,” Macie said. “He knows your face too!”

In her comedy career thus far, Macie said her highlight show was performing with Robert Schimmel, Jim Gaffigan, Mitch Butel, Neil Brennan, and Dane Cook.

Words of wisdom for inspiring comedians, Macie said, “You can’t get discouraged. You’re not going to be George Carlin over night. It takes years to build an act, and don’t think you’re going to be the one comic whose not going to get away with not bombing.”

She stressed the fact that once a comedian, prepare to fail before succeeding.

“Just keep getting up. You’re going to fail, then you just dust yourself off, and do it again, and you suffer the rejection. If you are meant to be in this business, the people that are in it, and the people that stay, and the people that suffer the rejection, I think are the ones that end up having careers. The ones that stick it out.”

For more information about Macie, go to her Web site at www.aprilmacieishilarious.com. She has a CD on sale, so buy it today!

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Thursday, May 13, 8pm – JEFFERSON STARSHIP 40th Anniversary TOUR (\$40 / \$45)

Friday, May 14, 8pm – THE LOVIN’ SPOONFUL (\$35 / \$40)

Friday, May 21, 8pm – STEELY DAN TRIBUTE BAND (\$25)

Saturday, May 29, 8pm – BEATLEJUICE (\$20)

CANCER: FROM PAGE 34

I know Charlie is the least selfish, most caring, loving, giving, and compassionate person I've ever met. Since our walk in 2007, Charlie has become a walk coordinator, and we have walked in the last three Avon Breast Cancer Walks.

He has become a mentor to some, a father figure to many and a friend to all that have the pleasure to meet him. The world is a better place because of him, his family should be proud. I know I am a better person in life because of him.

Once again walk season is upon us and Charlie is back at it again. He is organizing walks, always making sure to have power bars and peanut butter filled pretzels for everyone. Charlie spends much of his free time attending jewelry parties, candle parties, bake sales and variety of other team fund raisers. At 67 years old Charlie Bradbury continues to fight the war that he has waged against breast cancer. It is Charlie's passion that inspired us to form a team, a

team with 30 walkers now registered. It is for these reasons we have named the team Charlie's Angels.

On May 15th and May 16th, Charlie's Angels will take to the streets of Boston. We will walk 39.3 miles over the course of two days. With a fund raising goal of \$70,000.00 this year, I know we will work hard to meet it because of Charlie's contagious inspiration. When we do take to the streets, it will be for one reason, to eradicate breast cancer forever. Charlie Bradbury is truly a hero, I know he is mine. The world is a little better because of him.

If you would like more information on the Avon Breast Cancer Walk you can visit their website at www.avonwalk.org, or if you would like to donate through Charlie's Angels you may make checks payable to Avon Walk for Breast Cancer and mail it to The Rocky Club 11 Trinity Street Lawrence MA, 01841, Attention Sean Mannion.

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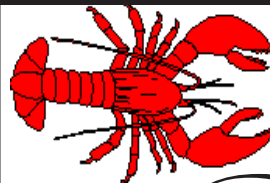
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Please support the creation of May Long Activism for Israel & America Fund

May Long

ACTIVISM FOR ISRAEL & AMERICA FUND

Dear Supporter of Israel and Democracy in America,

In response to rising global anti-Semitism and threats to our liberty and security, activist organizations are doing excellent work to support Israel and to keep America free from Sharia law.

Grass-roots organizations have been born out of a world that has lost moral footing. Those I know and personally support include Christians and Jews United for Israel, Americans against Hate, Global Security Project, Z STREET, Proclaiming Justice to the Nations, Citizens for Peace and Tolerance, Action Alliance, Act! for America. Out-of-the box programs are being developed by creative, courageous people in these groups.

Years of anti-democracy and anti-Semitic propaganda has confused and activated people to taking stands that are not based in truth. We need funding in support of new approaches.

To address this, Jay and I are establishing the May Long Activism for Israel and America Fund at CJUI. This concept

addresses my deeply held belief that like-minded organizations must work together to hold the tide against the existential threat to our freedom and Israel's security.

Imminent events we must support:

May 16, 2010

The counter to Israel Apartheid Week at UC, Irvine. -sponsor- Proclaiming Justice to the Nations, President Laurie Cardozza-Moore.

May 23, 2010 The Boston March for a United Jerusalem-sponsor Christians and Jews United for Israel - President Rev Fumio Taku.

Outreach education project - the

distribution to local government officials of copies of the Third Jihad and disks of the Call to Action by Brigitte Gabriel, educating about the threat from local and national Jihadists groups - Sponsor Palm Beach Chapter Act! for America, David R.Goldberg, Chair.

For more information on events listed above, please e-mail me at Mayjay-long@aol.com

CJUI makes the difference. We are the grass-roots with a world vision that unites people of truth and courage. Visit the website at: www.cjui.org



Flood victims: Free legal assistance available

A toll-free legal assistance hotline and online request form is now available for victims of recent severe storms and flooding in Massachusetts. The service, which allows Massachusetts residents to request the assistance of a lawyer, is a partnership between the Massachusetts Bar Association, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"The Massachusetts Bar Association is proud to partner with the ABA and FEMA to provide Bay State flood victims with legal assistance as they recover from losses," MBA President Valerie A. Yarashus said.

Massachusetts residents facing legal issues due to the floods can call the Lawyer Referral Service toll free number, (866) 627-7577, from 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday, fill out an online form at www.MassBar.org/FloodRelief or email flood2010@massbar.org. Assistance will be offered based on the legal question, and could include information and referrals to attorneys or local, state and federal agencies.

Examples of legal questions include:

Securing FEMA and related government benefits; Assistance with life, medical and property insurance claims; Help with home repair contracts and contractors; Replacement of wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster; Support in consumer protection matters, remedies and procedures; Guidance on mortgage-foreclosure problems; Counseling on landlord/tenant problems; and Assistance with other legal problems related to the disaster.

