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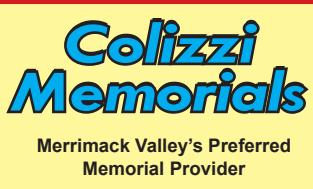
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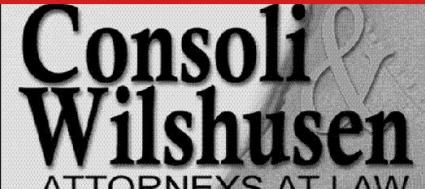
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ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
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## Interview with Newt



PHOTO: ALEX TALCOTT

Presidential front runner Speaker Newt Gingrich faces our Valley Patriot presidential panel and answers questions about the EPA, illegal aliens, education and so much more. Can Gingrich secure the Republican nomination and go on to defeat President Obama next November?

**See Story: Page 15**

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The Doc. is IN  
Dr. Rami  
Rustum  
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## VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

### Hero in Our Midst: Admiral Jeremiah Denton

Helen Mooradian

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

On Christmas Eve 1967, in the darkness of a POW camp in Communist North Vietnam, a soft, low voice began singing carols. "Silent night, Holy night,

all is calm, all is bright."

The haunting strains came from the cell of a lone POW, locked in solitary confinement. He was shackled in leg irons with a 5-ft, cement-filled iron bar linking ankle cuffs together. Elbows tied

behind his back, cutting off circulation.

Yet his spirit remained unbroken. His voice penetrated the deep silence, bringing comfort, hope and cheer to the other Americans.

The POW camp was "Alcatraz," known for its unspeakable brutality.

The POW was Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., U.S. Navy, later promoted to Admiral, who endured nearly eight years of excruciating torture as a prisoner, more than four of them in solitary confinement where he was viciously tortured, beaten until unconscious, starved and threatened 18 hours a day, every day from 1965 to October 1969. He stands as a symbol of the indomitable American spirit of a man devoted to God, country, duty and honor.

On July 18, 1965, the 41-year old Denton, Commanding Officer of Attack Squadron Seventy-Five, was shot down in his Navy A-6E Intruder jet while leading a group of 28 aircraft on Thanh Hoa. Captured, he was imprisoned in the "Hanoi Hilton."

A hero and patriot of epic proportions, Denton described his experiences in his memorable book, "When Hell Was in Session," now updated and reissued (WND Books).

#### Famous 1966 televised interview

Millions of Americans came to know Denton on May 17, 1966, during a televised interview arranged by North Vietnam. Tortured before the interview, he was threatened with greater torture if he didn't respond properly. Yet Denton looked straight into the TV camera and blinked his eyes in Morse code repeat-



Admiral Jeremiah A.  
Denton, Jr., USN (ret.)

Admiral Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., USN (ret.) received the Navy Cross, the Navy's highest honor, Distinguished Service Medals from DoD and USN, three Silver Stars, Distinguished Flying Cross, five Bronze Stars, two Air Medals, two Purple Hearts, among others. He served as a U.S. Senator, and worked with President Ronald Reagan.

edly to spell out the word "t-o-r-t-u-r-e." Naval intelligence immediately picked it up, the first confirmation that American POWs were being tortured.

In response to allegations of U.S.

**DENTON: PAGE 40**

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# EDITORIAL

## UNBECOMING!

Over the years, embattled School Committee Chairman Chris Allen has worked very hard to help the public school children of North Andover get a better education.

But, Allen's behavior of late has overshadowed much of the good her efforts might have accomplished.

First, Allen was engaged in using school department resources (and employees) to orchestrate and promote the imposition of a meals tax for town restaurants.

Then, she conspired with Superintendent Hottel to charge The Valley Patriot \$7,099 to fill a Freedom of Information request for a copy of her school department emails (sent and received) prior to the recent Special Town Meeting.

E-mails obtained (separately) by the Valley Patriot clearly show Allen using the school department computer server to campaign, to insult town residents, to call the tea party "the party of dicks" and to call town activist Ted Tripp and meals tax opponents "small minded".

When Chris Allen was recently confronted by Mr. Tripp at a public meeting, she refused to apologize for her behavior. At a later meeting she did apologize, but quickly retracted that apology by saying everything she had written in her letter was "true".

Equally or even more disturbing however is that Allen recently hired former North Andover High School wrestling coach David Castricone to fix the roof on her home on Belmont Street. Castricone is out on bail while he awaits trial on child porn charges... not to mention that he was videotaped coming and going from the girls' locker room at North Andover High.

Students are left to ask themselves: "Does Chris Allen stand with us, or with her friend who was trolling the girls' locker room?"

Allen's behavior of late is bizarre to say the least, and is nothing short of unbecoming of the prestigious position she holds as the elected leader of the North Andover Public Schools.

We expect more ... much more.

Chris Allen has an obligation to the voters to refrain from propaganda, lies, vulgar language, personal attacks, abusing her authority in the schools to promote her cause, supporting a coach who may have victimized students, and using taxpayer resources for political activity.

Mrs. Allen not only owes Mr. Tripp a sincere public apology but she also owes the Merrimack Valley Tea Party, school employees and the taxpayers of North Andover a public apology.

It is time for Chris Allen's to step down as chairman of the North Andover School Committee.

### News tips

Phone in news tips to (978) 771-4091, or you may email tips to us at [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com). We respect the anonymity of our sources if requested.

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

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

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Local daily news updates are online at [www.valleypatriot.com](http://www.valleypatriot.com)



## Thank you for your 209A Article

Dear Editor,

Thank you for publishing the editorial on page 2, "209A Restraining Order Law Should Go" (as well as the article on page 17, "Fatherhood Coalition looks to repeal 209A Restraining Order Law").

The law makes criminals out of men who have not broken the law. There are plenty of violent men and women to fill our nation's prisons. Thieves, prostitutes, and white collar criminals are released from jail so as to make room for

so-called offenders of the restraining order law.

There should be a ballot measure placed before Massachusetts voters to repeal this unjust and unnecessary law.

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# Why do we celebrate “the Holidays”?

**Jeff Katz**

RADIO TALK SHOW HOST/TALK 1200AM

Tis the season, my friends. The collective attention turns to “the holidays.” The main stream media types have thrown together Chanukah, Christmas and Kwanzaa as if each is the same, just some small variation or strange detail here and there. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth.

The oldest of the three winter holidays is Chanukah, the story of Judah Maccabee and his band of Jewish heroes. The story takes place around 165 years B.C.E. as a brutal Syrian King Antiochus goes to great lengths to assault the Jewish people and destroy their temples. The Maccabees fight back and despite their small numbers and lack of military equipment, they somehow prevail against the much larger and better equipped forces of the King. The Jews then take steps to clean the Temple and re-sanctify it. They need oil to light the lamp but it is clear that they have only enough to last one night. Nonetheless, they know that they must make the Temple acceptable to G-d again after it had been defiled and so they continue the work. The small amount of oil miraculously lasts eight nights. It is clear to the Jewish people that they could only prevail in the battle by the grace of G-d. It is clear when the oil lasts for eight nights, that anything is possible with G-d.

Indeed, miracles are what G-d provides for us mortals.

Fast forward a couple of hundred years, and look at Christmas. For Christians worldwide, Christmas provides a wonderful, warm and inspiring time. Christians see a manifestation of G-d’s eternal love. Love so deep, it is almost unimaginable. John 3:16 declares “For He so loved the world that He gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” A clear message to Christians that with G-d everything is indeed possible.

Two of “the holidays” down, and now time to discuss the newest on the scene. The “holiday” which according to media types is of equal importance, and deserving of equal if not greater attention, Kwanzaa. It is 1966 and a criminal by the name of Ronald N. Everett decides he’s going to do something interesting. Everett, in addition to his criminal activities, is a stone cold racist and bigot. He heads up a group called United Slaves a/k/a US. The motto of his group is “anywhere we are, us is.” He declares the establishment of the “anti-Christmas”. A holiday he names Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa’s creator states in his own words that the reason for the holiday is to promote a Black revolution.

Everett, a man who grew up on a poultry farm in Maryland changes his last name

to Karenga and awards himself the title “maulana” a Swahili word which means master teacher. He eventually ditches all vestiges of his birth name and becomes Maulana Karenga. Finally, after years of engaging in gang activity Ronald N. Everett a/k/a Maulana Karenga gets sent away to state prison.

In 1971 he is convicted on two counts of felonious assault and one count of false imprisonment. The Los Angeles Superior Court sentencing report from September 1971 described Karenga as delusional, paranoid and schizophrenic. It details how he talks to the wall and imaginary people. It also addresses the brutal details of the crimes leading to his convictions. Torturing two women by beating them with an electrical cord, squeezing body parts in a vise, burning them with a soldering iron and pouring detergent down their throats.

As the late Tony Snow wrote, “There is no part of Kwanzaa that is not fraudulent.”



**VALLEY PATRIOT EXCLUSIVE**  
Jeff Katz, a former police officer, is heard daily from 5AM to 10AM on WXKS-AM TALK-1200 in Boston.

The name and all terms used are Swahili, which is a language spoken by about 7% of the population on the African continent and on the opposite side from where most people brought to the U.S.A. as slaves had lived. Corn while a big part of the fictional fabric of Kwanzaa is, in fact, not a plant native to Africa. And there is no logical reason why anyone would celebrate a harvest festival in the dead of winter. But then the facts are not at all relevant to the story of Kwanzaa. In fact, the tenants of Kwanzaa as advanced by its creator are designed as purely racist and angry.

All of us can happily acknowledge the messages of Chanukah and Christmas. The lesson that G-d protects his people and provides them with strength and miracles. The reminder that G-d loves his children and always has them in His heart. The lesson of Kwanzaa? Well, I’ll leave that to you. I wish you a Chag Sameach, Happy Chanukah and a Merry Christmas!



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# Should You Promote Your Business on Groupon?

**Cliff Ennico**

CREATORS SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS

"Social media" is the buzzword of the moment in online commerce, thanks largely to the success of "The Social Network," a movie about Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg.

Just about every e-commerce website is looking to add a "social media" element and to find new ways to harness "the power of the collective" to create new business models.

One recent ripple in the "social media" stream are online coupon promotion websites, the most popular of which are Groupon.com and LivingSocial.com.

There are subtle differences between the websites, but most work like this:

— You, a merchant with stuff to sell, contact the site and offer a special deal to your customers — an "exclusive" deal not available anywhere else — usually at a steep discount (50 percent to 90 percent off list price is not uncommon).

— The site posts your "deal," with a specific end date (similar to an eBay listing), and people sign up for it.

— If more than X people (you negotiate the "X" with the site) sign up for the deal by the end date, you are committed to offer it to whoever signed up.

— Each purchaser pays by credit card and receives in return a "voucher" with your coupon, which they can then present for goods or services at your establishment.

— You and the website split the proceeds (usually 50/50).

A great idea, no? Especially if you're a new restaurant, club, tanning salon or clothing boutique in town who wants to attract lots of Internet-savvy young customers who don't clip newspaper coupons or look at Valpaks.

But think about it . . . does it really make sense to offer your best stuff at 90 percent discount, and then split the few pennies left over 50/50 with a website?

I can hear some of you saying, "Well, haven't small businesses always offered 'loss leaders' on certain merchandise to get customers into their stores?" And you would be right — selling the blue-plate special to some people at cost (on Tuesday nights when nobody's in your restaurant anyway) might attract some new customers who would then order a bottle of wine with their dinner at full price.

But historically, "loss leader" merchandise tends to be stuff that the seller wants to get rid of at any price — older, discontinued, "past expiration date" or out-of-

style goods, or the menu items people order only occasionally. A restaurant's signature dish is not likely to be offered at cost on Friday and Saturday nights.

If you are new to coupon promotions, be sure to use the "return on investment calculator" most of these websites offer to make 100 percent sure you won't lose money on the deal.

Otherwise, why not? Groupon.com says they have 32 million registered users, even though their coupons are not available everywhere in the United States (I tried to find deals in my home state of Connecticut and couldn't find any).

So are there any legal issues in using a social media coupon site?

The short answer is "yes": the same rules that apply for paper coupon promotions. Every state has consumer protection laws for coupons, gift certificates and other sales promotion tools, and you are expected to know and comply with them — the websites won't help you with that.

So, for example:

— laws regarding expiration dates (laws requiring a minimum expiration date or requiring merchants to redeem coupons as long as they are in business)

— laws requiring merchants to maintain a sufficient stock of inventory to honor all outstanding coupons (or clearly state that they are redeemable only "while supplies last")

— laws requiring that any limitations on redemption (such as "Tuesday and Wednesday evenings only" or "only one per customer") must be clearly stated on the voucher the customer buys:

\* laws forbidding the intentional sale of merchandise below cost, or prohibiting sales below the manufacturer's suggested retail price. \* laws restricting or prohibiting discount promotions for alcoholic beverages. \* laws prohibiting merchants from restricting consumers' ability to transfer coupons once issued.

Before using a social media coupon site, ask to see their "merchant terms and conditions" or vendor contract and have a lawyer review these before launching your first promotion. Most "social media coupon" websites do not have these documents clearly posted for public view; you will need to speak to a sales representative and ask for them.

If the website does not have a "merchant agreement" as such, here are some of the questions you should ask:

— Can I change the terms of an offer before the end date as long as I give notice of the change to people who have already

**GROUPON: PAGE 28**

# Best Websites for Freebies and Coupons

**Christine Durst**

and Michael Haaren

CREATORS SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS

As the economy continues to wrestle with the doldrums, freebies and discounts look better than ever — and vendors have taken the cue. Here are some popular freebie websites and useful search terms. Freebies, as you might imagine, go even faster online than they do elsewhere, so if you see something you like, be sure to grab it fast.

For background, some freebies and coupons require that you "like" the brand on its Facebook page, while others simply require a basic registration.

Before we jump in, here's a final word of caution. Scammers often use freebie sites to capture personal information about unsuspecting consumers. If your searches take you to an unfamiliar website or an obscure product, be sure to do your "due diligence" before sharing any information. While not foolproof, searching with the website, company or product name, followed by the "plus" sign and the word "scam" (without quotes), will often turn up any complaints.

## WEBSITES

— ItsAllFreeOnline.com: This site offers a variety of freebies and discounts. When we recently visited, offers included free samples of Sephora cosmetics, a coupon for Ruffles chips and a free sample of Stride Spark gum.

— Walmart.com: Wal-Mart offers free samples and coupons regularly. Products range from shampoo to vitamin drinks to pet food. To get to the page, just search with "free samples Wal-Mart" (without the quotes), or go to the Web page directly with this link: <http://tinyurl.com/22p7pph>.

— Mommy Saves Big, <http://free-product-samples.blogspot.com>: This site offers a wide variety of freebies.

## AD FEEDBACK

Be sure to check the categories on the left of the page. Recent promotions included a free sample of Snuggle fabric softener, samples of Aveda Smooth Infu-

sion hair care products and free address labels from the National Foundation for Cancer.

— TheFreebieBlogger.com: Another excellent freebie-and-coupon spot. Categories include in-store and online freebies as well as rebates and contests/giveaways. Recent freebies included calendars, Fekkai Hairspray, Flexitol Heel Balm and books ("Compliance for Dummies").

— FreeGrabber.com: Another popular spot for freebie lovers. On a recent visit, freebies included samples of Rachael Ray's dog food, Overtime pain relief lotion and a cinnamon roll at Whataburger.

## SEARCH TERMS

As we all know, many searches yield a "grab bag" of results. You can improve things by putting quotes around your search terms, which tells the search engine to look for the specific phrase and nothing else. The phrases themselves should be those likely to be found in the text of your target resource.

Here are some of our favorite search terms for finding freebies. (Don't forget to include the quotes!):

- "for a free sample"
- "get your sample"
- "free trial size"

Bear in mind that these search terms won't eliminate dubious or out-of-date websites, but they will help narrow and shorten your search — leaving you extra time to enjoy those free samples!