When the president declares a major

disaster, FEMA, in cooperation with the ABA Young Lawyers Division, establishes a toll-free number for disaster victims to request legal assistance. Funding for the toll-free line comes from FEMA under the authority of Section 415 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The AMA Young Lawyers Division in turn partners with state bar associations and other legal organizations to recruit volunteer lawyers in affected areas to handle victims' cases.

For more information on the program, visit www.MassBar.org/FloodRelief.

The ABA Young Lawyers Division is the home for young lawyers. With more than 150,000 members and 300 affiliated groups, the ABA YLD is the largest young lawyer organization in the world.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

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.

This MBA e-mail is sent as a service. If you do not want to receive future press releases, send an e-mail to pressreleases@massbar.org or write to the Communications Department, Massachusetts Bar Association, 20 West St. Boston, MA 02111-1204.



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Andover takes Special Olympics in State Championship

The Andover Golden Eagles Special Olympics Basketball Program soared their way to victory again in Worcester at the Special Olympics State Championship Games that were played on Saturday and Sunday (March 13th and 14th).

There were 114 basketball teams competing in Worcester this year, and the competition on! The Andover Blue team coached by Mark Davey, Head Coach and Audrey DeSisto, Program Director and Coach won Gold medals. Playing for the Blue Team: Alexis Alfonso, Michael Briggs, Devan DeSisto, Katie Garofoli, Matt Hirsh, Adam Hornung, Brandon McCormack, John McKeon, Max Novick and Niko Wallingford.

The Andover Eagles Team coached by David Pekarovich and Jaymi Cohen took home Silver medals. Playing for the Andover Eagles: Raymond Jouvelakos, Kevin O'Connor, Kyle White, Will Quirnbach, Michael Fox, Matt Crush, Grant Hespeler, Eddie Martin, Steve Kimball, Ben Aronovitz, Chris Briggs and Andreas Christopulos.

The Andover Gold Team coached by Peter Garofoli and Assistant Coaches David Briggs and Devon Follett won Bronze Medals. Playing for the Gold: Ian Angles, Tyler Gervasio, Katherine Hallihan, Will Lionetta, Nabeeha Ahhusaini, Francesca



Lionetta, Zachary Perry, Nicole Annino, Will Eikenberry, Rachel Annino, Clay Wadman and Sheryl Ehlbeck.

The teams also won "six out of six games" during the Assessment rounds a few months ago in Weston, MA.

The program is a Unified Mentoring Inclusion Program and is made up of kids with and without disabilities between ages 8 and 21. Special thanks goes out to Abby Martin, Jackie Hodas, Devon Follett, Sam Okun, Michelle McCormack, Marina Wallingford, Andy Hook, Lisa Alfonso and all the parents who have been so dedicated to making this program a huge success.

Thank you Everyone!
Audrey DeSisto

Expert on addiction and treatment in Latino communities to speak at NECC

Dr. Hortensia Amaro, associate dean of the Bouve College of Health Sciences at Northeastern University, will present a lecture titled "Prevention and Treatment of Addiction in Latino Communities", as part of the White Fund lecture series presented in partnership with Northern Essex Community College, on Tuesday, May 11, at noon in the Lawrence Public Library, 51 Lawrence St. The presentation is free and open to the public.

Amaro will discuss alcohol and drug use among Latino youth and adults, use of treatment services, barriers to care, and steps Latino parents and communities can take to prevent addiction. Over the past 27 years, Amaro has forged vital connections between public health research and practice. Her rigorous and visionary commitment to the science of substance abuse treatment and HIV prevention has had a profound impact on the field of public health. She is also a distinguished profes-

sor of Health Sciences and of Counseling Psychology in the Bouve College of Health Sciences, and director of the Institute on Urban Health Research.

The White Fund's purpose is to have a free series of interactive presentations for Lawrence area adults, youth, and children. The audience is encouraged to seek wisdom, cultural enrichment, and intellectual enhancement by attending and participating. Funded by a generous financial gift from the Honorable Daniel Appleton White, the White Fund Lecture Series has provided cultural conversation featuring well-known lecturers in fields such as history, literature, travel, the arts, and politics. The White Fund is collaborating with Northern Essex on this series.

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



TEEN TALK with TYLER DUMONT!

A Problem...Or An Inconvenience?

Tyler Dumont
VALLEY PATRIOT TEEN COLUMNIST

You know those few minutes every once in a while when your cell phone has no service? Or, when your teacher gives you so much homework you just want to protest by ripping it up and throwing it in her face? What about the annoyance when you go to take a shower and the hot water tank is out? Think of those nights when your mom makes a disgusting meal – you hate the taste of that putrid breaded chicken every single time she makes it. Of course, she continues to make it anyway... you swear in order to get on your nerves. Being stuck in traffic on your way to a party or sports game is, obviously, extremely irritating to the average teen, too. We just don't get it, do we?

Us teens need to change our conceited and greedy attitudes. Over my April vacation, I realized what a life I have. After I got back from traveling to St. Thomas and St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands, it finally hit me. We have absolutely zero concept of what an amazing life most of us have. While I was there, I witnessed some examples of what poverty truly is. A lot of people are living out of shacks, which were on average the size of a typical shed. The windows are blown out on most of them. Some even lack a roof to shelter from weather. Many people travel the streets, looking for something to eat. Luckily, there are many wild chickens and pigs on the island, so they just may be alright tonight...if they can find one and are able to cook it.

Every single day, after teens get home from their poorly funded elementary and high schools, they hit the books. I can't tell you how many teens I saw studying in their homes and also in dirt fields...places they'd refer to as a park. Oh, and did I mention they wear uniforms, even in public schools? It is expected of them to show up every single day in dress code. One woman I spoke to, who works part-time at a Pizza Hut (one of two on the island of St. Thomas), said that her daughter showed up once wearing the wrong socks and that she had to go pick her up or bring her a different pair. So, she immediately runs to the store and brings her daughter a new pair at school. The administrators, however, tell her that they're still not the proper length for her daughter. The woman looks up, lifts her skirt, and asks if her own socks were acceptable. The administration says "yes"...so she takes off her own socks and gives them to her daughter to wear for the rest of the day. Could you imagine that happening to you at school?

My point is this: We get so angry over things that really are no problem at all. I mean, I watch people get literally mad at folks when their pizza or cheeseburger is a few minutes late...or their steak isn't cooked the way they asked. And believe me, I'm guilty of it sometimes, too. But what we forget are the real problems in the world. Most people on the island of St. Thomas don't even have running water. They collect rain from their gutters and store it in large barrels. If they are lucky



TEENTALK: PAGE 40

HANNA'S BOOK REVIEWS

Dolor: Lila Book 1 by Rick Florino

Hanna Porten
VALLEY PATRIOT BOOK REVIEWER

The book Dolor is about a town Dolor, hence the name and the events that happened at a house there. Dolor is usually a sleepy town that flies under the radar but when the FBI came to town one day because of a fire there was a change in the town. It was empty, forgotten even. In the center of town where an old man lived is where FBI Agent Jeffries went. Inside the house Agent Jeffries found 10 diaries, the first one left open was called Lila, this first book of the series Dolor. The books are diaries about people in Dolor. The story in this book is what was in the diary.

Dolor's Deputy Police Officer named Richard witnessed his daughter Lila's death when she drowned and he kept seeing this event happen in his dreams. Henry, Lila's teddy bear was also in the dreams too, in the beginning and at the end. Before Lila died she would put Henry outside her door if she was scared and the month leading up to her death Henry was outside her door every night. After Lila's death she would try to communicate to her father through Henry and Henry became alive. Henry told Richard to pay attention so he could figure out what happened to Lila and in Dolor.

Richard kept trying to figure out what he was missing as Henry the bear kept telling Richard to pay attention, particu-

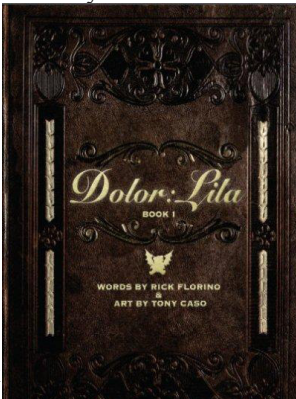
larly to December. That was the month Lila died, the month Henry was outside her door the most, and the month Lila's mother, Kayla, was around the least. Lila had told Richard that her mom changes at night, but never said why. Richard

thought that could mean something. One night Richard was stopping a fight between Billy who was beating his wife Marci when the ambulance came and Billy was arrested. Richard saw someone running outside, and had no idea who it could be. At the police station someone told him that he had gotten hit in the head the night Lila died but Richard didn't remember that at all.

Henry said that he had warned Lila but she was a baby and couldn't stop fate but Richard had to or he would die also. The day that Lila drowned Kayla wrote Richard a note and Lila had also wrote her father a note. Lila had also sent her father an e-mail. You will have to read the book to find out what the notes said but Richard blacked out after reading the notes.

When Richard woke up Lila's killer was revealed along with the motive. That was the end of the diary.

Agent Jeffries was confused and then the book closed on its own. He now had a bump on his head that he had no clue how he got. Another diary Chrissy opened. Dolor:Chrissy is the next book in the series Dolor.



Devils fall in playoffs

Shawn Hansen
VALLEY PATRIOT SPORTS WRITER

Over the course of seven months of hockey, the Lowell Devils finished the regular season with a record of 39-31-4-6, clinching a spot in the playoffs.

Despite splitting a two game series in Worcester to start the Atlantic Division Semifinal Series, the Devils couldn't seem to turn things around at their home, the Tsongas Center.

In the first period of game five, #24 T.J. Trevelyan put the Worcester on the board first making with 9:36 on the board, as #21 Benn Ferriero knocked in the second goal of the night to cap off a 2-0 first period.

Half way amidst the game, in the second period, #25 Nick Palmieri got the Devils into the game with a goal, 3:26 into the frame. From there on, the Sharks went on a feeding frenzy as Ferriero latched in his second goal of the night at 10:16, and #22 Andrew Dasjardins sliced in a goal at 1:00 to make it 4-1.

In the third period, the Worcester Sharks Trevelyan netted his second goal of the night at 15:30 as the Devils were stopped in their tracks, ending a season 4-1 to the Worcester Sharks.

With the win, the Sharks advanced to the Atlantic Division Finals to face the Manchester Monarchs.

With the season at an end, Coach John

MacLean reflected on his first season in Lowell feeling proud of what the Devils had accomplished.

"I think the guys played really hard this year. They tried to create a new environment in there that we wanted to win, and compete, and be a tough team to compete every night. I think they accomplished that, making the playoffs, that was a big thing," said MacLean.

He said in the locker room after the 5-1 loss to the Sharks in game five, he told his team that they worked hard, and had a really good season.

"They all did something at different times, I think they all grew as players. Gionta grew in the leadership role, and had a great year. Matt Taormina made a name for himself, Ben Walter was a competitor all year, Palmieri put up some nice numbers as far as goals," said MacLean. "Different guys, I could go through the list. All of them had a good learning experience, and leaned a lot about themselves."

MacLean said that he told everyone in the locker room they have to look at the overall season, and know that every team in the American Hockey League doesn't get the chance to make it to the playoffs.

In the off season, everyone will go home, practice with a summer league, and prepare for next season.

MacLean said he will be getting back into the family life in New Jersey, and



PHOTO: SHAWN HANSEN

will be doing things around the house that was left for him during his absence in the winter.

Michael Swift, Center for the Devils wearing number 23 said, "The season was great, but not for the playoffs, and series, it was a let down. We battled hard the whole year, and the only thing you can ask for it to battle hard, and work hard, and when you work hard good things happen, like us in the playoffs."

Leading the team in goals with 24, Swift said he accomplished something great, and at the beginning of the year, he would never have thought of leading the team in goals.

"In November, I wasn't really sure what was going on, and then after Christmas, I picked it up a bit, and that's where you have to play good, in the stretch of going into the playoffs."