Christine Durst and Michael Haaren are leaders in the work-at-home movement and advocates of de-rat-raced living. Their latest book is "Work at Home Now," a guide to finding home-based jobs. They offer additional guidance on finding home-based work at [www.RatRaceRebellion.com](http://www.RatRaceRebellion.com). To read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

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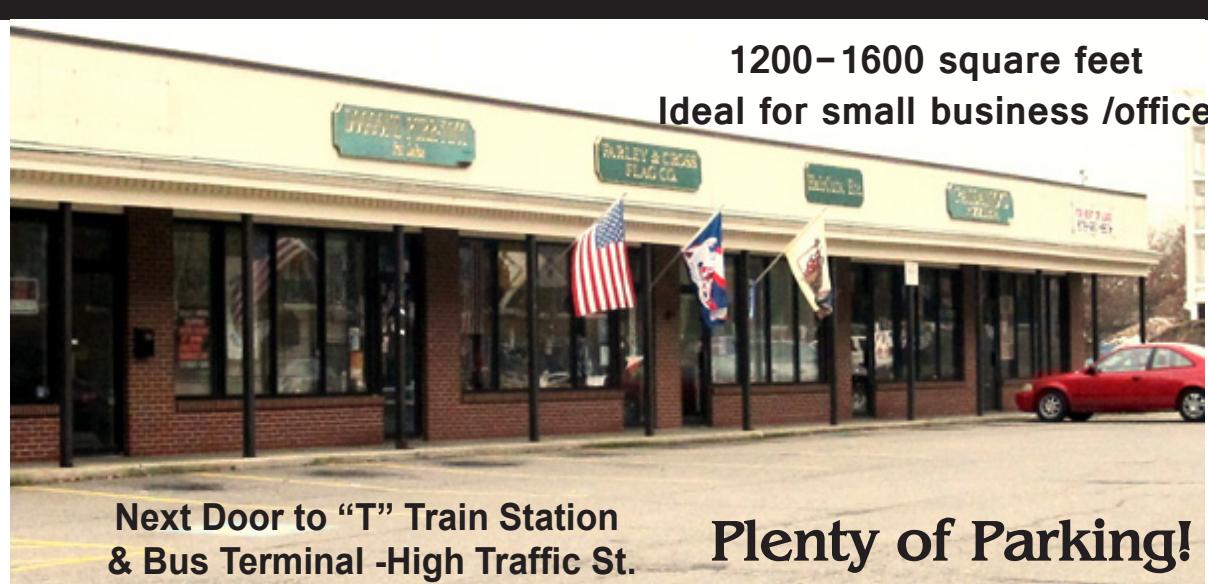
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# Liberals, I have Some Bad News for You There is no Government Santa Claus

**Doctor Chuck Ormsby**  
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR/COLUMNIST

There is a school of thought among psychiatrists that liberals suffer from a severe case of arrested development. The theory is that their parents routinely rewarded their temper tantrums by giving them whatever they demanded. Anything to make them shut up.

I can certainly sympathize with their parents' goal.

Unfortunately, as most rational adults are aware, capitulating to spoiled children merely teaches them that their irrational rants will be rewarded. If screaming doesn't get these brats what they want, they learn to just scream louder. If that doesn't work, pounding on the floor and holding their breath until their faces turns purple may bring the result they seek.

This problem, which we have all seen play out in miniature at our local grocery store, is now a massive societal problem that is threatening to bring the world to the brink of collapse.

How else can one explain the swan dive into insolvency by the PIIGS – Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain? Their history of deficit spending for the benefit of public employees, welfare recipients and union workers can only be described as irrational and suicidal.

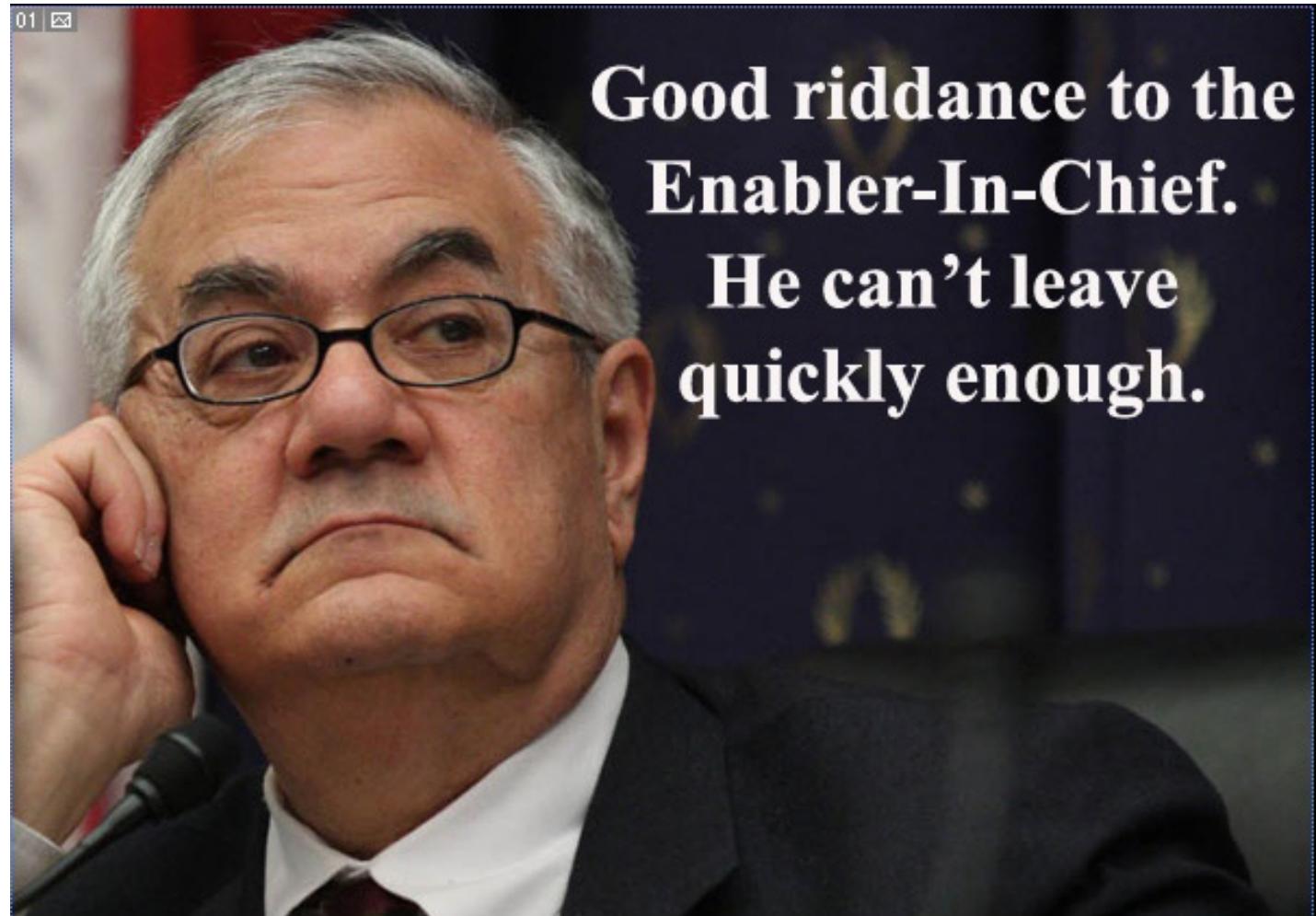
This problem is not confined to Europe. California is leading the way here in the U.S. and the federal government is following California over the cliff and dragging us with it.

California is our poster child for arrested development. Its tax burden, compounded by an onerous regulatory burden, is rapidly driving businesses out of the state, which in turn causes higher unemployment rates, lower wages and, as a consequence, reduced tax revenues.

California's financial situation is bleak. Its current debt, not counting future obligations, is over \$370 billion and just servicing this debt costs taxpayers over \$7 billion annually (8% of the state budget). Estimates of state revenues this year have recently dropped \$3.7 billion compared to projections made just a few months ago and those estimates were already nearly \$20 billion below the peak revenues in 2007-08.

California is only a step's throw from bankruptcy. Achieving junk bond status, just like the PIIGS, is probably the next step.

As Europe tilts towards economic collapse and California wallows in debt, our Congress has failed to meet a ridiculously easy target for deficit reduction. Cutting



\$1.2 trillion in the projected deficit over ten years represents less than a 10% cut in deficit spending. Most sensible people could meet that target over lunch.

Obama blames the Republicans for being obstructionists, even though ALL of the plans for significantly reducing spending have been proposed by (and in some cases passed by) the Republicans. It is the Democrats who have routinely blocked these measures so they can continue to funnel tax money to their constituencies: public employees, the poverty lobby, unions, and the radical environmentalists.

The present is bleak but the future is even bleaker if government spending is not radically curbed.

So, what is the reaction of those who feed at the government trough when told that the government is bankrupt and their bloated paychecks, pensions, and benefits might need to be moderated?

They throw tantrums: Pathetic demonstrations, occupations, sit-ins, and riots. The only thing that they haven't tried is crying, holding their breath and turning purple.

These parasites are no better than ignorant children who have no clue why their mother won't buy them a new toy car or the latest doll that will pee on command.

They have no idea how to be productive because they never have been. They

don't appreciate that goods and services will only be produced if someone has a motivation to do so ... a motivation that is eliminated if their paychecks or those goods and services are routinely expropriated.

All the "gimme lobby" knows is that these goodies exist, and they want them. How did the wealth that they want to steal come into existence? These low-lifes not only have no idea, this question doesn't even occur to them.

They see it. They want it. To them, nothing else could possibly matter.

How does this state of mind differ from the red-faced three year old hanging by one arm from his mother and screaming bloody murder?

It doesn't.

You probably know the child who has learned that Santa Claus is fictitious but who continues to pretend he is real just so the Christmas presents keep on coming.

The same willful blindness is rampant among the leftist parasites. It doesn't matter what facts are spelled out to them regarding our debt, our deficits or the economic consequences of increased taxes and regulations.

The facts don't matter to parasites; they just want us to keep giving them what they want, or else. Or else they will riot, stop traffic, block shoppers at stores, or

pollute our city parks.

What the demonstrators deserve is our contempt. What they need is a big dose of tough love.

Let's get this straight. Parasites rarely benefit their hosts. If we had to choose between the current situation and not having them around at all, we would be better off without them. But those are not the only choices available to us.

A third choice is to convert them to productive citizens. This means eliminating the government Ponzi scheme that steals the property produced by our productive citizens and uses that property to purchase the votes of the parasites.

Think of it as putting pieces of coal in the Christmas stockings of lazy, insubordinate kids. It may lead to an uncomfortable moment, but ultimately it is good for them and for the rational adults that have to deal with them.

Everyone must eventually grow up and learn to be responsible and productive ... and finally realize that there is no Santa Claus.

Boo Hoo!

*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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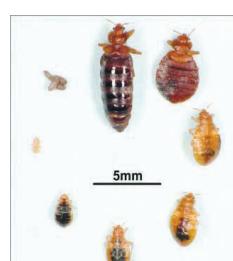
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# Controversy over Chris Allen's Meals Tax Campaigning

**Tom Duggan**

VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

North Andover School Committee Chairman Chris Allen thinks that the Merrimack Valley Tea Party and town activist Ted Tripp are "small minded" for opposing the proposed meals tax on the town meeting warrant last week.

She also believes, or at least says she believes, that they don't care about education and have denigrated teachers and educators in town.

So says Ted Tripp, a town resident who read an email she sent out by Allen to administrators and public school employees. The email was sent the day before Town Meeting was to vote on a proposed 0.75% meals tax on all prepared food sold in North Andover. (see email below).

Her email to the employees of the school system came just days after Superintendent Hottel sent home a letter with students advocating support of the meals tax on official stationary of the North Andover Public Schools, causing outrage in town.

Chairman Allen, who campaigned for the meals tax, is also being accused by Mr. Tripp of using school resources to affect the meals tax vote at Special Town meeting. He spoke during last week's

school committee meeting demanding an apology.

"Yesterday I got a flurry of phone calls and emails over a letter that was sent out this past Monday," Tripp said at the public meeting, while Chairman Allen disrespectfully sent out texts and played with her cell phone.

"It was apparently sent out from a town authorized email computer, or town authorized computer account. And I say that because, at the bottom it says: 'please note the Massachusetts Secretary of State's office has determined that most emails to and from municipal office officials are public records.'"

But Chairman Allen told the Valley Patriot that she did not use public resources to send the email and defended her statements, refusing to apologize to Tripp or those "like minded" people in town who opposed the tax. She also said in her written response to Valley Patriot inquiries that she intends to continue her activism for the schools.

Tripp also addressed Allen's claim that he doesn't care about education in town.

"I want to tell you a little bit about this 'small minded' person right here. I went to high school. I graduated valedictorian

of my class. I went onto MIT. I got on the dean's list my freshman year. I graduated with a bachelors in chemical engineering. I went on another year and got a masters degree in chemical engineering. Then I went to work. In my technical career I was co-inventor on four US patents. I have many foreign patents as well."

I presented technical papers in, Munich, London, Amsterdam, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Tokyo... for 20 years I gave continuing education courses using electronic accelerators for the instant polymerization of coatings and adhesives.

And why do I tell you this? Because I value education as much, if not more than everybody else in this room tonight. I also value great teachers, there's nothing like a terrific teacher in education.

Superintendent Hottel knows, since he started in North Andover. I have had discussion with him on how to further education in North Andover. We talked about when he first came, I said one of the things you can do is, let's get a course in Chinese. That's the future. We've talked about improving scores. I said let's have courses in Latin and Greek and, well, you came close this year to having courses in Latin. We've talked about improving



scores. There's nobody here who values education and teachers more than me.

So, I challenge Chairman Allen to prove, show proof somewhere that I wrote or I said #1 that all the money from that meals tax was going to go to the schools. I never said that and I never wrote it. #2 I never denigrated any teachers or any

**ALLEN: PAGE 8**

## Opponents Say Effort To Repeal Meals Tax is Likely

**Tom Duggan**

VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

A Special Town Meeting was held last month to revisit the idea of a .75% meals tax on restaurants. The measure was rejected by town meeting earlier this year by seven votes. This time around it passed by the exact same vote total. The vote was 253 votes in favor and 246 votes against.

North Andover Selectman Tracey Watson opposed the meals tax and spoke out against the measure, telling The Valley Patriot that she was disappointed. "Absolutely, utterly disappointed," she said shaking her head after the vote.

"[I'm] disappointed in the fact that we are taxing not only one population of our business community, but our most generous population of our business community. And it's disappointing..."

Watson said she was surprised by the vote total but says this is not the end of this fight in town.

"It lost by seven and now it [has] won by seven. It can be repealed in June. And I am sure that will happen. I am sure the opponents have a fire



in their belly to bring it (back up again)," she said.

"I personally, probably will support such an effort. I know what our restaurants do for this community. And they are the base of our business community so many people come to North Andover to go to our restaurants and in return shop in our shops. So it's very disappointing but Town meeting is democracy in its purist form and I love that! So you win some you lose some and this will not be the end of this

issue."

Anne Sarro, a North Andover resident spoke in favor of the meals tax. "I just want to ask one thing. Andover has a meals tax. Has there ever been a time when you thought about having dinner in Andover and you said 'I'm not going to go because they have a meals tax?' I doubt it."

Selectmen Chairman Rosemary Smedile opposed the tax. She told Town Meeting participants that "this is a tax on food. I don't think people understand this is a tax on food!"

After the meeting she agreed with

**TAX: PAGE 16**

## Activities From the North Andover Senior Center

A living will is a document that spells out your wishes for the kind of care you'll receive if you're not in a position to speak for yourself. A "durable power of attorney for health care" is a document that names a "healthy care proxy" – a person you choose to make health care decisions for you if you can no longer make them.

Your proxy can reinforce decisions already spelled out in your living will, or handle situations and decisions your living will doesn't address.

Together, your living will and durable power of attorney for health care are known as "advance directives." State laws vary, so be sure your documents and wishes are in line with your state's law. You may want to consult an attorney.

Though advanced directives typically deal with end-of-life decisions, you can make the directives – and change them – any time. They also can be used in non-life-or-death situations. For example, people who are diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer's disease are encouraged to create advanced directives for their care, in addition to legal documents that plan for their finances and estate.

GALA OF TREES: The Friends of the North Andover Senior Center present the Gala of Trees, November 14 – December 16. View trees from 8:30 – 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday @ the Senior Center. Drawing of prizes will be held at the

Selectmen's Breakfast on December 16. Tickets are available at the front desk.

SUPPER CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY:

Thursday, December 15, 4 p.m. to Village Inn Dracut, call reception to sign up.

SPECIAL SHOPPING TRIP: Monday, December 12, The Senior Center van will be going to Wal-Mart and Rockingham Mall at 12:30 p.m. You choose your destination! Call for pick up, \$4, round trip.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS NEW

PROGRAM: GIRL TALK with Lu, starts January 11, 2012, 12:30-1:30, no fee, call to sign up.

STRESS RELIEF: Wednesdays from 2-4 pm, 20 minute sessions with Miriam Smith, Pranic Healer. \$5 donation to the Senior Center.

FOOT CARE SCHEDULE CHANGE: Dr. Connolly is scheduled to see clients on the 2nd Wednesday of every month starting September 14 from 1 – 4 pm by appointment only; \$30 fee.

SHINE VOLUNTEERS offer

free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to North Andover residents on Medicare. Call the North Andover Senior Center and ask for a SHINE appointment, (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders).