During the off season, Swift will take a little time off, get back on the ice, and go from there.



"Shawn Hansen is currently in his last semester at UMass Lowell. He wrote for *The Campus Report*, and was sports editor. Hansen now writes for the *UMass Lowell Connector*, the *Billerica Minuteman*, and the *Tewksbury Advocate*. To get in touch with Shawn, email him at Shawn.Hansen.sportsentertainment@gmail.com."

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T	O	D	C	H	I	C	A	G	O	T	O
C	A	T	O	S	E	N	N	I	M	O	N

Instructions: 17 NHL teams are hidden in the grid above. Your task is to find them all, without the aid of a list. Only the city is hidden, not the franchise name (i.e. Carolina, not Hurricanes). Good luck!

Teams:

1)	7)	13)
2)	8)	14)
3)	9)	15)
4)	10)	16)
5)	11)	17)
6)	12)	

Team Haverhill Sponsors HHS Athletic Dept. Golf Tournament

The First Annual Haverhill High School Athletics Golf Tournament will take place at the Renaissance Golf Club on Monday, May 24, 2010. Team Haverhill is proud to be the lead sponsor of the event. Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the tournament tee-off at 11:00 a.m. Dinner and awards will follow.

The Haverhill HS Athletics Golf Tournament raises funding for Haverhill High School boys' and girls' sports programs, including over 50 varsity, junior varsity, and freshman teams. The tournament brings together Haverhill HS student-athletes, coaches, administrators, alumni, friends of Haverhill HS Athletics, business and community leaders and many others. Participants will have the opportunity to meet current and former Haverhill HS student-athletes and coaches. Former New England area professional athletes will also join the fun.

Great auction items will be available for bidding throughout the day's activities. The Kiwanis Club of Haverhill will sponsor a putting contest throughout the tournament. One lucky participant will have an opportunity to make a putt for \$10,000.

The cost is \$175 per player, which includes a box lunch, cart, greens fees and dinner. Additional guests may join us for dinner at a cost of \$30 per person. The Haverhill HS Athletic Department staff is seeking additional tournament sponsors and auction items.

To register, please call 978-374-5732 or email Garin Veris at: gveris@haverhill-ps.org. Information will soon be available on the Haverhill High School Athletics website at <http://hhs.haverhill-ps.org/>. Checks may be sent to: Haverhill High School Athletic Department, 137 Monument Street, Haverhill, MA 01830.



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Polito announces passage of “Restaurant Rejuvenation Act”

State Representative Karyn Polito (R – Shrewsbury) is pleased to announce that the House has adopted a budget amendment she introduced that will allow restaurants to serve alcohol during Sunday brunch hours. Known as the “Restaurant Rejuvenation Act” and advocated by television’s “Phantom Gourmet,” Dave Andelman, the legislation has the potential to give an economic boost to the Massachusetts restaurant industry. That industry employs approximately one out of ten Massachusetts workers, or almost 300,000 people, and it is responsible for over \$12 billion in annual sales. However, the restaurant industry has suffered greatly due to recent economic difficulties. “I am thrilled my colleagues recognized the potential of the Restaurant Rejuvenation Act to create additional jobs in Massachusetts,” said Polito, who was the main

sponsor of the budget amendment to enact the legislation in the House. “Massachusetts restaurants are facing tremendous challenges due to the recession, the meals tax, higher sales taxes and a new tax on alcoholic beverages. I hope the passage of this amendment will help to offset some of the costs on businesses.” Under current law, Massachusetts restaurants outside of Suffolk county are prohibited from selling alcoholic beverages before noon on Sundays, unless local licensing boards grant permission. The Restaurant Rejuvenation Act would move the starting time back to 10:00 a.m. statewide, thereby helping restaurants to compete with neighboring states for Sunday brunch business and removing licensing differences between communities. The legislation now moves to the Senate for its consideration.

LeTip Networking for small Businesses

LeTip Merrimack Valley Executives is a local chapter of a Thirty Two Year Old business networking group that meets every Wednesday, at the LaQuinta Inn at 131 River Road, Andover, Massachusetts. Our meetings start at 7AM and end by 8:30AM. Our group is growing, but as of yet, we still have openings for several professionals to whom we can send our referrals. We are especially looking for an Accountant, a Real Estate Agent, and an Estate Planning Attorney. Our group meets every week to hand out solid, qualified business leads to professionals like YOU. We’ve found this

to be the very best way to meet business owners throughout our area. We accept only one business category in each service area. We have only one personal injury attorney, one life and disability insurance agent, one electrical contractor, one general contractor, one mortgage loan officer, one chiropractor, one property and casualty insurance agent, one real estate lawyer, etc. The referral opportunities are HUGE! When you come, be sure to bring lots of business cards to hand out! You will meet a lot of great contacts; and your first Breakfast will be on us. For more information

Protecting the Stay-at-Home Spouse

Gregory Loosigian
VALLEY PATRIOT FINANCIAL COLUMNIST

When married couples have young children, often one spouse stays home while the other works outside the home. While most parents understand the necessity of purchasing a life insurance policy on the income earner, few realize the importance of also insuring the stay-at-home spouse. Being Prepared for the Unexpected What if the stay-at-home spouse suddenly became ill, disabled or died? The family would be devastated. Friends and family members would initially pitch in to help. But, eventually they would return to their regular lives. Before the surviving spouse returned to work, a caretaker for the children and home would need to be hired, presenting a potential financial hardship. But, had life insurance been purchased on the stay-at-home parent, the family’s needs would have been protected.

Measuring the Value of the Stay-at-Home Spouse Despite the importance of the stay-at-home parent, there’s little research to quantify its value. In its May 8, 2008, Mom Salary Survey, Salary.com reported the ten most popular functions performed by mothers

equates to \$116,805 per year vs. a working mother’s salary of \$68,405. It further states the stay-at-home spouse works a 94-hour week, serving as housekeeper, teacher, cook, psychologist, and van driver — in short, functioning as a CEO at home. Flexible, Customizable Choices The type of policy you select depends on your needs and budget. Term life insurance provides affordable coverage for several years. In contrast permanent life insurance provides protection for your entire life (provided premiums are paid) and accumulates cash value tax-deferred. This cash value can be accessed (unpaid loans accrue interest and reduce policy’s cash value and death benefit). Plus, riders, available with term and permanent life insurance, enable you to customize your policy to meet and grow with your changing needs. The loss of a parent is hard enough on a family; purchasing insurance coverage for a stay-at-home spouse can help ensure that it doesn’t become a financial hardship as well. Gregory J. Loosigian Agent, MA Ins. Lic #183059, NH # 2017596, New York Life Insurance Company, Tel. # 978-273-8377, 10 New England Business Center Drive, Suite 205, Andover, Ma. 01810

please contact Paul Lambert at 978-609-6420 or at PDLLAW@comcast.net. If you would like to attend our next meeting call or e-mail as soon as possible. Imagine a sales force promoting your business on a daily basis – a sale force that does not add

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Sheldon Fine
VALLEY PATRIOT LEGAL COLUMNIST

There has been much discussion about whether an individual has the right to bring a liability action against a landlord for damages caused by slipping and falling on snow and ice. The law in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is that snow falls and it’s no person’s fault, as it’s a natural accumulation of snow and ice and not an unnatural accumulation of snow and ice. However, there is law which states that a landowner has an affirmative duty of reasonable care under the circumstances to prevent injuries to those who are lawfully on the landowner’s property, but stated Massachusetts does not however “regard the natural accumulation of snow and ice as an actionable property defect.” A recent case, Barasso et al vs. Hillview West Condominium Trust et al discussed this question. The case originally started in the Superior Court with a finding for the defendants in that ruling that there was no genuine issue of material facts as “there was a natural accumulation of snow and ice in existence in the plaintiff’s injury”. The plaintiffs, “Barraso’s appealed the case to the Appeals Court. The facts of this particular case are as follows: There was a major northeast snowstorm resulting in a declaration of emergency for two days on

March 6 and 7, 2001. The snow plower, under contract with the condominium, plowed for the two days. The plaintiff, before going to work, went to the dumpster, which had snow piled up against it. The snow had stopped and the parking lot was plowed. The plaintiff had complained in the past that there was a problem since there was only one way to the dumpster. The plaintiff climbed through the snow to get to the door but after several steps and with the fourth step, his right foot hit the bottom of mound which had ice in it. He slipped and fell. He put his left hand down to brace the fall and fractured his wrist, as a result of the injuries the plaintiff was unable to return to his job as a lithographer for five months. The Appeals Court looked at the case and fought with the issue as to whether this was a natural or unnatural accumulation of snow. The judge explained that “An unnatural accumulation occurs and gives use to a claim for damages where “an act of omission by the (defendant) changed the condition of snow and ice from its natural state.” With respect to snow removal efforts, it distinguishes between on the one hand, “creation” of and “alteration” of conditions, which are actionable and on the other hand, mere exposure of the remaining natural accumulation of snow or ice, which is not actionable. The court found that there was a general issue concerning the ques-

tion of natural vs. unnatural accumulation. They sent the case back to the lower court for more discussion consistent with their opinion. Another recent case could change the law as it stands in this field. The Massachusetts Supreme Court is poised to reconsider the long held legal distinction between natural and unnatural accumulation of snow and ice. The above case along with another case in the Appeals case O’Brien vs. Leahy Landscaping has weakened the standard in these cases. The Supreme Court will take this case up shortly. The defense lawyers warn that the rule has been in place for more than 100 years so why change. There are many cases out there. One, this writer and another attorney handled. We found other circumstances that caused a woman to fall on ice in a parking lot of a mall. The circumstances were that there was water which came down the side of a building across the sidewalk onto the parking lot which froze. The woman stopped and fell and fractured her knee which required surgery. The case was settled out of court. It is hope that the following case Papadopolos et al vs. Target Corporation et al will give some full understanding as to what is natural vs. unnatural accumulation of snow and ice and what would the liabilities of the landlords at least on commercial property will be. The court may take the added issue as to liability of homeowner liability etc. In this case on December 30, 2002, the plaintiff drove to Target to buy soap upon exiting the store with his purchase he slipped on what was called a “small glubber of ice” that was covered with dirt and sand.

The fall fractured his hip which required surgery. In December 2005, the plaintiff filed a negligence complaint against Target and the landscaping company which had cleared the snow that day. In November 2007, Suffolk Court Judge granted a dismissal of the case on summary judgment staying that Mr. Papadopoulos ‘s injury resulted from his tripping over a natural accumulation of snow and ice” The case was appealed to the Appeals Court which issued an unpublished decision affirming the lower court’s ruling. The plaintiff sought further appellate review from the Supreme Judicial court which granted the request in July and instructed the parties to prepare briefs on the question of “whether in a premises liability action involving snow and ice the distinction between natural and unnatural accumulation of snow and ice should be a factor under Mass. Law. In an Amicus Curie brief (friend of court) the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys said the natural accumulation rule is “an anachronism proven by experience to be impractical arbitrary in application and ill suited to modern conditions. The Supreme Court will have its hands full with this case which according to defense counsel would “open the floodgates to new litigation arising out of ice and snow cases, with property owners standing little if any chance of prevailing on motions for summary judgment-even where such relief was warranted. We will wait to see what happens. If you have any questions, contact this writer’s office for an appointment at 978-475-9886.

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PHOTOS:TOM DUGGAN

The Valley Patriot's food critic chose as best dishes at this years **Taste of Methuen**: Above Left photo: Mike Condon (in hat) of The Sweetheart Inn, (famous wedding soup), Mike Asmar of Shadis (grape leaves, hommus and kibbe) and Mick Geleota, general manager of Not Your Average Joe's with Natacha Rodriguez serving their tender, mustard chicken cutlets and crab cakes.