FOXWOODS: Next scheduled trip, Tuesday, January 17, \$25 includes lunch buffet, transportation and Keno. Bus leaves from St. Michael's parking lot at 6:30 am.

THE FIX – IT SHOP: (New Hours) The first and third Monday of the month from 12-3. We repair almost as good as new. Lamps with cords and sockets, replace watch batteries, small tables and chairs.

Anything not listed; we will give it a shot! Your cost is \$2 - \$4 depending on work needed, plus parts. Proceeds benefit the Senior Center. If there is a Monday Holiday please call the Center for the date change.

BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS: Thursday mornings by individual 45 minute appointments. \$7 and sign up is required. You will learn how to set up email and search the internet and more.

NEW BASIC 1 and BASIC 2 COMPUTER CLASSES are being formed now. Small classes of 4 students, four weeks long, Tuesday a.m. and Thursday p.m. Cost is \$25, sign up required.

**ZUMBA WITH TALLIE!**

Mon 3:30-4:30 Zumba Basic (Mary), Wed 3-3:45 Zumba Gold w/Tallie, Wed 4-5 Zumba Fitness w/ Tallie, Thu 4:30-5:30 Zumba Fitness w/ Tallie, Sat 9:30-10:30am Zumba Fitness w/ Mary.

## North Andover Fire Dept. 3rd Annual Toy Drive

It's that time of year again! Matt Davis of the North Andover Fire Department is hosting his 3rd annual toy drive for the children of Massachusetts in collaboration with the "Toys for Local Children" organization located in Somerville MA.

Toys for Local Children also known as TLC is a local charity aimed at supporting local families to help make their holiday dreams come true.

This organization prides itself on being able to keep all the toys within Massachusetts. TLC has paired up with several Fire Departments north of Boston to help with their campaign. Some of the towns participating are North Andover, Billerica, Bedford, Chelmsford, Stoneham & Tewksbury.

As for North Andover, Davis has been organizing this event within town for the past two years.

Each year Davis is thrilled to see how many people come to the Station

and drop off donations.

He stated last year they donated almost ten huge bags full of toys. He was really excited last year; the fire department was able to donate some toys to a family in North Andover.

Davis has reached out to the local housing departments in hopes of being able to donate to even more families that may be in need within North Andover. "Neighbors helping Neighbors builds a Community", stated Davis and he hopes that this toy drive will be able to make many residents holiday a very happy and joyous event.

If you are interested in donating, please bring an unwrapped toy, to either of the North Andover stations and there will be a drop off box in the lobby.

Toys needed are for all ages, girls and boys, from infants to teens. Toys will be collected until December 23, 2011.

Cost to Comply with FOI Request by Tom Duggan						
Project Component	Personnel	Salary	Hrs	Hr Rate	Time	Cost Notes
Retrieval of Emails	IT Administrator	\$90,000	2080	43.26923	12	\$519
Printing	Secretary					\$450 4500 pages at \$10 per page
Review	Superintendent	\$170,000	2080	81.73077	75	\$6,130 1 minute per communication
Total						\$7,099

## Hottel Tries to Charge \$7,099 for Public Documents

Pennie Hae

VALLEY PATRIOT POLITICAL COLUMNIST

North Andover School Superintendent Christopher Hottel handed The Valley Patriot a bill for \$7,099 to fill a freedom of information request last month.

The Valley Patriot had requested copies of all emails, sent and received by members of the school committee and the superintendent covering a 30 day period just prior to and after the Special Town Meeting on proposed the meals tax.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, public documents must be handed over within ten days of the request and cost cannot be used as a prohibition for access to public documents.

Superintendent Hottel, who already makes more than \$170,000 a year from the North Andover taxpayers billed the Valley Patriot \$6,130 for his time to per-

sonally go through each and every email to make sure no information was being revealed about specific student, current lawsuits and other information not covered under Freedom of Information.

Hottel also tried to charge the Valley Patriot \$519 for the time it would take a computer administrator to retrieve the emails from the school department server. The School Administrator's name was not listed on the bill but his yearly salary was listed at \$90,000.

Claiming that he feared the emails we would obtain would end up getting forwarded out again over the internet Hottel said he didn't want to supply the emails electronically, (on a disk or usb port) giving him the leeway to charge the Valley Patriot \$450 to print out 4,500 emails each on a separate piece of paper.

"This is clearly a violation of the letter

**HOTTEL: PAGE 38**

## CHRIS ALLEN: FROM PAGE 7

educators in the system. I would never do that. I may argue with you on policy. I may argue with you on money. But I would never denigrate the teachers here.

So, I challenge you, and if you can't show any proof, and I know you can't, I expect a public apology number one. And I expect you to send to your email list here, an apology as well to all those people saying you were wrong, and you apologize because your remarks were incorrect. Finally, I just so want you to know tomorrow I am filing a freedom of information act. I want the original of this and anything that went out on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday... and a list of all the recipients it went to because this is public information. I want from a school computer it's all public information and I am going to get that and then I will share that with the press."

Allen's Response

Chairman Allen says she her email comments about Trip prior to Special Town Meeting were in response to an email sent out by Tripp to his "Tea Party Constituents".

"During public comment at our School Committee meeting on November 17, Tedd Tripp came before the board in a highly emotional state relating to an email I sent out just prior to Special Town meeting," her response reads.

"I confess to being forced into a defensive state just prior to town meeting when I read an email from Ted to Tea Party constituents which referred to the Town Meeting Warrant Article #9 related to the Local Option Meals Excise Tax and claimed that:

"The schools are already salivating at the prospect of this extra money. As a matter of fact, the superintendent of schools sent home in the backpack of every student a notice about the meeting and

how great this would benefit the schools if it passes. While technically not illegal because he doesn't come right out and ask for a "yes" vote on this article, you can see he is advocating for the parents to get to town meeting and support it. That's why, as Tea Party advocates, we must stop these kinds of games by "big government" people who ALWAYS, ALWAYS want more of our money. There is no end to it. WE MUST JUST KEEP TELLING THEM NO!!!! Please take the time to come to town meeting on Tuesday evening and vote NO (HELL NO!) on the meals tax."

As Chair of the School Committee, I took this language as a disparagement of our school employees. I was further concerned about the language that was used in targeted phone calls to citizens, at least one of which made all kinds of untrue and inflammatory statements about our schools, such as that "test scores are low" and "not many kids go on to college." In fact, our schools have been cited this year by many media outlets for outstanding test results and 93% of our students proceed directly to college after graduating from North Andover High School.

My letter was thus intended to refer not to Mr. Tripp alone, but, as I said, to a "politically motivated group" that disseminated these inflammatory statements.

Some facts: I never said Mr. Tripp was anti-education. I used publicly available voter lists, cross referenced to publicly available town reports of North Andover employees. I have lived in town for over 27 years so I also know a lot of folks. I did not use a school computer. The phone call referenced was very real, was documented, and the person who made the call is known. As chair of the North

**From:** Allen, Chris  
**To:** Allen, Chris  
**Bcc:** Abernathy, Talle; Africano, Jennifer; Amor, Cynthia; Ando, Guy; Angelo, Kimberly; Armano, Lorraine; Armstrong, Donna; Baker, Kathy; Barczak, Cheryl; Baron, Melissa; Bate, Anne; Bayles, Susan; Boshac, Nancy; Boucher, Francine; Boudreau, Ann; Boulier, Katie; Branca, Carrie; Brennan, John; Broderick, Jane; Buchta, Caroline; Burbank, Dana; Burdick, Kimberly; Burns, Ginny; Callaway, Deb; Caputo, Denise; Carney, Kaitrina; Caron, Jeannie; Carroll, Nancy; Casaleto, Denise; Caterino, Julie; Chandler, Nancy; Cheverie, Deborah; Chisholm, Elise; Connolly, Linda; Connolly, Ryan; Crosby, Lynn; Cudlin, Linda; Dalinowski, Cathy; Daley, Debra; Devine, Rosemary; Dirksen, Sheila; Dolan, Colleen; Donnigan, Barbara Ann; Donegan, Jeanne; Downey, Maurice; Dragoitis, Donna; Dunbar, Kristin; Durand, Catherine; Durkin, Kimberly; Ebert, Marianne; Edwards, Karen; Ensign, Michelle; Eraso, Laura; Faro, Marie; Farrow, Judith; Finneran, Ellen; Flanagan, Caitlin; Fleming, Donna; Foote, Linda; Foster, Edie; Foster, Sarah; Foulds, Virginia; Francoeur, Susan; Freddo, Martha; Fuller, Susan; Gaede, Christine; Gaffey, Janet; Gaffey, Susan; Gagne, Patricia; Galante, Richard; Giard, Kathleen; Gilligan, Gregg; Green, John; Hadjian, May; Hall, Tracey; Hebert, Ashley  
**Subject:** Special Town Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, November 14, 2011 10:22:23 AM  
**Importance:** High

Hello,

Do you know Ted Tripp? Well, he thinks he knows you. Over the weekend he sent out messages via his Tea Party pals, by email and phone, objecting to the passage of Article 9, the local options meal tax. Why? Because, says he, all the money would go to the schools. In a phone call on Saturday, a like-minded person said, "the tax will all go to the schools who cannot seem to balance their budget" "The schools have enough for what they have to do and are not doing a good job teaching the kids today". "Poor test scores" were cited, and "not many kids go on to college".

You and I know that these statements are not true, and I very much want to believe that most of North Andover supports successful schools. It is very discouraging to have our teachers, custodians, nurses, food service staff, paraprofessionals, assistants, and all who are dedicated to serving our students, disparaged by a politically motivated group of small minded and misinformed folk. You don't deserve it, and neither do our students.

Please help me help you, and show your support for the North Andover Schools, and all of North Andover's public employees. Please attend this Tuesday's Special Town Meeting, November 15, 7pm at the High School. The meeting will be short, and I ask that you please stay for all nine articles. For more information on the warrant, please visit:

<http://www.northandoverpublicschools.com/>  
<http://www.townofnorthandover.com/Pages/index>

Thank you for all that you do,

Chris Allen

Andover School Committee I was elected to advocate for our public schools. I will continue to do so."

Working together?

While opponents of the meals tax have complained loudly that Chairman Allen and Superintendent Hottel have been working together behind the scenes to politic for the meals tax, an email from Allen to The Valley Patriot seem to confirm that claim.

While awaiting a written response from Allen to Valley Patriot inquiries on the issue, Allen explained the short delay in her response in an email stating the following:

"Any statement I make to any publication must be run by Mr. Hottel first

(standing instructions) so I am waiting for his reply. He is generally very prompt. ~ C. Allen

When pressed about why an elected member of the School Committee would need permission from a subordinate (the Superintendent works for the committee) and whether this was a standing policy of the committee, she responded saying:

"No, not a policy, just a curtesy between chair and super. He always extends me the same, kind of the "no surprise" rule. I realized this doesn't happen with other school committees."

To respond to this story or send us a new tip you can Email the Valley Patriot at [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com)

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Trucks from Castricone Construction seen outside the home of School Committee Chairman Chris Allen. Above Right workers for Dave Castricone begin work on Allen's Belmont Street home. Mr. Castricone was seen coming and going from the property while work was being done.

## Valley Patriot On-line Breaks Castricone Story, Allens Attack Selectman

Last month, The Valley Patriot received several calls from North Andover residents saying that they had seen former high school wrestling coach Dave Castricone coming and going from School Committee Chair Chris Allen's Belmont St. home. Others called to report that the Allens had hired Castricone Construction to do repair work on their roof.

Castricone is awaiting trial on child porn charges and was video-taped coming and going from the girls locker room at North Andover High School.

It wasn't long before Valley Patriot volunteer news spotters in town began emailing in photos of Castricone's crew doing work on the Allen's home.

The story was posted on The Valley Patriot's Facebook pages along with the photos sent to us by readers. This touched off a debate about Mr. Castricone's presumption of innocence (he has not yet been convicted of anything) as well as criticism of the Allens for bad judgment, given the seriousness of the allegations and her role on the school committee when the incidents occurred.

But the firestorm that ensued was nothing anyone could have predicted. Allen's husband appeared at the next Board of Selectman meeting taking time away from important town business to complain about

the coverage the story had received. He also accused Selectman Tracy Watson of "orchestrating" a news story for "political reasons".

At first he cast his accusations against "members of the board" but Watson pushed him to name names leading to him pointing the finger at her and Selectmen Rosemary Smedile.

"They dispatched photographers to my home, my home," Larry Allen said incensed, knowing nothing of how the Valley Patriot obtained the news story or where we had obtained the photos.

Larry Allen, then detailed the amount of pain the story had caused his family and painted themselves as victims of a political conspiracy.

And while he took responsibility for hiring Castricone saying he had called four other contractors to fix a leaky roof and that Mr. Castricone was the only had contractor available, he also continually denied that anyone should take objection to his actions.

He also put forth his belief that the media story was really nothing more than "local man hires local contractor".

Email us your thoughts on this story at [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com) and we will print them next month.

## An Open Letter to all Lawrencians

**Bob O'Koniewski**

VALLEY PATRIOT POLITICAL COLUMNIST

Dear Fellow Lawrencians,

We now have entered the twenty-fourth month of the Lantigua administration, and I am curious to know what the citizens of our fine city think of the current state of the community.

Other than the hubbub emerging from the recall movement, it is difficult to decipher the silence that greets each and every mayoral transgression. Are people happy with the mayor's shenanigans? Or, is the silence an indicator of a deeply set apathy that no violation against common sense or human decency can budge to the point of at least a whimper of upset or outrage? A review of the various indices by which we judge our quality of life point in a steady downward direction, yet are the home owning taxpayers the only ones who care and, but for the resultant crash in home values, cannot get out fast enough?

From its onset the Lantigua administration was beset with controversy, as the mayor attempted to hold two elected jobs simultaneously with their dual paychecks, of course. To make matters worse, the arrogance of the double dipping came amid the legislative creation of a city overseer and a \$35 million bailout, all set against the backdrop of a newly renovated mayoral suite with \$10,000 curtains, a cost almost as much as the per capita income in many of the city's households.

Somewhere into the opening act, some Mensa types came up with the bright idea to take a cleaver to our police department's budget, with the imprimatur and acquiescence of the sheep on the city council led by council president Frank Moran and budget committee chairman Dan Rivera.

If there is one community that requires a fully financed and staffed police force, that community would be Lawrence. The immediate result of the incompetence inflicted by the tremulous troika of Lantigua, Moran, and Rivera and all the gains

achieved by eight years of Police Chief John Romero's aggressive crime fighting initiatives were wiped out completely. Car thefts – up. Home break-ins – up. Drug dealings – up. Domestic violence – up. Street crimes – up. Gang activity – up. Violent crimes against the person – up. And just this week we suffered our ninth murder of 2011, an execution slaying in the middle of the day one block from City Hall.

Within the administration itself, the mayor has taken his sweet time filling key slots and almost never with a qualified individual. Just choose a position – deputy police chief, personnel director, economic development director, recycling director – and the mayor has filled the position with a campaign hack whose only qualifications seem to be the ability to say "Yes, sir, Mr. Mayor, sir." No worldwide search needed in Lawrence to find the best for a challenged community. Instead, the nod goes to the uneducated, the unqualified, and the incompetent.

In a city of over 20% unemployment, one would think there would be some shout-out to urban economic experts and planners. Not in Lawrence. What qualifies for economic development are night clubs, cash wiring services, all-night barber shops, and downtown parking meters that have essentially driven people out of the area. What are they going to roll out next? Tolls on the bridges? Taxes on "For Sale" signs and New Hampshire license plates? And again, where is the city council? Meek sheep simply following willingly their shepherd, the mayor.

And now this past week the other shoe has dropped. The state education department has voted to take over the city's schools. As much as the mayor tries to shine the pile of manure that the bad PR state receivership brings, saying that he was the one who wanted it and asked for it, it was already a done deal. He was told it was happening, with him or without. The mayor is trying to save face by jumping in front of the parade. If that makes

**LETTER: PAGE 32**

## Lawrence Schools: Playing the Blame Game

**Jamison Tomasek**

VALLEY PATRIOT POLITICAL COLUMNIST

The takeover of the failing Lawrence Public Schools by the state was a long time coming. While some decry the loss of representation with the end of the School Committee, the rights of the people who pay the bills (as most know, 100% of the LPS budget comes from state funding) will now be represented. Some examination of everyone involved is necessary in case history repeats itself. After all, the state has stepped in before to help and it didn't stick, and also helped choose the last two superintendents (and they didn't stick either!).

The Mayor greased the inevitable slide of the LPS into the state's hands with his actions right from the beginning. In the SC meetings (by city charter he is the chair) he exercised no leadership, demanded no improvements, and offered no vision or even viewpoint as to what needed to be done to improve the schools. Long rambling pointless monologues of thirty minutes or more. "Good things going on here" comments. Not initiating a superintendent search committee was a signal that he wanted to keep acting/interim/assistant Superintendent Bergeron, possibly seeing if she would "play ball" with him. No wonder the SC tacked this

way and that as they tried to see which way the wind was blowing (with the exception of Mark "6 to 1" Gray). When the Mayor turned on Bergeron, it has to be with the assumption that he was looking for a replacement willing to swap a few school buses for four high mileage Chevy Impalas. When that didn't go his way state government friends (a.k.a. people who owe him) took the LPS off his hands, and now he has one less thing to annoy him and impact his free time.

In the beginning the School Committee was trying to read the mayor intentions. Then they were just confused (because he's not readable!). There must be people living in Lawrence who could have done a better job, but they are not willing or able to step up. In recent years across the country there have been problems with urban school committees/boards. In the 90's both Boston and Chicago replaced dysfunctional elected school boards with ones appointed by their mayors (imagine that in Lawrence!), so maybe this was never fixable.

At the end Bergeron was the darling of some and viewed as the potential savior of the situation, except that she had been Laboy's #2, a top administrator all the time the schools were moving downward, then had a chance and showed no leadership. As for the teachers, you can tell some are great and others seem really questionable. They probably are all over

the place. The state has the power to act aggressively with regards to work rules and fire teachers as well as make them work harder. What some would suggest are incentives for exceptional teachers to come to Lawrence. Research shows great teachers improve students, no matter what the circumstances.

Some Lawrence parents are great. It appears that many of them are not. In the whole "city of immigrants" storyline, how is it that Southeast Asians arriving in the 70's produced children who would win spelling bees, yet more recent immigrants' children are classified "English not a first language" and that is used as a reason for failure? Why are kids at Lawrence charter and private schools doing great? Stories about lack of parental involvement (or even concern) are everywhere in Lawrence. As far as the kids, someone has to make it clear that they need to try harder because it's not going to happen for them otherwise. Other people who should catch blame as well: State officials and State legislators who claim to care about schools, kids and education, but did nothing about LPS' problems. So let's hope the state educational officials now show leadership and a commitment to success. If they can get the schools improving, not only is that a benefit to the kids, but home values in the city should start to move upward as well.

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# Getting to Know Methuen's Mayor Elect Stephen N. Zanni

**Diana Fay DiZoglio**  
VALLEY PATRIOT METHUEN REPORTER

After months of campaigning and weeks of patiently awaiting the results of a recount, Mayor Elect Zanni and his supporters are finally at ease. Mr. Zanni told the Valley Patriot about his goals as future Methuen Mayor and Chairman of the School Committee.

#### The Recount

"The recount is over. It's only been a couple of days, of course, but I am glad to bring it to close and glad that the system works. The recount was handled very well and very professionally. It shows that the integrity of the system does work," stated Zanni.

The vote was nearly divided between Mayor Elect Zanni and his opponent Al DiNuccio. Naturally many wonder how the soon to be mayor will handle a split-vote constituency. When the Valley Patriot asked for his thoughts on this, Zanni expressed his hope that people will see what he is trying to accomplish, and that he is accountable to the people.

"We really worked hard. I think that our message really resonates with the residents. I want to be a mayor that this city is going to be proud of. I am not going to be in the office every day. I am going to be out and about in the community, seeing

what's going on, and interacting with people", said the Mayor Elect. "There are all kinds of comments out there already but the end result is that I want them to be able to see me. If they have a question, I have an open door policy. I will have a very user friendly office," he added.

#### On Bringing Change

"I plan on having weekly department head meetings. Hopefully we

can work together to solve problems that arise in the community. Each department is different but one may have an answer for another and we work collectively to problem solve. I think that is important," stated Zanni.

"I believe it is really important that the mayor and city councilors have a good



working relationship. I plan to meet with each city councilor separately. It will give me a good chance to see what their particular needs are," added Zanni.

#### Zanni's Top Goals:

"My intention is not to raise taxes while maintaining services," said Zanni. Where possible, Zanni suggests

consolidation, regionalization and privatization. "It will all depend on what makes the most sense. If we can do these things while not impacting our services, we can save money," he added.

"The other way in which we are going to help the tax base is by improving the business climate. I am going to form an

economic council or a jobs council that will meet quarterly. The purpose of meeting quarterly is not just to know how their business is going. It is also to determine if they want to expand, or if they know about other businesses that are interested in coming to Methuen. I think if we have a way of looking at the permit process, to see if there are ways to give some tax incentives to new companies, we can increase our tax base", he stated.

The Mayor Elect then continued on to discuss public safety in Methuen. "Make the city more proactive instead of reactive", said Zanni. He said one of the things that will help to increase public safety is "meeting with the department heads, like the police and fire chiefs, to really start to develop working relationships. I think that both departments are sufficient in numbers at this point. Especially in these tough economic times, I don't see us adding more but rather working with what we have—while maintaining service."

"These are just some of my priorities", he added.

"Another priority of course is the high school. I want to make sure that the high school gets completed on time and within the budget. I am looking forward to working with the superintendent and each of the school committee members."

**ZANNI, PAGE 27**

## Christmas Tree Lighting

**Diana Fay DiZoglio**  
VALLEY PATRIOT METHUEN REPORTER

Methuen's Annual Christmas Tree Lighting was filled with happy-faced children; proud parents with cameras and, of course, Santa. Amidst the songs being sung by the children's choir, Mayor Bill Manzi stated, "It was a great night tonight; big crowd and a beautiful night for Santa. The kids are having a ball! This is one of the fun things about being Mayor. We are very happy that it went so well tonight."

One Proud Mom, Kayla Rivera of Methuen, watched lovingly as her daughters performed some Christmas favorites with their peers. Lindsay Waller of Methuen was there with her sister and niece. She stated, "I love it! It's a gorgeous night. I am seeing everybody from high school. People in the community, including the city councilors, are here. It's great that everybody can be out together this time of the year."

Among the laughter and celebration, City Councilor at Large Jennifer Aziz-Kannan stated, "We want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas! We are watching Santa. As we watch the tree, we have disk jockeys, hot chocolate and cookies, and a ton of families here. Merry Christmas to everybody!"

East District Councilor Ron Marsan

stated, "What a great turnout. There's an amazing amount of people here. Everybody is having a good time with the Heavenly Donut's hot chocolate. It's just a good time for all here tonight."

"Methuen's tree lighting was fantastic as always. It's great to see kid's faces as Santa arrives. Hats off to Jill Stackelin who does a great job organizing events for our great city," said Central District Councilor Jaime Atkinson.

East District Councilor Tom Ciulla stated, "It was really great to see people from surrounding communities get together. There were families and various groups coming together for a good cause. You don't see many events that bring people together like this. It really is the pride of Methuen."

During the holiday season, Methuen offers many other opportunities to spread cheer around the community. The Festival of Trees, for example, is one of Methuen's beloved events where trees are raffled off to fund community projects. Many people from all over the Merrimack Valley come to Methuen to participate in these and more exciting traditions.

The Methuen's Annual Tree Lighting is organized by Jill Stackelin. The Valley Patriot commends Jill and all of the volunteers for making this tremendous community gathering possible.

## Thank you for Your Trust!

**Ken Willette, Jr.**

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Dear Methuen Voters:

As I finish up my sixth year of public service on the Methuen School Committee, I will be forever appreciative of the important trust you have given me to serve your taxpayer interests. Working with some dedicated and articulate colleagues over the years, I have been able to successfully enact a number of reform measures designed to strengthen residency enforcement, augment public safety, expand transparency and public participation, and engage the various unions in thoughtful and constructive dialogue over meaningful concessions.

As the co-creator of the residency enforcement policy in the Methuen Public Schools, along with my recently re-elected colleague Evan Chaisson, we have been able to remove at least 150 students who were illegally attending our public schools but residing outside of Methuen. Since the implementation of the most comprehensive and most effective residency enforcement policy in our school district's history, I have been very impressed that the superintendent, the principals and administrators, the teachers and school resource officers, the staff and parents have collectively adopted the full spirit of the new policy by sending warning notices to parents and guardians,

following up on informative tips left on the special hotline, visiting homes and bus stops and essentially having zero tolerance for people attending here illegally.

Please note that the fight still goes on as we speak, especially as certain families will utilize devious methods to attend our school system. I am confident that the superintendent and the newly elected school committee will remain vigilant on this front. I also sponsored a policy that banned future school admissions simply because a parent or guardian worked in the system yet resided outside of Methuen. When I returned back to the school committee, the school system approved 19 new admissions in the previous school year because parents worked in the system and lived outside our community. That almost encompassed an entire classroom. My policy proposal was approved unanimously, thus gradually freeing up classroom space.

I was also concerned about the lack of transparency during certain school committee workshops. I made a motion, which was approved unanimously, to ensure that all school committee meetings (both regular and workshop) were conducted in the Great Hall and were televised. Many of my colleagues also advocated for greater public participation, and I was proud to join their efforts.

**WILLETTE, PAGE 38**

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# Random Thoughts with Ronnie Ford

Ronnie Ford

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

Let's go to Methuen, you know the place. Some nitwit talk show host from Boston refers to Methuen as Lawrence with trees! The Methuen council is shaping its composition right now. It isn't complete yet, but whose friend is whose friend? That is the question.

The new Chairperson will be Jennifer Kannan. Backing her up is long time government servant and politico Joyce Campagone as Vice-chairperson. Imagine that! Two women bossing males around! They will probably do a good job, but can the council unite and work together? Jeannie Pappalardo can offer some pretty decent legislation but she lacks her past allies, Larry Giordano, Pat Ulliano and Phil Lahey. I am certain things will be cool at least for some time. The trick is to keep it that way.

Now for Mr. Personality, Steve Zanni. This guy is one of a kind, who has to be introduced to Dale Carnegie. However, I don't think he is dishonest. I think he is interested in making Methuen a better place to live and work. I feel he can do a commendable job. He will of course need his council and school committee to feed ideas and take actions that will result in a better community. As I look at the council there is enough grey matter (brains) to do the job and do it well.

"Hell is empty and all the devils are here" William Shakespeare

No prayer in schools, trying to take "under God" out of the Pledge of Allegiance, No Christmas tree, No Nativity Scene, Santa Claus, they are still working on, (St. Nicholas) don't you know, most of the local, state and federal people who are elected to do the people's business, doing everything to line their own pockets, and forgetting who put them there.

The news media which is owned by powerful corporations who are so liberal it makes your stomach burp. Corrupt people who are lobbyists, officials who

are PLACED in high positions by the president. The drug dealers, pedophiles, cheats in every walk of life, and last but by no means least, the Congress, both Democrats and Republicans who refuse to work together to get this country back on track. The illegal aliens who run across our boarders with no restraint, and bleed us dry and no one stops them.

Those who refuse to work and do their share, who sit back and take welfare rather than contribute, those who refuse to take responsibility for their actions. And, those in the entertainment world, who think because they have made big bucks on their so called talent, have the intelligence to tell us who to vote for, get up on their soap box and extol some nut case that wants to get in on the goodie train.

If you do not vote, (legally) you are part of the problem. If you sit back and say and do nothing when you see a wrong being done, you are part of the problem. The economy, lack of jobs, banks, foreclosures, are in the septic system due to all of the above.

And while all this is going on, the president traverses the earth making a complete fool of himself and us. We need to get rid of all these demi-gods in office and demand term limits. Otherwise, the America the majority of us know and love will be unrecognizable.

"We are each our own devil and we make this world our Hell" William Shakespeare.

Calling an illegal alien an undocumented immigrant is like calling a drug dealer an un-licensed pharmacist. Wake up America! Get informed, get involved.

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year!

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

Ronnie may be reached at radiotalk@comcast.net



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## The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

### Merry Christmas 'Nollaig Shona Duit'

Jack Doyle, County Sligo

VALLEY PATRIOT IRISH COLUMNIST

Ireland, like most countries, has a number of Christmas traditions that are all of its own. Many of these customs have their root in the time when the Gaelic culture and religion of the country were being suppressed and it is perhaps because of that they have survived into modern times.

#### THE CANDLE IN THE WINDOW

The placing of a lighted candle in the window of a house on Christmas eve is still practiced today. It has a number of purposes but primarily it was a symbol of welcome to Mary and Joseph as they traveled looking for shelter.

The candle also indicated a safe place for priests to perform mass as, during Penal Times this was not allowed.

A further element of the tradition is that the candle should be lit by the youngest member of the household and only be extinguished by a girl bearing the name 'Mary'.

**THE LADEN TABLE:** After evening meal on Christmas eve the kitchen table was again set and on it were placed a loaf of bread filled with caraway seeds and raisins, a pitcher of milk and a large lit candle. The door to the house was left unlatched so that Mary and Joseph, or any wandering traveler, could avail of the welcome.

#### THE WREN BOY PROCESSION

During Penal Times there was once a plot in a village against the local soldiers. They were surrounded and were about to be ambushed when a group of wrens pecked on their drums and awakened the



soldiers. The plot failed and the wren became known as 'The Devil's bird'.

On St. Stephens day a procession takes place where a pole with a holly bush is carried from house to house and families dress up in old clothes and with blackened faces. In olden times an actual wren would be killed and placed on top of the pole.

This custom has to a large degree disappeared but the tradition of visiting from house to house on St. Stephens Day has survived and is very much part of Christ-

mas.

**DECORATIONS:** The placing of a ring of Holly on doors originated in Ireland as Holly was one of the main plants that flourished at Christmas time and which gave the poor ample means with which to decorate their dwellings.

All decorations are traditionally taken down on Little Christmas (January 6th.) and it is considered to be bad luck to take them down beforehand.

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#### An Irish Christmas Blessing

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

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## Martha, Martha, Martha... 3 DWI's

**Lonnie Brennan**

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

While the local papers detailed multiple articles regarding the most recent incident of Georgetown Housing Authority Member Martha Robertson, the chatter around town about this, and other elected and appointed officials, has been deafening.

One person said it best 'thank God it was a tree she hit, and not a child.'

You see, for those few who might not have heard, Ms. Robertson is an elected official in the Town of Georgetown, now with her third drunk driving arrest (convicted twice in the past), as detailed in the local papers.

This time, it was just before 12:30 in the afternoon, and on school grounds at Triton Regional.

Stop, and pray for her, now. Pray that she wakes up, dries out, and gets her life together. And resigns.

Yes, just when you thought that perhaps things were settled down at the Housing Authority (see below), where Ms. Robertson has served as chairperson on/off for many years (because, as she explained at one meeting, she gets along with Housing Director Diane Jodoin, while some of the previous members have not), and as the major defender of Ms. Jodoin in all activities (see below), we're back looking at the Housing Authority again. Ugh!

Yes, most of us have seen it on Channel 9, and certainly suspected it, but few have smelt it up close and personal. At least one member did, and went to the police station following a meeting to have a chat about it, concerned that on her way home someday, Ms. Robertson might present a danger.

'She stunk to high heaven, you could smell it', the former board member confidentially related. 'I was afraid she was going to hurt someone.'

Unfortunately, an elected official under the influence of alcohol and/or prescription medication is not unusual, and doesn't appear to be illegal in certain circumstances; just stupid.



History Re-Cap: Some might remember Ms. Robertson for her ardent support of director Jodoin who came under fire a few years back for a series of activities. Ms. Robertson was instrumental in more than one meeting to keep Ms. Jodoin protected, and at the helm. For years, despite objections by one lone board member, Ms. Robertson (who lives in a state-subsidized 3-bedroom condo-like apartment at the Housing Authority's 99 Jewett Street location, with her adult children), allowed the director to use a rubber stamp to affix Ms. Robertson's name on checks.

It took that sole board member four years to finally get the attention of the State Department of Housing and Community Development, which put an abrupt end to the rubber stamp usage, detailing in writing the inappropriate methods being used by Ms. Robertson and Ms. Jodoin.

Ms. Robertson has supported director Jodoin to the max. That support included not allowing discussions and entry of agenda items from individual members who conflicted with Ms. Jodoin. Ms. Robertson also affixing her signature on several letters to previous board members in a series of blasts which served to divert, delay, and ultimately prevent the calling of a requested executive session to discuss the director's performance.

Yes, not that long ago, Housing Authority board meetings degenerated to a carnival atmosphere when the meetings suddenly became stacked with partisan heckling, and it became more than obvious that frustrations were boiling over on all sides. It became 'the best show in town' on Channel 9.

Despite Ms. Robertson's efforts in support of Ms. Jodoin, the state eventually stepped in and gave the director a 17 week paid leave (vacation), as they imposed a cooling off period. Ms. Jodoin was then re-instated to her 27 hour per week (parent flex schedule), \$42,000 per year position, with mileage perks.

The big question: will Georgetown re-elect a (three-time) drunkard this spring?