MERCIER:FROM PAGE 34

to grant 1200 senior Twilight Wishes as of the end of 2009. A Book has been written by Author Stanley F. Bronstein with contributions by Cass Forkin. You will not want to miss reading this one. Get your tissues ready because it will certainly bring tears to your eyes and warm your heart with every single page you read.

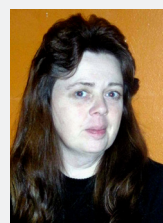
It features a sampling of a wide variety of wishes that have been granted. One woman's desperate need for something as simple as a new bed so she would not have to sleep in her wheelchair each night. Another tells of a man's great desire to fly in a fighter jet. Yes, he soared the great blue skies in a fighter jet! Then there is a hot air balloon ride that three elderly ladies always dreamed of taking and were able to do it together thanks to Twilight

Wish. Yet another tells of an elderly man's dying wish to spend a day with Great Dane dogs. He had no family and had previously owned two of these dogs that were his some-one special to come each night to. He also had his wish fulfilled and spent an entire day with not one but four of these majestic animals.

He died three weeks later.

There are certain requirements that must be met to qualify for a wish such as age, financial need and legal citizenship. You check out their website for all the details. The recipient must also be able to cognitively, physically and emotionally be capable of experiencing the wish. Anyone can nominate a senior for a wish as well as helping grant a wish through

assistance, monetary donations and services. You can visit Twilight Wishes website at <http://www.TwilightWish.org> or you can contact them directly at PO Box 1042, Doylestown, PA 18901, Phone: 1 215 230 8777, Fax: 1 215 230 8770, E-mail: angels@twilightwish.org. You can also purchase Stanley F. Bronstein's book through any major on line book retailer or via e-mail at Stanley@StanleyBronstein.com.



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



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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH, BOULETTE: From page 1

Lawrence, Massachusetts in January 1996 where he served as a small arms repairman. He was promoted to Corporal in October 1996.

In July 1997, Boulette was selected to be a member of Marine Security Detachment, USS Constitution, during OPSAIL 200 and the events commemorating the ship's 200th birthday. During this time he was involved in the day to day security functions required to protect this national treasure, and was aboard the ship when it sailed under its own power for the first time in 116 years.

In January 1998 Boulette was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. In March of that year he trained with the Norwegian military and other members of NATO, above the Arctic Circle at Camp Osmarka, Norway, in support of Operation Strong Resolve '98.

In July 1999 Boulette completed the Sergeant's Course held at Camp Crowder, Missouri. Also during this time he began serving as a Squad Leader, and later Platoon Sergeant for second platoon of Ordnance Contact Team -1. He also performed duties as the Armory NCOIC, and Unit Training NCO.

In May 2000 Boulette received a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Cum Laude), in Communications, from Framingham State College, in Framingham, Massachusetts. Boulette was also the founder and team Captain of the Framingham State College Men's Lacrosse Club Team.

Boulette completed the Small Arms Repair Refresher Course held at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Aberdeen Maryland in October 2000 finishing second in his class.

In June 2002 Boulette was hired by the

Billerica (MA) Police Department. He attended the 8th Massachusetts Police Officers Course, held at Massachusetts National Guard Base, Camp Curtis Guild, Reading, Massachusetts. He served as Platoon Leader throughout the duration of the 22-week course, supervising 35 other student police officers. He now serves as a Patrolman for the Billerica Police Department and is the Master-at-

Arms of the department Honor Guard. He has been credited with three separate life saving actions.

In June 2003 Boulette was promoted Staff Sergeant (E-6). The following month he completed the Staff NCO Academy held at Camp Crowder, Missouri where he was named to the Commanding General's Honor Roll for completing the course with a 95.55% cumulative average.

In October of 2003 Boulette participated in his first marathon, completing the 28th Marine Corps Marathon in Washington D.C. In December 2003, he completed his postgraduate studies. In February 2004 Staff Sergeant Boulette received a Master of Science Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Western New England College, Springfield, Massachusetts.

On January 5, 2004, SSgt Boulette was called to active duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom - II. He was assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force, 1st Force Service Support Group, Combat Service Support Battalion - 1, Combat Service Support Company - 121. After completing pre-deployment training in Camp Pendleton, CA, Boulette deployed to the Iraqi theater of operations in Feb 04 and served at Camp Fallujah until Oct 04. While at Camp Fallujah Boulette

served as the Senior Small Arms Repairman for the Infantry Weapon Repair Shop, he was the Platoon Sergeant and Training NCO for Ordnance Platoon, he also served as the SNCOIC of the company area guard.

In October of 2005 Boulette attended Primary Marksmanship Instructor School held at Weapons Training Battalion Quantico, VA. He finished in the top 10 students academically, and was also the Rifle High Shooter for the course. He was awarded MOS 8530, Marksmanship Coach and MOS 8531 Primary Marksmanship Instructor/Combat Marksmanship Trainer. Following the completion of his training, Boulette became the lead marksmanship instructor for the 4th Maintenance Battalion.

In Feb - March 2006 Boulette completed the Army's Combat Lifesaver class held at Devens Reserve Forces Training Area. During this time Boulette also received certification from the Massachusetts State Police, as a Basic Firearms Safety Instructor.

In May 2006 Boulette served as Primary Marksmanship Instructor and Range SNOIC during OCT-1's annual rifle and pistol qualifications. Under his tutelage, the unit achieved 100% qualification. In August of 2006 Boulette traveled to Omaha, Nebraska to serve as PMI/CMT for Engineer Maintenance Company's annual rifle qualification. In just five days, despite inadequate range operations equipment, and severe weather conditions Eng Maint Co achieved a 99% percent qualification rate out of 202 shooters. For his efforts Boulette received a Certificate of Commendation.

Boulette last served as the SNOIC of the Infantry Weapon Repair Section of Ordnance Contact Team One, Devens, MA and was the unit's Primary Marksmanship Instructor. He has voluntarily participated in 89 military funerals honors details in his career. He was Honorably Discharged from the United States Marine Corps on 5 Oct 2006.

In February 2009 Boulette enlisted in the United States Air Force Reserve as a Technical Sergeant with the 439th Security Forces Squadron, Westover ARB,



Chicopee, MA.

Boulette completed the Security Forces Apprentice Course in Dec 2009. He was the class Honor Graduate and received school's highest achievement award, the Sgt Louis H. Fischer Award. This award is given to students who complete the course with a 97% or higher average and who fire expert with both the M9 pistol and the M4 Carbine. Of the over 5000 students who complete the Security Forces Apprentice course annually, less than 1% receive the Fischer Award.

Boulette now serves as a Fire Team Leader and Designated Marksman for Squad 3 of the 439th Security Forces Squadron.

Technical Sergeant Boulette's personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. He has also been awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for prolonged volunteer work in his community. His hobbies include reading, competitive pistol and rifle shooting, lacrosse, and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

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American Legion Baseball, and assorted AL news

John Lenotte
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

As we are now in the start of a new baseball season, I would like to point out some facts from the national American Legion web site (www.legion.org). The first American Legion Baseball World Series was held in Philadelphia in 1926. Yonkers, N.Y, Post 321 beat a team from Pocatello, Idaho, capping off what appeared to be a successful first season. Professional baseball now contributes \$40,000 yearly, or about 3 percent of the total budget.

American Legion Baseball enjoys a reputation as one of the most successful and tradition-rich amateur athletic leagues. Today, the program registers over 5,400 teams in all 50 states, including Canada and Puerto Rico. Almost 100,000 youths, ages 15 to 19, participate annually. Since its inception, the league has had 10 million players, and nearly 75 percent of current college players are program graduates.

Legion Baseball also has a reputation for serving the young people who play for it. In college scholarships, the league annually awards a total of \$51,000 - \$1,000 for a player selected from each department based upon leadership, character, scholarship and financial need. Recently, the Legion passed a resolution allowing corporate sponsorship, in the hope of creating more financial aid for college. Gatorade already funds \$10,000 in scholarships for the Legion

Baseball Player of the Year and the eight regional players of the year.

In 1949, the national player of the year was first named through the arrangement of Robert Quinn, director of The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. Fittingly, winners receive a trip to the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., making them the only amateur athletes invited to the exhibit. The award is now named after George W. Rulon, who served as program coordinator from 1961 to 1987.

Major League Baseball and American Legion Baseball don't have a formal partnership, but the two owe each other a tremendous debt of gratitude. MLB has sponsored Legion Baseball almost since its inception, and Legion Baseball has returned the favor, churning out major-league prospects since the alumni base has been old enough to be scouted. More than half of current major-leaguers played Legion Baseball. So did almost every working MLB manager, along with several former commissioners. In all, more than 50 program graduates are in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Legion Baseball's alumni base includes some of the sport's most recognizable names. Yogi Berra played for Fred W. Stockholm Post 245 in St. Louis. Ted Williams suited up for a post in San Diego. Frank Robinson led his Oakland, Calif., team to the only back-to-back national championships in program history. Babe

Ruth was too old to join when Legion Baseball started, but he spent the final years of his life promoting the program as its director of operations. Other prominent players include Ryne Sandberg, Roy Campanella, Dusty Baker, Albert Pujols, Greg Maddux and Chipper Jones.

Yet baseball isn't the only area where former players have excelled. Legion Baseball graduates have gone on to prominence in other career fields. Former vice president Dick Cheney played for Post 2 in Casper, Wyo. Famed journalist and author Tom Brokaw played Legion ball in South Dakota, and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack was on a team in Pennsylvania.

In short, Legion Baseball graduates are proud contributors throughout our society and often are the most successful people in their respective career fields.

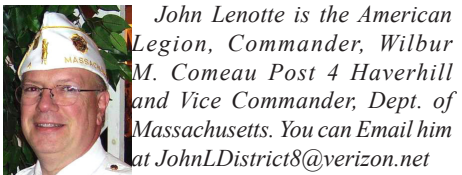
As a follow-up to last month's article, Congresswoman Tsongas also has several initiatives focused on providing adequate resources and support for active duty members. For example, she is about to introduce legislation designed to improve sexual assault prevention and response in the Armed Forces. This legislative initiative professionalizes training, enhances victim support initiatives, and improves reporting and accountability procedures.

She is also focused on ensuring that the members of our armed forces have the equipment they need to carry out their

missions as effectively and safely as possible. To that end, she will soon introduce a bill directing the Secretary of Defense to establish a DOD Joint Task Force dedicated to reducing the weight of body armor and related protective equipment while maintaining the appropriate levels of protection. This initiative builds on legislation that she introduced last year, and was signed into law, which provides dedicated funding to the research and development of lighter weight body armor.

In terms of the National Guard, Tsongas is working with the House Armed Services Committee on a variety of issues. She is helping to provide the Army Guard with improved access to training equipment before they deploy, addressing the Air Guard's need for the radar upgrades in four of its F-15s, and advancing legislation to count time served in support of homeland security operations towards education benefits.

If you want input to any of this legislation, contact the Congresswoman's office. As I have stated before and will state again in the future. Let your voices be heard!



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

Navigating the Dept. of Veteran Affairs Website

Susan Piazza
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a wide array of information at their website: <http://www.va.gov/> Use this site to download a version of the VA's 2010 Benefits Booklet. To download this booklet, pull down the "Veteran Services" tab (This can be found under the Dept of VA's title.) Then go under "Inside Veteran Services" and select "Benefits Booklet". You can choose to download the 2010 edition in total (right side bar) or elect to download single chapters (left side bar).

An online application for medical benefits can be accessed through: [https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/Form 10-10EZ](https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/Form%2010-10EZ) is available as a downloadable and printable form. Instructions for completing this form are available here as well. At this site one is able to change one's information with another easy download - Form 10-10EZR.

Help is available at 1-877-222-8387, the VA's toll free telephone number, for those who either do not have access to a computer or are unable to use a computer.