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*Dr. Michael Provenzano*

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## Haverhill Bank Sponsors Redesign of Santa Float

A walking Christmas tree and a somersaulting Frosty the Snowman were among the nearly 25 elves and other Christmas characters that escorted Santa into Haverhill during the 47th annual VFW Santa Parade last Sunday.

Santa arrived on a newly designed float, complete with flying reindeer and a golden crescent moon that arched over his sleigh. The float also displayed replicas of Haverhill's Cultural Treasures: The Buttonwoods Museum, Tattersall Farm, Whittier's Birthplace, Winnekenni Castle and the Firefighting Museum. Creative Haverhill and Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School, in addition to an architect and designer, completely revamped the float. Haverhill Bank sponsored the redesign.

"Haverhill Bank is pleased to provide the support that allowed the committee to revamp the Santa Float," said Haverhill Bank President and CEO Thomas L. Mortimer. "The

parade is such a part of Haverhill's tradition—it brings out the spirit of the season and of the community—that we're happy to be part of it. Our employees always enjoy participating in the parade. This year we had more people than ever in costume. It was a great turnout."

This year's parade brought out one of the largest groups of participants in years. According to Roland Plourde, Santa Parade chairman, there were 31 floats, 28 marching groups and 15 bands.

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## RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

# Exclusive Interview with Newt Gingrich

The Valley Patriot was invited to sit with Former Speaker of the House and presidential candidate Newt Gingrich. Valley Patriot President Tom Duggan, Tea Party Columnist Christine Morabito and College student Justess Bowles sat with Speaker Gingrich and picked his brain for more than a half hour on November 11th, a week prior to his announcement of his policy on immigration and border enforcement.

**Christine Morabito:** In your 21st Century contract with America, (very similar to the one in 1994 that successfully decreased unemployment, creating jobs), you call for citizen involvement. How do you see that manifesting itself?

**Gingrich:** Well, there are three layers of citizen involvement and, in this sense, the contract is much more complicated than in 1994. There is still a Legislative section, but unlike '94', the current contract also has a "day one" section of executive orders. The current contract is for the presidency, not the speakership. It also has a training program for new presidential appointees, so that they are really, truly change agents. And finally, it has a citizen component. The citizen component has 3 layers.

I always tell people, I don't ask them to be for me, I ask them to be with me. Because, if they are for me, they are going to vote and say "sure, I hope Newt fixes it". That's impossible, I can't fix it by myself.

So, the first layer is, I want people to be actively engaged.

The second layer is building an interactive system, so that the people can give us feedback for eight solid years. We don't know how to do this yet, but we are talking about Google, Facebook, YouTube and all of these different techniques. If you do things on this scale, the way we want to do them, or the way you want to do them, we are going to make mistakes but we are going to learn new things, or there will be new technologies emerging to help us.

The more we can build a genuine citizen information system the better. It's really two ways. This is what makes it hard. We know how to send signals out. I have one million three hundred thousand people on Twitter. So, I can tweet and it's not hard. But what if 1,300,000 people write me ?

So, we don't really know today how to structure the information flow so that it's 2-way. But I want it to be genuine. I also want it to be multi-way so that, as you are doing with the Valley Patriot, if people decide they want to get together for a local project, then people in that area can get together virtually on the internet and have the equivalent of an old fashioned town hall meeting. So, these are the



PHOTO: ALEX TALCOTT

Presidential candidate and former Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich (right) reading The Valley Patriot before the start of our interview. Pictured (l to r) are: College student Justess Bowles of Manchester NH, Christine Morabito (The Valley Patriot's Tea Party columnist) of Haverhill, and Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan of North Andover, at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, NH last month.

things we are exploring.

The third layer is, I think very, very powerful, and profound. If you are going to take Washington bureaucracy and enforce the 10th Amendment and shrink

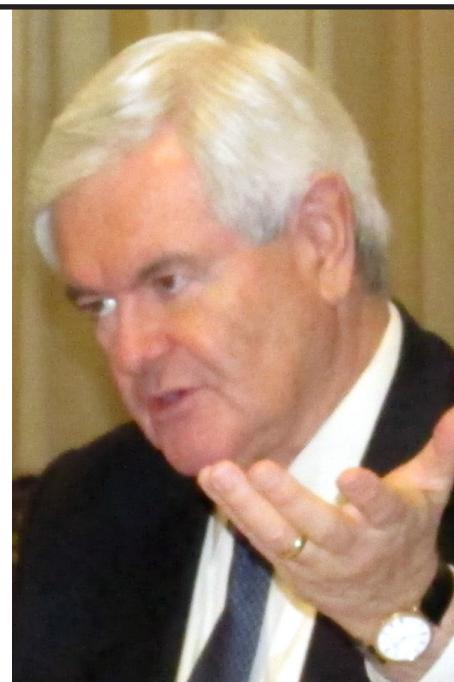
their opinion doesn't matter; "We actually don't want you here".

All you have to go back to is recognizing that the number one characteristic of children who learn is that they have

"When you think about national security, my dad spent 27 years in the infantry. I grew up with the Army. I am the longest serving teacher in the senior military. I taught one and two star generals and admirals for 23 years.

I started working with the Army's Training and Doctrine Command in 1979. So, my background in National Security is unlike anybody else's who is running for President, including the current President."

**Newt Gingrich  
Candidate for President**



the Washington bureaucracy, you have to grow citizenship to fill the vacuum. So, for example, a key part of our education reform is simple: Parents have to get involved again.

The reason the PTA is in decline as an ineffective force, and the reason why parents gave up, is that we have bureaucratized the schools. So parents are told that

relatives who care. In my case, it was my grandmother who decided that I would be her student. She taught me how to read by the time I was 4, so I entered school with a huge net advantage. So, it's re-growing citizenship as the 3rd part of the movement.

**Duggan:** I want to talk about the border for a minute. We had a congressional candidate in Nikki Tsongas's district, (Sam Meas) a Republican who talked about an idea that I felt was just fascinating and I wanted you to address, if you could. He said that if we took the illegal aliens and we tracked the expenses for healthcare, education or whatever, and we also tracked what countries that they

were coming from, we should do is bill the home country for the services that we are providing for their citizens. And if they don't want to pay for the expenses that we are spending for their citizens, we should take it out of the foreign aid that we give to them. I was just wondering if you could address that, if you thought that was a good idea or if you thought that was something possible?

**Gingrich:** Well, it is an interesting idea. But I think it misses the underlying point. The Gingrich administration, and this is in the 21st century contract with America, will have a commitment to have complete control of the border by January 1, 2014.

We're in the process of drafting a bill now, which would in essence, suspend all regulations and all Federal Law that would inhibit you from completing [a wall on the border]. So, now we would have none of the environmental impact studies, none of the things that make it hard to do. No "the national park can't be touched," because it's an absurdity. How are you going to control the border if you are going to say "No, the Big Ben National Park is going to be an unpatrolled area"?

So, you've got to decide if you are going to control the whole border. I believe we can control the border by January 1, 2014. I think we can also establish a guest worker program, and establish English as the official language of government. I think we can with a guest worker program, which I would outsource to American Express, Visa or MasterCard, because they have the technology to run without fraud; the Federal Government doesn't.

**Duggan:** What about the expenses? What we are spending for those who are here; Citizens of other governments, citizens of other countries? They show up in our Emergency Rooms, we are providing for their education, how do we recoup for

**GINGRICH, PAGE 24**



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**SEE OUR COUPON ON PAGE 4**

# Notes from Dracut Town Meeting

Cathy Richardson Brown

DRACUT SELECTMAN

The chill of winter is in the air and the town is starting to look a lot like Christmas! This is some of my favorite weather. I love the cool nights, the views of the hills that we can see when they aren't blocked by the leaves and the crisp, starlit skies.

The Christmas fairs have started and the town is bustling with activity. This weekend we have gingerbread houses to see, a holiday stroll at Bridgewood Plaza and a Christmas bizarre at the Old Yellow Meeting House. This time of year, the talents of Dracut's many entrepreneurs shine.

Dracut's residents are always generous and I know they are always willing to help out with food drives and other fund raisers for our local needy families. There are many opportunities to help this year, and I want to remind our Dracut residents that the Dracut Food Pantry can always use some extra help, especially now.

In November, Dracut held its town

meeting. Two particular items received a great deal of attention. One was the proposal by our Town Manager to increase the meals tax from 6.25% to 7%. This was loudly opposed by the business community. Mr. Piendak did a good job of outlining the recent decreases in revenues that the town has faced, in part due to less state aid available to our town, while also outlining areas where there has been some increase in expenses.

The feedback from some residents was that this seemed to be an increase in a tax just because it can be done without a specific goal in mind, although the money would be more than likely added to the



general fund initially. It was also seen as insulting to some who felt it was another example of government on every level looking for more ways to increase revenue without looking at where decreases in current levels of spending can be found. The Selectmen were divided and gave therefore "no recommendation," although

I think it would have been helpful for the Moderator to tell the residents that "no recommendation" does not mean the Board members do not have an opinion. Two of us, including myself, wanted the meals tax item to be dismissed from the warrant, while one member who is a local business owner had to abstain, and the

other two members did not feel they could vote to dismiss it but rather wanted the voters to decide. I think this article should have been dismissed from the warrant, telling the residents that their Board is not willing to raise taxes.

The second article that raised a great deal of discussion was a proposed zoning change that would allow a local business to expand to the rear of their property which abuts a residential apartment complex. What was interesting about this was that it displayed community participation and allowed for town residents who do not necessarily always come to town meeting to see that their voice can make a difference. I was glad to see that so many residents came out to voice their concern about the meals tax and the zoning change because it demonstrates the heart and soul of American democracy in action.

This is a wonderful time of year for many, and for some, it is difficult, but I wish all the readers a blessed Christmas season.

## Public Meetings

Below is a list of the town administrative meetings for the month of December. If you would like to learn more about these departments or their meeting location, please visit the town website: at [www.dracut-ma.us](http://www.dracut-ma.us)

Thu Dec 8th Open Space Committee Meeting 6:30pm  
 Fri Dec 9th Dracut School Committee Meeting 10:00am  
 Mon Dec 12th School Executive Session Meeting 6pm  
 Dracut School Committee Meeting 7:00pm  
 Tue Dec 13th Board of Selectmen Meeting 7:00pm  
 Wed Dec 14th Board of Library Trustees 4:30pm  
 Planning Board Meeting 7:00pm  
 Permanent Building Committee Meeting 5:00pm  
 Thu Dec 15th Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting 7:00pm  
 Wed Dec 28th Historical Commission Meeting 7:00pm

## Dracut Senior Happenings

Please visit our Council for Aging portal on the Dracut website at [www.dracut-ma.us](http://www.dracut-ma.us) for a full listing of daily activities for our vital Dracut Seniors! Below is a highlight of some events happening:

**Wed. Dec 7th 10am-11am**  
 Coping with Loss During The Holidays lecture

**Thu. Dec 8th - 10:00am**  
 Holiday Breakfast host: Sen. Finegold

**Fri. Dec 9th - 10:00am**  
 Dollar Tree in Methuen and Village Inn

**Tue. Dec 13th -10:00am**  
 Grocery Shopping  
 Noon Movie: "The Christmas Cottage"

**Wed. Dec 14th 10am - 11am**  
 Coping with Loss During The Holidays lecture  
 1:00-3:00 Senior Club Meeting

**Fri. Dec 16th 10:00am**  
 Kmart and Ruby Tuesday

**Tue. Dec 20th Grocery Shopping**

**Wed. Dec 21st 10:00am-11:00am**  
 Coping with Loss During The Holidays lecture  
 11:30 Christmas Party at Lenzi's,  
 2:30 DCOA Board Meeting

**Fri. Dec 23rd 9:00am**  
 Breakfast at Alicia's Pelham, NH

12:00 HAPPY HOLIDAY'S Center closes at 12 noon

**Mon. Dec 26th - Center is Closed**

**Tues. Dec 27th** 10:00am Grocery Shopping

**Wed. Dec 28th** Senior Club Meeting

**Fri. Dec 29th 10am** Movie & lunch at Chunky's

## Dracut School Events

Dec 7th: Half Day District wide  
 Dec 8th: \*Dracut High School, Fall Sports Awards, Junior High/Engelsby  
 \* Fall Drama, 7:00pm at DHS,  
 \*Choral Concert, Production 7pm, Gymnasium, at Junior High School in DHS Black Box Theater  
 \*Special Education PAC Mtg. 6:30-8:30pm, DHS Library  
 December 9th: "The Ned Show" Greenmont Avenue School 2:00-2:45pm  
 Dec 9th: Dracut High School Fall Drama Production 7pm, DHS Black Box Theater  
 Dec 10th: Fall Drama Production,

Dracut High School, 7pm - DHS Black Box Theater

Dec 11th: Campbell School Breakfast with Santa, 8:30-11:30

Dec 12th: School Committee Meeting Harmony Hall, 6pm Executive Session 7pm Meeting

Dec 13th: Campbell School, PTO Meeting 7pm

Dec 15th: Dracut High School Winter Concert 7pm, Auditorium

Dec 16th: Engelsby Activity Night Please contact school for times

Dec 21st: Brookside PTO Mtg., 7pm  
 Dec 26th-30th: School Vacation

## MEALS TAX FROM PAGE 7

Watson telling The Valley Patriot that this measure will be back at the next Town Meeting.

"I think what citizens don't understand is that this is a tax on food. It's on prepared food at the grocery store. It's on prepared food at the bakeries, on the ice cream stands. It's a tax on young people and the elderly who often take advantage of those prepared foods. It's disappointing that this has gone this way but I think we will closely monitor it. If we see that the restaurant numbers are going down we will make a move to repeal it."

Asked if it was possible to repeal it, Smedile said "yes", but added that she doesn't believe it can be put on the ballot to be repealed. "It would need to come back to Town Meeting."

Opponents of the meals tax also complained loudly at town meeting that Superintendent of Schools Hottel sent out notices home with students last week advocating the meals tax proposal at town meeting. Former Selectman Rick Nardella told the Valley Patriot it was "just plain wrong to use public dollars to campaign for a political issue at town meeting."

Selectman Tracy Watson said that, technically the superintendent hadn't broken the law, but "certainly this is a violation of the spirit of the law. It is also just bad policy to use public dollars and our school children to campaign for a political issue."

Dick Valencourt, head of the North Andover Merchants Association said that he and his members opposed the tax, adding that none of the restaurants in his association want the tax.

Supporters of the measure said that surrounding towns like Chelmsford and Andover have a meals tax and the figures show that it has not hurt business for their restaurants, in fact sales actually went up in those communities during the two years since they implemented the tax.

Supporters of the tax said that 100% of the taxes collected will go directly to the town. The State's Department of Revenue projected an income of \$437,000 to the town with the tax.

Steve Dawe, a former member of the North Andover Finance Committee, said that the reasoning behind the meals tax was absurd.

"I can't think of a single worse reason to implement a tax than 'you won't notice it'. That's what we heard last night. [That's] why we are in Iraq, and less than 1% of the United States is involved in the fighting... you won't notice it. Horrible!"

Selectman Watson said that people need to show up at town meeting to have their voices heard. "But, what it shows... and I hope people take a lesson from this, is that your vote matters. Your vote counts. So, show up at town meeting!"

# Christmas presents for local pols

Gerry Nutter

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

I could talk about the un-Inspected Housing Units at the Lowell Housing Authority or about the former State Senator who wants to be the City Manager. I could get into the Mayor's fight or the mess in the selection of a City Treasurer or City Clerk but hey it's December a time of Holidays and Cheer so instead it's time for me to again give out some Holiday gifts to the city and state officials here in Lowell. Merry Christmas!

**City Manager Bernie Lynch – Patrick Murphy for Mayor,** Kevin Murphy announcing he's running for Re-election and Gov. Patrick appointing Steve Panagiotakos to the New Gaming Commission.

**Mayor Jim Milinazzo – The voters** who stayed home in November (at least the 100 that would have kept you in)

**Former State Sen. Steve Panagiotakos – A copy of the book "Be Careful what you Wish For" along with six months of private tutoring from Brian Martin and Bill Taupier.**

**Rep. Kevin Murphy – Free Verizon Service and the Sun** reminding everyone about you know who's Ethics Conflict so you don't have to bring it up.

**Rep. Dave Nangle – A Mike McLaughlin Bobblehead, Comp tickets to Colleen Garry's next fundraiser and a job with the new Sheriff.**

**Rep. Tom Golden – Having Robert Merrill as your only opponent in 2012** would be enough of a gift.

**Patrick Murphy – Public declaration of support in December from Bill Martin and Kevin Broderick.**



Rodney Elliot – a 5th vote for Mayor in 2014 with a promise it will happen from Pangy and the SUN paying for your cell phone (don't they already?)