Access to VA health care is broken down into different groups. These groups are used to prioritize health care for eligible veterans.

ELIGIBILITY for PRIORITY GROUPS:

GROUP 1: This group is set-aside for those veterans who have a service-connected disability rated at 50% or more and for those veterans deemed unemployable due to a service-connected disability.

GROUP 2: This group is set-aside for those veterans who have a service-connected disability rated at 30 or 40%.

GROUP 3: This group is set-aside for those veterans who have a service-connected disability rated at 10 or 20% or for veterans discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated while in the line of duty. This category includes veterans awarded the Purple Heart or former Prisoners of War (POW). Any veteran who became disabled while in treatment or while participating in Vocational Rehab is included in this group.

GROUP 4: This group is set-aside for veterans who receive aid and attendance or who receive benefits for being housebound. Included in this group are those veterans

the VA determines to be "catastrophically disabled".

NOTE: Income limits for the following groups have increased 10% as of 15 June 2009. This relaxing of income requirements is a direct result of this country's current economic crisis. The following information uses the new income guidelines for the VA national income threshold taken from the May 2010 issue of "The American Legion Magazine."

GROUP 5: This group is set-aside for those veterans who have a service-connected disability rated zero and whose gross annual income and/or net worth is less than the VA national income threshold (2010 threshold is \$32,342. for a veteran with no dependents). Additionally one can become eligible under this category if one's income falls below the geographically adjusted income limit. Example: the 2009 geographically adjusted income level for a veteran with no dependents living in Lawrence, MA is \$44,800. The 2009 geographically adjusted income level for a veteran with no dependents living in Washington, DC is \$47,335. This category also encompasses veterans receiving VA pension benefits, veterans eligible for Medicaid assistance and those veterans deemed to be not service-connected and therefore not compensable.

GROUP 6: This group is set-aside for those veterans who have certain conditions as a result of being exposed to ionizing radiation associated with either atmospheric testing or the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; illnesses resulting from Department of Defense operation Project 112/ Project SHAD; and "veterans with zero percent service-connected disabilities who are receiving disability compensation benefits". (VA's website <http://www.va.gov/>) Veterans who served in a combat theater after 11 November 1998 are covered under certain conditions as well. The following two points are also taken directly from the VA's website <http://www.va.gov/> they comprise the remainder of Group 6's eligibility.

1. Veterans discharged from active duty on or after Jan. 28, 2003, who were enrolled as of Jan. 28, 2008 and veterans who apply for enrollment after Jan. 28, 2008, for 5 years post discharge

2. Veterans discharged from active duty before Jan. 28, 2003, who apply for enrollment after Jan. 28, 2008, until Jan. 27, 2011

GROUP 7: This income-based group is set-aside for veterans whose income, whose gross household income, is below the income limit for their geographic area. The veteran must pay the related co-pay for services rendered under this category.

GROUP 8: This group is set-aside for veterans whose gross household income and/or net worth are above the national income level and geographic adjusted income level. (Remember the national income level is \$32,342. for a veteran with no dependents. The geographic adjusted level depends on ones location.) The veteran must pay the related co-pay for services rendered under this category.

The 2009 geographically adjusted income thresholds can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/library/pubs/gmtincomethresholds>. This site allows one to check the income thresholds for individual states by clicking on "508 Version / HTML by State available"

The 2009 geographic income thresholds for cities in Massachusetts as determined by the VA can be found at: <http://www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/Library/pubs/GMTIncomeThresholds/ByState/MA.asp>

The 2009 geographic income thresholds for cities in New Hampshire as determined by the VA can be found at: <http://www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/Library/pubs/GMTIncomeThresholds/ByState/NH.asp>

Keep in mind the VA's latest computations are for 2009, not 2010. So use these sites only as a guide. Check with the VA or your local veterans agent for the 2010 limits as they have increased.

For an explanation of the grouping system and more check out: http://www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/benefits_chap01.asp

Information on travel reimbursement, billing of ones private health insurance, readjustment counseling, etc. are detailed on this website. Those combat veterans who have been recently discharged will also find valuable information here as well.

The VA website for those with health

care eligibility questions is: https://iris.va.gov/Scripts/iris.cfg/php.exe/enduser/cc/ask_1.php Suggestions, complaints, and compliments can be submitted at this site as well. One can additionally access information regarding a claim or appeal here as well.

The VA makes provisions for one to provide additional information to ones claim or to upload attachments through the Veterans ON-line Application (VONAPP) website at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp> Use the Statement in Support of Claim form VA Form 21-4138. Instructions for including files with ones statement can be found here as well. System requirements are noted.

The VA website for "My HealtheVet" can be found at: <http://www.myhealth.va.gov/> This site offers Internet access to VA's health care information. This site is not only for current veterans; it can be beneficial for active military members as well as dependents and caregivers.

Another excellent website is: <http://www.legion.org/benefitscalculator/> This site calculate ones potential benefits. One is required to answer a series of questions and then this site analyzes your answers to come up with a series of benefits. If you can obtain a copy of the Legion's May 2010 magazine I would suggest reading page 18, "No stampede of Priority 8 enrollees" by Tom Philpott; it is very informative.

I hope this health care guide helps. Remember if you have questions or need additional information check with either the VA or your local veteran's agent.

As always, I pray all our service men and women, here and abroad, stay safe. May god bless them and may god bless the United States of America. Until later, I remain, Sue Piazza, Past Commander, Chapter 2 Queen City, D.A.V.



Susan Piazza is the past Commander, Chapter 2, Queen City, DAV and was the first female commander of the DAV in 75 years. She has been involved with the DAV for over twenty five years. You can email Susan at WithMara@aol.com



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**8:00 am - Registration: Essex County Correctional Facility
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10:45 am - Crescent Yacht Club, 3 Ferry Street, Bradford

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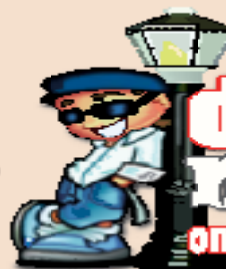
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