Fred Doyle – A permanent gig as Rodney's speech writer along with free tuition to Bernie's Political Science class at U Mass Lowell and the Greeters job at City Hall when Pangy becomes Manager.

Jackie Doherty – An Autographed Paul Georges 8 x 10 signed Glossy along with the book negotiating for Dummies.

John Leahy – The same voters Milinazzo got and the complete Video Collec-

tion of the Crosby/Hope ROAD Pictures to remind you of your time with Leary.

Jim Leary – A reminder that Martin was successful without Lewis, being a guest roaster at Paul George's retirement party and a Patrick Murphy for Mayor Button.

Franky Descoteaux – A few years being a soccer mom then a return to political life. Possibly as the next State Senator from Lowell.

Alison Laraba – Shedd Park Pavilion for her going away party hosted by former Supt. Scott and the Teachers Union. After all you did for them, they owe you

that.

**Robert Gignac – A No fear of school Tee shirt, personal trainer and a set of keys to Lowell High**

**Ed Rozmiarek – Mandatory attendance at the Seminar "How to Deal with Difficult People" along with a copy of How to listen and not talk**

**Dave Conway – A course with Kevin Murphy and Rita Mercier on standing by your friends through thick and thin.**

**Bud Caulfield – The appointment for Life as Lowell's Goodwill Ambassador and the Thanks of a grateful city for all the years of Service.**

**Rita Mercier – A We're Even tee-shirt, dinner for two with Pangy at Davio's to heal old wounds along with the same promise for the Mayoral post in 2014 that he will give Rodney.**

**John Linnehan – The concession rights at City Hall that way you'll have that city hall job you have long desired.**

**Tom Moses – An autographed Album of "That's what Friends are for" and a framed copy of Rodney's 2003 Ethics Commission Letter to hang in your office.**

**Supt. Jean Franco – An introduction to the Sun Editor, Chris Scott's cookie recipe and a Headmaster with basic political skills.**

**Connie Martin – I will Survive as her new Campaign theme song and patience with her 3 new colleagues.**

**To All the Lowell Politicians: The announcement that LeftinLowell and GerryNuttersLowell are shutting down and Nutter, Lupien and Mitchell have all been hired by the Murray for Governor Campaign!**

## Tisei, kicks off campaign to unseat Tierney

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

**Wakefield – Former State Senator and candidate for Lt. Governor Richard Tisei announced last month that he will seek the republican nomination for congress in the hopes of unseating democrat John Tierney.**

Flanked by supporters and members of the media, Tisei said that he was going to make jobs and taxes the main focus of his congressional campaign. The Valley Patriot caught up to him after his announcement. Our interview is below.

**VP:** Knowing how Massachusetts residents generally go "D" (for Democrat) down the ticket on election day, and especially with somebody so strong like Obama at the top, how do you plan on breaking through that running as a Republican?

**Richard Tisei:** I think that there are enough people who recognize that the country is heading in the wrong direction and that they are willing to take a look at all of the candidates who are running and make a change. By re-electing what we have right now, you know, you are not going to end up with any change right now and people are hurting and I think that they are looking for hope.

**VP:** How do you break through that? How do you get it through to them, those who are going to be voting for Obama at the top to vote for you on the next line?

**Richard Tisei:** I think it's going to be getting out and meeting people on a one-on-one basis and having a good message.

I am running, because I want to re-store the American dream, I want more jobs. I want spending to be put under control.

And I want fewer regulations to allow small business to create jobs. Everybody is concerned about job creation right now. That is the number one issue. I think if you are able to articulate how you're going to create more jobs and what the Federal Government should be doing and shouldn't be doing. People are going to listen.

**VP:** What, specifically, about your opponent has he not tackled, has he not handled that makes you want to go out there and represent the people?

**Richard Tisei:** The big issues of the day right now, taxes, spending, excessive government regulations and bigger government John Tierney voted for all of those things and he's in favor of all of those things. They have a different philosophy. I think that small businesses should be allowed to innovate and create jobs without government interference. I support lower taxes. Raising taxes during a recession, any economist will tell you, is a bad idea. The Federal Government borrows... for every dollar they spend; they are borrowing forty-cents on the dollar. How long can a business or a family survive taking on that much debt? I mean, we are in a lot of danger as a country right now and this is our opportunity to put things on the right track.

**VP:** John Tierney has abandoned Israel, where do you stand on Israel and as a congressman; how are you going to be voting on a lot of those appropriations?

**Richard Tisei:** Well, I've been to Israel. I was there for 2 weeks in the 90's. I learned a lot about the country. One thing I did learn is that they are a fast and our most trusted ally. Israel is the only place



in the Middle East where they respect freedom of speech, freedom to worship, freedom to think and act as independent individuals. It's really imperative that America supports Israel, because Israel supports us. They are closer to us than any other nation in the world.

**VP:** The last campaign between John Tierney and Bill Hudak seemed to get very nasty, very dirty. How are you going to handle that if it happens and it's you?

**Richard Tisei:** I just announced and I try to be very positive. This is going to be a positive campaign and I think that if I go out and I talk to people about the issues that are really affecting them, they

are going to respond positively to me and I've never run a dirty campaign and I am not going to do that right now. That's how they do things in Washington, they pin America against America and I am not going to do that during this campaign.

I know there are a ton of people out there right now who have a genuine desire to change things, change the rhetoric, change what's going on in Washington. I am trying to do this differently and I am going to try to let people know what I am all about and hopefully they are going to end up responding to me.

# A Year in Review for the Legislature

**Senator Steve Baddour**

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Judging by the weather this fall, you would never guess it was almost Christmas! However, the year's end is upon us and it's a welcome opportunity to reflect on the 2011 Legislative session. There were many successes but there were also a few notable missed opportunities.

Without question, the Legislature took on some traditionally entrenched Beacon Hill interests in 2011. This past year was one which put the Senate, in particular, in the crosshairs of public unions. Our aggressive and ultimately successful efforts to enact municipal health reform were not popular but will result in real, long-term savings for cities and towns while still allowing public employees to receive high-quality affordable health care. I reminded many who challenged me on the idea of moving municipalities into the state's Group Insurance Commission (GIC) program that they would receive the same health care as I and every other state employee receive.

Similarly, the Senate led the effort to change the pension system for future public employees. Passage of this legislation was critical to getting a better handle on the state's unfunded pension liability, as well as eliminating loopholes that allowed certain public employees to unfairly spike their pensions in their final years of service. I am confident that these changes – though opposed by many – will ensure the viability of our public retirement system while balancing the need to

provide a stable retirement to thousands of public servants.

This session also included many economic development initiatives. The long-awaited passage of expanded gaming will create thousands of construction jobs in the short-term and thousands of good-paying permanent jobs throughout the Commonwealth. As the former Senate Chairman of the Joint Committee on Transportation, I helped ensure that cities and towns again received a record setting level of Chapter 90 funds so that municipalities could repair locally owned roads and bridges, providing a boost to the sluggish construction industry.

I also believe that providing an annual sales tax holiday in August – traditionally the slowest month for retailers – is critical to keeping our retailers competitive with those in tax-free New Hampshire. Small businesses also benefitted from the Senate's bill that froze unemployment insurance rates; without this change, employers would have faced double-digit increases in their contributions, crippling the slow recovery that our state's economy has finally seen.

Just a few weeks ago, I voted in favor of two bills that I believe were long overdue. Although Massachusetts was one of the first states to propose legislation aimed at halting the burgeoning practice of human trafficking, it became one of the last in our nation to finally enact such protections. After nearly six years, the bill strengthening the penalties for sexually enslaving for personal gain was signed into law. A momentous achievement. Another bill that



lingered for too long dealt with alimony reform. These outdated, antiquated laws in many cases inappropriately bound divorced spouses for life. The statutes created perverse incentives for ex-spouses to remain out of work, avoid marrying another partner and keep no longer dependent children under the same roof for financial gain. Changing these policies will ensure that those who genuinely need alimony receive it and those who are looking for a lifetime free ride don't.

Despite some of these accomplishments, there were a few missed opportunities. I was disappointed that my effort to have new casino revenue count towards the trigger to roll-back the state's income tax was defeated, as was my budget amendments to require immigration status checks to receive state benefits into Mas-

sachusetts law. I am committed, however, to ensuring that a bill I sponsored with Senator Richard Moore (D-Uxbridge) and Senator Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester) and dozens of others that comprehensively deals with the challenges of illegal immigration is debated before the Senate.

I am also committed to holding the line to ensure a tough repeat offender law survives conference committee and is signed by Governor Patrick in 2012. As a Senator, I believe that ensuring that our parole laws are updated and tough on hardened career criminals is a public safety priority for our society.

In January, the Legislature will commence formal sessions. I look forward to working on the Commonwealth's FY13 budget as well as finishing the work that remains. Happy New Year!

## Single Family Home Sales Up by 18 Percent in Oct. vs. Last Year

### Median Single Family Sales Price Drops to Lowest Level Since February of 2011

(MERRIMACK & NASHOBA VALLEYS) — The Northeast Association of REALTORS® (NEAR) — which represents more than 1,200 REALTORS® throughout the Merrimack and Nashoba valleys — reported today that sales of single family homes and condominiums locally were up significantly for the month of September compared with September of 2010. Year-to-date, the median price for single family homes and condominiums sold locally remained basically stable — dropping for single family homes by 2.9 percent to \$310,000, and rising for condominiums by 1.7 percent to \$179,000. NEAR's report is based on data from MLS Property Information Network based in Shrewsbury.

The data also showed that area single family home sales during September beat last September's sales pace by 20.3 percent, and condo sales rose by a steep 31 percent over last year. The report also noted that the median price of single

family homes sold in September was up by 8.4 percent versus last September, to \$315,000, while the median price for condos sold last month was \$174,800, down by 3.2 percent compared with last year. The median price is the point at which half the properties sold cost more, and half cost less.

Meanwhile, the number of multi-family properties sold during September fell by 11.8 percent compared with last September, and the median price for multi-unit homes was also down by 7.9 percent, to \$175,000. However, the number of multi-family property sales during September rose compared with August of this year by 12.5 percent, to 45 sales.

NEAR President Tom Courtney said, "It's a positive sign to see three straight months of year-over-year sales increases. Prices continue to be more affordable and interest rates are at historical lows. The combination of these two things makes it very beneficial for people who are in the

market to buy." He also said, "Mortgage financing headaches continue to plague the home sales market, since lenders have now tightened credit to the point where some would-be buyers with stable jobs and reasonable credit scores are being denied financing. It's a case of slamming the barn door once the horse is long gone." He added that various lenders will often differ in their approaches to a particular case, so buyers who are turned down by one lender should consider trying another, which may come to a more favorable conclusion.

The report also reflected that as of October 15, the inventory of homes for sale in all categories locally had remained basically flat since last month. Notably, while single family and condo inventory is now comparable to the level of a year ago, the number of multi-family properties for sale has decreased by 14 percent versus October of 2010. The local inventory for all three property types remains well

below the peaks set in 2006 and 2007.

Also included were details on the average length of time it took to sell a property locally, which remained relatively stable for all three property types. For properties sold in September, the average number of days on market were: 1) for single family homes, 106 days; 2) for condominiums, 139 days; and, 3) for multi-family properties, 114 days.

The Northeast Association of REALTORS® represents more than 1,200 REALTORS® and 200 affiliate members in the Merrimack and Nashoba valleys. NEAR is one of 1,500 local chapters of the National Association of REALTORS®. Officially, NEAR covers 15 cities and towns from Boxford to Littleton, though it has members from more than 50 cities and towns in the Merrimack and Nashoba valleys as well as southern New Hampshire. The term, REALTOR®, is a trademark for use exclusively by members of the National Association of REALTORS®, whose members subscribe to a strict Code of Ethics.

Oct 2011 vs. Oct 2010	# Sold Oct 2010	# Sold Oct 2011	Yr over Year Change	Median Price Oct 2010	Median Price Oct 2011	Yr over Year Change	Avg. DoM Oct 2010	Avg. DoM Oct 2011	Yr over Year Change
Single Family	188	222	18.1%	\$332,250	\$258,450	-22.2%	116	108	-6.9%
Condo	77	73	-5.2%	178,000	188,000	5.6%	102	128	25.5%
Multi Family	39	42	7.7%	191,000	189,175	-1.0%	76	99	30.3%

Oct 2011 vs. Sept 2011	# Sold Sept 2011	# Sold Oct 2011	Mo over Month Change	Median Price Sept 2011	Median Price Oct 2011	Mo over Month Change	Avg. DoM Sept 2011	Avg. DoM Oct 2011	Mo over Month Change
Single Family	243	222	-8.6%	\$315,000	\$258,450	-18.0%	106	108	1.9%
Condo	93	73	-21.5%	174,800	188,000	7.6%	139	128	-7.9%
Multi Family	45	42	-6.7%	175,000	189,175	8.1%	114	99	-13.2%

# American Capitalism: Why the Hate?

Christine Morabito

MERRIMACK VALLEY TEA PARTY

What a sad day in this country when our capitalist system is equated with evil. With the emergence of the Occupy Wall Street movement, and the Obama administration urging them on, class warfare has pulled up an unwelcomed chair. Surely I am not the only one deeply disturbed by anarchists chanting "eat the rich." When asked to comment on the protest, the criminally unfunny Roseanne Barr joked (at least I thought it was a joke) about bringing back the guillotine. In her nostalgia for the French Revolution's Reign of Terror, she generously offered to reserve beheadings for "the worst of the worst" capitalists.

Whether it stems from ignorance or gross misinformation, a large percentage of these occupiers truly believe that communism and socialism are superior to our system of free market capitalism. I know public education is one hot mess, but what kind of malarkey are we teaching these kids? Are they not taught about the forced labor, starvation, oppression and brutality under Stalin's Russia, Hitler's Germany, Communist China or North Korea?

You can hardly blame them. We have ruined the occupy generation with decades of revisionist history, moral relativism, no-fault divorces and a society where everybody wins and anything goes. You have to feel sorry for a culture that believes Che Guevara, the sadistic, mass murdering, narcissistic hit-man for Fidel Castro, is a cult hero worthy of a clothing line.

In startling contrast, I offer you the miracle of capitalism as expressed in the book "The 5,000 Year Leap": In America's infancy, settlers used the same primitive tools and farming methods which had been around for 5,000 years. Yet, because of the unique freedoms

they came to enjoy – especially property rights and the ability to trade freely with one another – in just a few hundred years Americans were providing food for the world and landing on the moon.

Free market capitalism was not the colonist's first choice, but an experiment tried after collectivism failed miserably -- for the same reason it always fails – because some people would rather sit around and let others do the work. Our system has a mechanism for dealing with the lazy – others prosper while the lazy do not. In this country, industrious people who wish to succeed will do so, if given freedom and incentive (or as the Left calls it, greed). In communist and socialist countries without personal freedoms people only do what they must in order to avoid being punished by governments that force people to work.

The invention of electricity, automobiles, air travel, vaccines, air conditioning, refrigeration and computers did not happen by accident. They were created by people motivated to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families. Besides making a profit, they just so happened to vastly improve millions of lives along the way. In our capitalist system we all get richer and our lives get easier when entrepreneurs prosper.

Compared with the rest of the world, Americans have few obstacles to succeeding, with countless examples and stories of rags to riches. Socialists and others on the left insist that a multitude of groups are under-privileged and oppressed. While granting these people victim status, they eliminate their drive to succeed, creating dependency and doing them a grave injustice. Remember, big government types have a vested interest in people remaining dependent on the big government programs they create.

Capitalists, on the other hand, want everyone to succeed. Just because I get



wealthy does not mean that you cannot. Leftists will tell you that corporations only get rich by exploiting workers. Last time I checked there were no forced labor camps in this country. If you are unhappy with your salary, you are free to negotiate with your employer for whatever amount you believe your skills are worth.

To increase your earning potential it is your responsibility to obtain the necessary skills. A grocery bagger at Market Basket may believe his skills are worth \$20 an hour. While he may be a superb bagger, in an hour he does not do \$20 worth of work.

Occupy protesters blame capitalism for all the ills of mankind. They say the system is corrupt and should be destroyed. The cause of most corruption is government's interference, not the lack of it. Capitalism in its purest form is inherently free of government

involvement. In a true free market, individuals trade with each other to their mutual benefit. When a company is unethical or negligent and people find out (they always do) the business suffers and eventually goes bankrupt. When government interferes and deems company A "too big to fail" or exempts company B from taxes in reward for campaign contributions, then we have a big problem.

Capitalism is also blamed for "child labor" and "sweatshops" in underdeveloped countries. While salaries in places like Bangladesh or Indonesia seem meager to us, lives are dramatically improved simply by providing employment in the first place, not to mention allowing them to earn an above average standard of living. To say these people are poor is a gross understatement – Third World poor should not be confused with American poor, who have air conditioning, televisions and access to healthcare. These are countries where the alternative to

**TEA PARTY, page 29**

## Activism for Smarties!

Christen Varley

TEA PARTY ORGANIZER/ACTIVIST

November was all about activism for me. Between volunteering for municipal candidates, lobbying against that abominable Bathroom Bill (which our legislature passed!), collecting signatures for the Voter ID citizen petition, delivering petitions to Town Halls and observing a municipal election recount, it was a whirlwind month. But let's face it – if you are a conservative political activist in Massachusetts, you're always busy. Not all of us will choose to make political activism our life's work. But each and every one of us can find a way to fit it into our lives. The question is "How?"

When Tea Party activists ask how they can have an impact, I ask them to consider what issue or issues they are passionate about. I recommend they figure out how many hours a week or month they are willing to commit. Finally, I ask them what skills they have that they can "contribute" towards their activism. These are important things to consider. Over the past three years, I have encountered more than a few people who jumped in to a cause and either over committed themselves or simply lost interest because it was not their passion. It's very easy to get distracted by the story of the day, get caught up in the urgency or excitement of the moment and latch onto someone else's pet cause. We all have something to contribute. Be a smart activist. Make sure you are contributing what you can where you want to most.

Activism can be a tricky business in which to participate. In my opinion, not every act of activism is worthwhile and not every issue is worthy of heroic efforts. Strategy is crucial. This is one lesson the Tea Party movement learned early on. When the media remarks that the Tea Party movement is dead because we don't hold weekly rallies and marches, occupy public property and shout at elected officials at town hall meetings, I smile. I smile because I know what we are doing behind the scenes. I know where the activism is happening – in the State House, in Town Halls and at your local Tea Party meeting.

I participated in a recount in the city of Worcester on November 28th. My friend Donna Colorio ran for School Committee. She won on Election Day by a margin of five votes, which resulted in a recount. She then lost by two votes. She then requested a hand recount. This meant Donna and her campaign manager and campaign volunteers had to clear a day to observe as the city conducted a hand recount of some 19,000 ballots from 50 wards. It is a time consuming process, it is physically grueling and it takes a day out of your life. I was all in!

As I watched over the shoulders of various poll workers determined to get an accurate count once and for all, the importance of the role of everyone in the room became evident. The one hundred plus volunteers for the two campaigns were pushed to the limit standing for hours at a time, analyzing marks on ballots and



squinting to read tally sheets all the while trying to be polite and appreciative towards poll workers who themselves were going above and beyond in their effort to count every single vote. The City officials were courteous and forthcoming toward questions and concerns workers, volunteers and candidates posed. It was truly a community effort aimed at ensuring the integrity and validity of every vote cast. I left Worcester City Hall feeling as if I had accomplished something. (Of course when I received the news an hour later that my friend Donna had been declared the victor by a miraculous 33 votes, I was jubilant!) All in all, a day well spent. One election won.

When I am presented with an issue, a cause, a news story or simply a

personal plea for assistance, I look at what I personally can do, how it fits in with my "mission", how it fits into the mission of the Greater Boston Tea Party and, finally, the movement as a whole. I strategize the best way to achieve the desired result. Is a rally necessary or would a letter writing campaign be more effective? Can I present this issue or do I need to find an expert? Do I have time? Am I interested in this or can I find someone else to take it on? I find this analytical approach helps me to stay focused and maximize the effect I can have.

We definitely need more activists on our side. We must also be smart about where, when and how we "act".

Christen Varley is the head of the Greater Boston Tea Party and one of its' founders. You can email her at: cvarley@greaterbostontea.org

**TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK**

With Chanukah and Christmas upon us it's time for our annual peek into Santa's bag of goodies to see what he has for newsmakers in our coverage area.

**State Senator Steve Baddour** - Hair gel and a mirror that tells him he is the fairest of them all. He doesn't think he hears that enough.

**Former North Andover Selectman Rick Nardella** - Another Selectman win in the spring

**Lawrence City Councilor Dan Rivera** - An I told you so. I tried to warn Mr. Rivera that Willie Lantigua would turn on him the minute he didn't tow the party line with the Lantigua administration and he didn't listen. Now another prediction has come true.

**Andover State Rep Jim Lyons** - A new Captain American uniform. It's going to be a tough year with the hacks on Beacon Hill.

**Former WCAP owner Clark Smidt** - Coal

**Lawrence City Councilor Roger Twomey** - Better judgment and the ability to see when he is being used and unwittingly helping corrupt officials.

**Talk1200's Jeff Katz** - One coupon for a free TSA pat down by porn star Jenna Jamison so he will stop whining about our dedicated TSA agents who hate searching him as much as he hates being searched.

**Channel 5's Michele McPhee** - Willie Lantigua's tax returns.

**Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins** - An indictment.

**Frank Cousins' spin-master Paul Fleming** - A set of balls so that the next time I ask him how many pre-trial detainees are being illegally housed at "The Farm" he will tell me the truth.

**Governor Deval Patrick** - The ability to understand what murdered Woburn Police Officer Jack Maguire's wife, Desiree, has been going through since his parole board freed her husband's killer.

**Gretchen Putnam** - Editor of the Eagle Tribune: Our top sales/management job at the Valley Patriot... there is a desk with her name on it and I think she may be sitting there sooner than people think!

**Sal Tabit** - Enough political support to defeat Paul Adams in next year's Republican primary.

**The North Andover Finance Committee** - Some new members that are a little less eager to raise taxes.

**North Andover Town Moderator Charlie Salisbury and his wife Martha** - Good health and great New Year!

**Haverhill Mayor Jim Fiorentini** - A better sixth sense about those around him who are corrupt and on the take.

**Lawrence Police Chief John Romero** - A bat phone that rings at the Eagle Tribune the minute he picks it up ... he already has that? .... OK a new boss.

**Lawrence City Councilor Marc**

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**Laplante** - Nothing. There's really nothing anyone can give Marc that will make the next two years any less grueling than it's going to be.

**Lawrence Attorney Carmine Diadamo** - One very long deposition!

**The Lowell Office of the FBI** - An apology on behalf of all journalists on behalf of our profession for the Eagle Tribune's shameful outing of their agents on the front page of their paper.

**Lowell Councilor Mendonca** - More appearances in the Valley Patriot and the Paying Attention! radio program on WCAP so he can increase his profile and win a little easier in the next election.

**Lawrence City Attorney Charlie Boddy** - A spine

**Lowell Mayor Rita Mercier** - The warmest hug anyone can get.

**The North Andover Republican Town Committee** - A Chairman who actually works to get Republicans elected and doesn't support Dave Torrisi behind the scenes.

**North Andover CAM** - The Paying Attention Television program.

**North Andover School Committee-man Chris Allen** - The phone number of 100 roofers who are NOT awaiting trial for child porn and are NOT too busy to fix her roof.

**FREE Admission!!**  
Don't miss  
**The Undertones!!**

an a cappella group from Northwestern University including NAHS alumnus Ben Barker will be performing at the North Andover High School!!  
Also showcasing: Our own North Andover High School a cappella groups.

Dec 12 @ 7pm  
in the CAFE

Donations Appreciated

**Methuen City Councilor Jeanne Pappalardo** - My undying love.... and a peaceful council in her final term.

**Former North Andover Selectman Dan Lanen** - A lock box to keep all those secrets.

**Congressman John Tierney** - Retirement.

**Acting Lawrence Superintendent Mary Lou Bergeron** - My phone number... as soon as she is no longer superintendent we would like to sit down with her and find out all those things she couldn't talk about when she was working for Lantigua. (979-771-4091)

**Lawrence City Council President Frank Moran** - The same advice I gave Dan Rivera last year, advice he didn't listen to and is now paying a heavy price.

**North Andover Superintendent Hottle**

- Better friends ...

**North Andover School Committee-man Stan Limpert** - The guts to speak out when he sees his colleagues engaged in bad behavior. That's what leadership is all about.

**Billy Manzi** - A new job as Willie Lantigua's chauffeur since he spent the last two years kissing his ass for free now he can get paid to do it.

**Former Mayoral candidate Al DiNuccio** - 35 more votes.

**Outgoing Methuen City Councilor Jim Hajjar** - A lifetime subscription to Methuen Life. He really seems to like that paper.

**Methuen State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell** - Some advice. Given that the last three House Speakers have been

indicted maybe you should stop inviting them to your fundraisers for photo ops!

**Outgoing Lawrence School Committeeman Mark Gray** - A life size painting of Mary Lou Bergeron ... naked. I think he has a thing for her.

**Willie Lantigua** - A secret compartment in his truck to hide all that extra cash the FBI is looking for.

**Newly Elected Methuen Mayor Steve Zanni** - A membership to the Republican party complete with tickets to the next convention.

**Newly Elected City Councilor Sean Fountain of Methuen** - A lifetime supply of Pepto Bismol. By the time he finishes his first term he is going to have an ulcer.

**The voters of Tyngsboro** - More Selectmen like Ashley O'Neill.

**U.S. Senator Scott Brown** - A Teflon vest so that all those lies and scurrilous attacks he will get from Democrats and ungrateful Republicans will bounce right off him and propel him to re-election.

**Congressman Ron Paul** - A one way ticket back to Alpha Centari, his home planet.

\*\*\*

**MERRIMACK VALLEY ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHANUKAH CELEBRATION & FAMILY CONCERT**

**ANDOVER** - A "Glee"ful Afternoon of A Cappella artists will highlight the Merrimack Valley Jewish Federation's annual First Light celebration. The community-wide Chanukah event and family concert will be held Sunday, December 11 at Temple Emanuel, 7 Haggetts Pond Road, Andover beginning at 2:30pm. A Cappella groups; Redline, Shir Appeal and Shenani-Ganns, will perform a wide range of music from Israeli and English pop, soul, rock, to traditional Jewish songs.

•Redline has been harmonizing around the Boston area since 2007. The members come from a variety of backgrounds, but are united in their drive to create a captivating musical experience.

•Shir Appeal is Tufts University's co-ed Jewish A Cappella group. Their recordings are included in Jewish and secular national compilations.

•ShenaniGanns is an award-winning group from Gann Academy. Founded in 2007, the group has earned a nomination in the 2008 Contemporary A. Cappella Awards and took 3rd place at the Northeast Championship of High School A Cappella. Directed by Reena Freedman, they just released their third CD. The festive afternoon will include candle lighting, a complimentary Latke Bar and Chanukah treats.

The cost is \$18 adult; \$9 senior (over 70); \$9 child (over 5); children 5 and under free. Family Plan maximum \$40 (children 12 and under only). Tickets can be purchased online at [www.mvjf.org](http://www.mvjf.org) or call 978-688-0466 for more information about the event and purchasing tickets by mail.

First Light is sponsored by the Merrimack Valley Jewish Federation, with support from local businesses.

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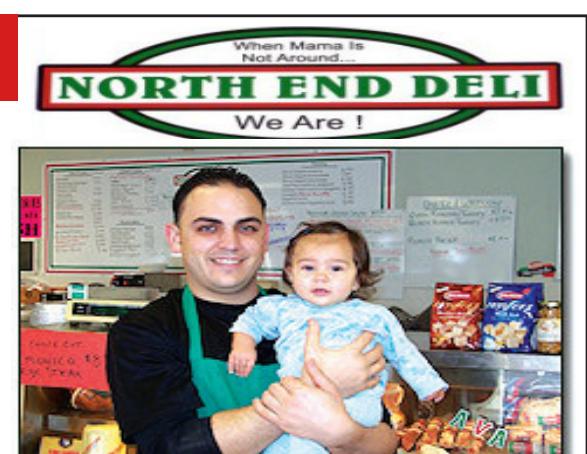
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Nevins Memorial Library Holiday Hours: Nevins Memorial Library will be closed Saturday, December 24th, through Monday, December 26th. & Saturday, December 31st, through Monday, January 2, 2012. Happy Holidays from the Staff of Nevins Library! School-Aged Programs for Children in K to 6th grade: Please visit our EventKeeper to register for these monthly programs: Terrific Tuesdays (K to 3rd grade), a Monthly Event for 4th to 6th graders, K'nex Building Club (4th to 6th grade), Donuts with Dad (3-6 years old), Art Saturdays, Saturday Afternoon Family Movies, and our book clubs--- American Girl Book Club (2nd to 4th grade), Bookworms (2nd & 3rd graders), and Book Chatters(4th to 6th grade). Mailing List please sign up to receive our library newsletter with all the news and events happening at Nevins Memorial Library!

**BOSTON POPS AT LOWELL MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM** - Mill City Management Presents the Boston Pops with Keith Lockhart Sunday, December 18 at 2:30PM at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium. Tickets are on sale now, with great seats still available. Tickets can be purchased in person at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium box office located at 50 East Merrimack Street in Lowell, by calling the box office at (978) 454-2299 or online at [www.lowellauditorium.com](http://www.lowellauditorium.com).

Back again this year with famous conductor Keith Lockhart, the Boston Pops will compliment a beautiful holiday season for one of the area's most beloved traditions. Kick off your holiday season with Keith Lockhart, the Boston Pops, and vocal powerhouse Rockapella!

For the first time ever, "America's Orchestra" joins America's leading A Capella group for an unforgettable holiday show. Enjoy unique takes on classic favorites and brand new originals, plus a special visit from Jolly Oles' St. Nick and a time-honored audience sing along. Treat yourself and your loved ones to a holiday tradition that millions cherish!

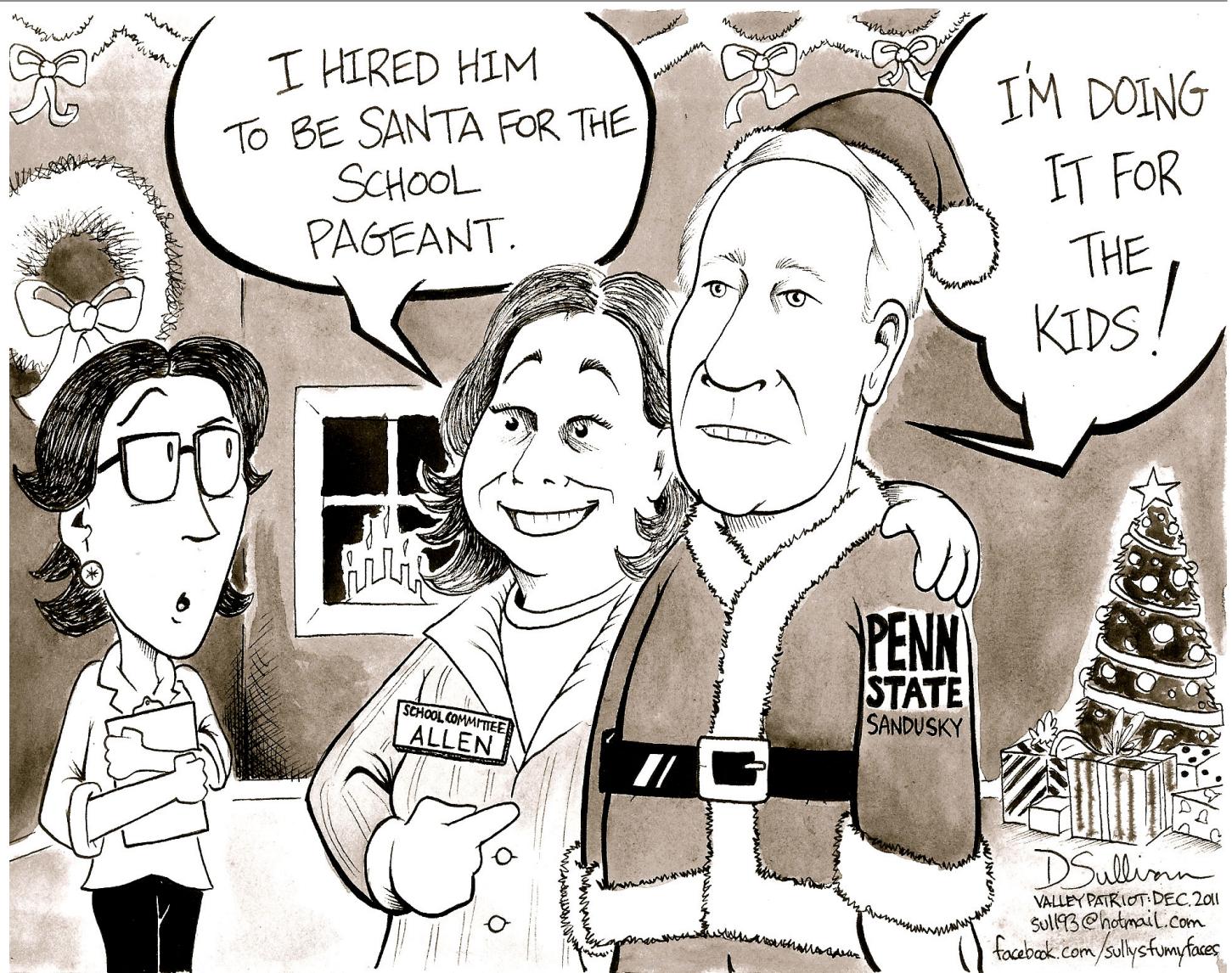
Publicity materials (photos, biographies, press releases, etc) are available for download at [www.lowellauditorium.com](http://www.lowellauditorium.com). Click on the "Press Room" link located towards the top of the homepage and then click on "Media Tools. Please contact Emily Wiseheart at (978) 937-8688 x229 for interview requests or if you have any questions about accessing the materials.

#### VISITOR CENTER OPEN HOUSE TO FEATURE TALK AND BOOK SIGNING BY LOCAL AUTHOR ROBERT BOOTH

[Salem, Mass.] Salem Maritime, the national park in Salem, is pleased to welcome Marblehead-based historian and author Robert Booth to the Visitor Center at 2 New Liberty Street on December 15, 2011 at 7:00 PM. Mr. Booth will be presenting an illustrated lecture entitled When Salem Ruled the World: Salem's Global Empire of Trade and Why it Failed, 1790-1830, based on his new book Death



RYAN CURTIN



**NEWS ITEM:** North Andover School Committee Chair Chris Allen and her husband were caught hiring the former High School Wrestling Coach to do work on the roof of their home. The Coach is currently awaiting trial for child porn charges. See Story Page 7.

of an Empire: The Rise and Murderous Fall of Salem, America's Richest City. Salem was once a global capital of commerce, with 200 ships and a fabulously lucrative trade to the Orient starting in the 1780s. The story of Salem's friendship with India, China, and the Muslim world is as fascinating and instructive as its abrupt fall from greatness, ending in the rise of a local crime lord and a sensational murder.

The lecture will be followed by a book signing in the bookstore of the Visitor Center, which will remain open from 5:00 PM until 8:30 PM. In addition to Death of an Empire, the bookstore carries many books for adults and children, as well as gifts, stocking stuffers, and herbs and spices for holiday cooking needs. The bookstore is operated by the National Park Service non-profit partner Eastern National, and all profits from sales go to support the interpretive and educational programs at Salem Maritime. This event is presented in partnership with the Essex National Heritage Area, and Essex Heritage members, teachers with an ID card, and Eastern National members will get 15% off the purchase price of Death of an Empire.

#### PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS WITH ARMED CITIZEN TRAINING!

This Christmas why not give the gift of security to your family? Consider firearms training with Armed Citizen Training. Get your permit, Home Security or improve your skills. Gift certificates available. 10% discount to Facebook friends of the Valley Patriot.

Merry Christmas, be safe from Armed Citizen Training..(508) 523-5105

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR KIDS AT NORTH ANDOVER HIGH!

Eight NAHS students have been selected to participate in the Massachusetts Northeastern District Senior Music Festival. After auditions of 1037 students from more than 95 public and private schools held in November, 434 students from grades nine through twelve were selected. (Ryan Curatain PHOTO)

Representing North Andover High School in the concert will be: Jackie Foley

'13-Soprano, Carolyn Noyes '14 - Soprano, Erik Hylan '12 - Tenor, Nick Thomas '12 - Tenor-- All-State Recommendation, Mark Fuller '13-- Bass-- All-State Recommendation, Arslan Sheikh '14—Bass, David Baylies, '13, Orchestra, Trumpet, All-State Recommendation, Ryan Curtin, '12, Band, Trombone, All-State Recommendation

**NORTH ANDOVER** - Boston MedFlight, the New England leader of critical care patient transport, announced the expansion of its services through a new base at Lawrence Municipal Airport in North Andover. Patients who require critical care air and ground transport in Northeastern Mass. and Southern N.H. will now have quicker access to the life-saving resources they need. "With our new base at Lawrence Municipal Airport, we are able to provide a faster response time and better serve critically ill and injured patients in the surrounding communities," said Suzanne K. Wedel, MD, Chief Executive Officer and Medical Director, Boston MedFlight.

Boston MedFlight repositioned a helicopter and critical care ambulance from its headquarters at Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Mass. to this new base at Lawrence Municipal Airport.

Boston MedFlight will continue to operate out of its existing headquarters at Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Mass. and base in Plymouth, Mass.

#### MITTEN/HAT COLLECTION TIME

- DCS is sponsoring the annual Mitten/Hat

Collection Program that benefits children and adults of Andover and the Merrimack Valley Schools. The several locations in Andover have agreed to participate in the program by displaying the snowman and providing a candy-cane or treat for those who bring new or gently used hats, gloves and mittens of all sizes to the snowman. Look for the snowman at these the Andover Town Offices, Senior Center, Memorial Hall Library, or possibly your local school. To make donations, simply go to one of the locations before noon on Thursday December 15th and drop off your mittens, hats, and scarves. The snowman says, "Please donate some hats, gloves, scarves or mittens to those in need. It is the cool thing to do." For more information, contact Andover DCS at 978-623-8277.

**TREBLE CHORUS:** Join Merrimack Valley's premiere children's chorus, The Treble Chorus of New England, under the artistic direction of Valerie J. Becker, as they celebrate the holidays with "A Winter Mosaic". The concert will be held on Wednesday, December 14th, 2011 at the Rogers Center for the Arts at Merrimack College, 315 Turnpike Street, North Andover, MA at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$16.00/ Adults, \$10.00/Students and Seniors. For more Information, call 978-794-4600 or email Anna S. Choi at [tcnemanager@treblechorusne.org](mailto:tcnemanager@treblechorusne.org). To order tickets online, go to [www.treblechorusne.org](http://www.treblechorusne.org).

**METHUEN VILLAGE** - Dave

#### NOTEBOOK, PAGE 38



Dave Guselli

Broker/Owner

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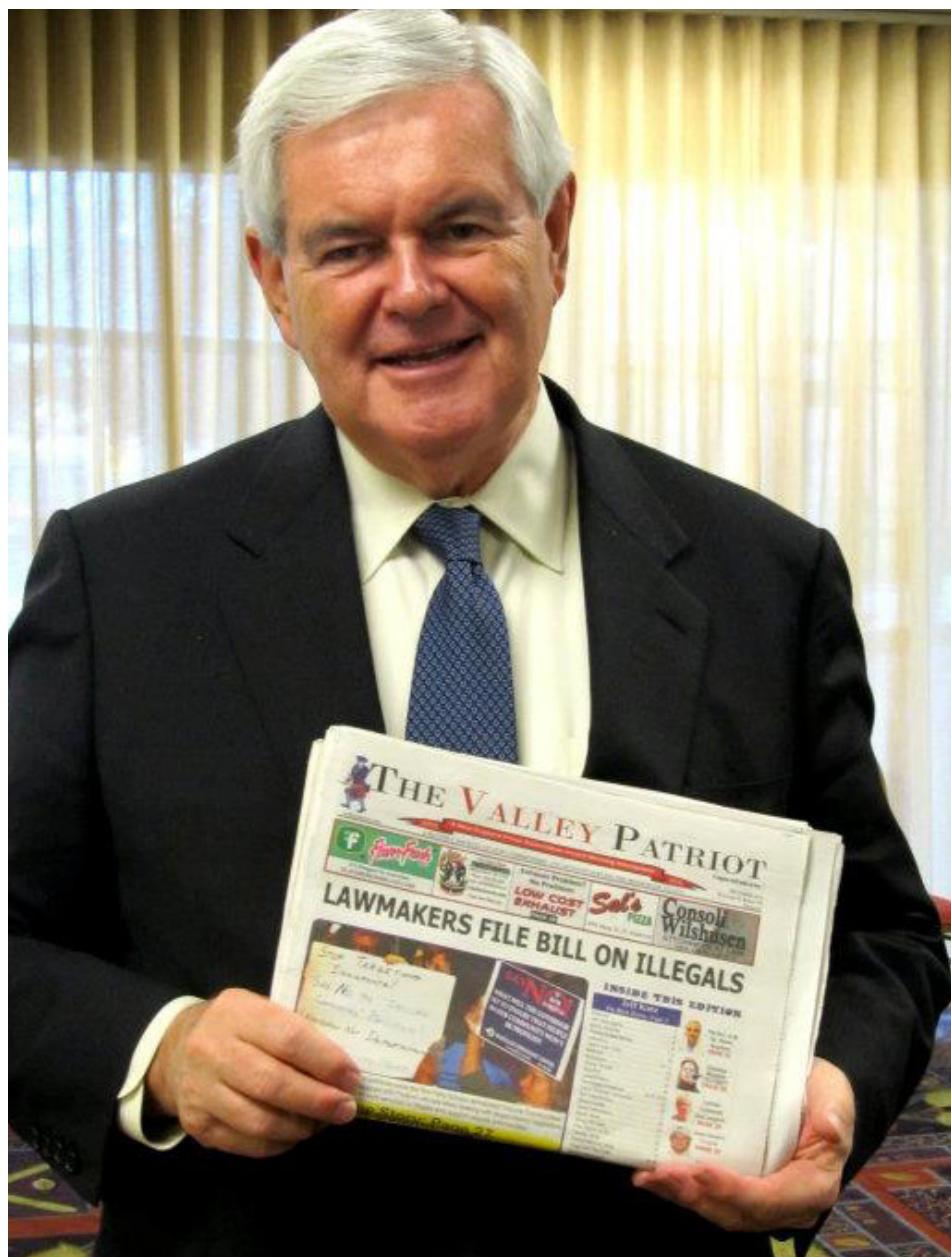
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## Route 110 Convenience in Methuen Sells 4th MILLION Dollar Ticket

Hasmu, owner of the Rt. 110 Convenience store has sold his fourth million dollar ticket in as many years. Hasmu says that he is using all the lottery winnings he receives as the vendor who sold the tickets to send his children Hem and Dep to college.



### In Memory of Lawrence Police Officer Kevin Callahan

For those of us who knew and cared about you, time cannot heal the pain nor minimize the loss we feel since you left us. The number of people whose lives you touched and the joy you brought to the world is immeasurable. We miss you and we pray for you.



- The editors of **The Valley Patriot**

We Miss You Kevin!

## “I AM” The Valley Patriot!

### Meet Dawn Brantmuller our Editorial Assistant

Dawn Brantmuller lives in Salem NH and graduated from the Greater Lawrence Technical School. Dawn has been with the Valley Patriot as an editorial assistant since 2009. She transcribes interviews, works as a spot photographer and does sales, follow up phone calls and runs errands needed to keep the paper operating efficiently.

Dawn is just one of the dozens of people who are a part of Team Patriot and a vital member of our staff.

Each month the Valley Patriot will showcase the hard working patriots who help us produce the news and do all that it takes to bring you what no other newspaper will... real news and commentary you just don't get anywhere else. Thank you Dawn for making us the most successful and credible news source in the Valley!



**Dawn Brantmuller  
Editor's Assistant**

## Three Dogz Diner... Overlooking the Waterfalls in Lawrence (The Old Sam's Steak-Out)



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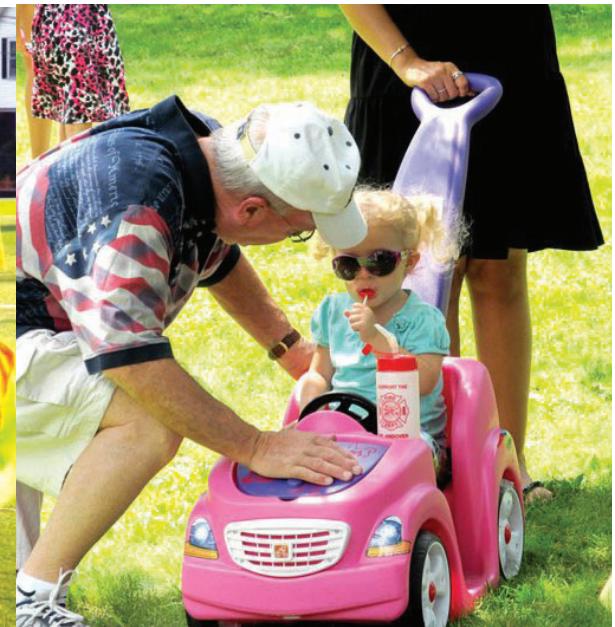
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# Valley Patriot's Best Photos of 2011



PHOTOS TOM DUGGAN

Methuen Police Officer Dan O'Connell calms a lost little girl at the 4th of July Methuen fireworks celebration. Officer Dibenedetto covered in peanut butter last September after being assaulted by the notorious "peanut butter attacker" on Methuen St. who threw a jar of peanut butter at the officer from a third floor window... the attacker is still at large! Lawrence Fire Chief Bergeron emerges from the charcoal remains of a burned out building on Water St.



Lawrence Firefighter Loffredo tried to put out a fire with rusty Lawrence water. Andover High School Marching Band at the New England School Band Competition. Retired North Andover Police Officer Davis makes an unscheduled traffic stop.



## Runners up!

Above left: North Andover Middle School Students perform "Footloose" last spring. Above right: A young woman and her giggling baby at the Lawrence Hispanic Week celebration on the Campagnone Common. Photo left: Funeral procession for slain Woburn Police Officer Jack Maguire who was laid to rest in January after being shot to death on Christmas. All photos: Tom Duggan except photo at left: Melissa Mazzarella

# PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE NEWT GINGRICH: FROM 15

those losses?

**Gingrich:** Look, I would like to mop up that pool of people who are not here legally in two ways. I have suggested that we may want to re-establish the equivalent of the World War II selective service committees, so you have local decision making and local analysis.

People who have no real ties to the United States, frankly, we should send home. Period. People who have been here a good while, who are married, have kids, have ties, ... we should allow them to get what the Krieble foundation calls a "Red Card." Make them a part of America, but not a path to citizenship. Have them pay a penalty for having come here illegally.

But, get them integrated so that, three years from now there shouldn't be anybody here who is illegal.

They should either have a red card, because we have decided that they can stay, or they should have been deported, or they should be stopped at the border. Our goal is to have a legal America. I would also, outlaw sanctuary cities. I would say any city which declares itself a sanctuary, loses all federal aid. Period.

So, I say fine, you want to fail to enforce U.S. laws, you don't get a penny. By the way, all of them will cease to be sanctuary cities in about 3 weeks.

**Christine:** On the EPA, you've talked about replacing it with an Environmental Solutions Agency. You spoke of this wacky proposal by the EPA to regulate dust?

**Gingrich:** Well, I just did a newsletter, I do a newsletter every week at Gingrich Productions. It comes out through Human Events. The Washington Post wrote this outrageous article that there really wasn't a dust regulation. Well, it wasn't true, this was EPA propaganda. The EPA under the Clean Air Act has responsibility for "particulate matter", it is called dust.

They were looking at regulation that will affect farming by establishing that, if the wind was blowing enough that the dust would leave your fields, then you shouldn't plow. You talk to farmers who drive down a dirt road and they kick up dust.

I mean, it's insane. In Arizona they're in this fight because Arizona is a desert. They actually have some areas in Arizona where they want them to water down the



PHOTO: JUSTESS BOWLES

dirt so that they don't get these huge dust storms. I met with a group from Arizona who said "we keep trying to explain to the EPA that the reason it's called a desert is that there is no water, and you want us to take the water that is there .... "

**Duggan:** (laughing) you have to explain that to the EPA?

**Gingrich:** Yeah, Look, I think it's an agency which has, for three generations, self selected radicals who are anti-business, anti-local control and who believe in a radical version of environmentalism at any cost. I would say it's probably the most destructive anti-manufacturing agency in the Federal Government. No other agency has contributed as much to the decay of American manufacturing as the EPA has.

I say this as someone who taught environmental studies and believes in the environment. I co-authored a book called "A Contract with the Earth, What Conservative Environmentalism is Like." That's why I don't just want to abolish, I want to replace it with a common sense, practical, innovation-oriented agency that starts by collaborating with state and local government and collaborates with business. Not automatically issuing dictatorial rules and litigating everything.

**Duggan:** Can you tell us how a President Newt Gingrich, would deal better than the other candidates with the Middle

East situation, the problem with Israel, the gathering storm of all of these Muslim countries as they are starting to rise and overthrow their governments and really leaning more towards Sharia law than anything, it seems as though Israel...

**Gingrich:** It has extended now down to Nigeria. There is a war in Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa...

**Duggan:** Are you the most pro-Israel of all of the candidates... Would you like to be thought of as the most pro-Israel candidate?

**Gingrich:** AIPAC said I was the most pro-Israel Speaker in American history, if that gives you some sense of ... Let me .... it's interesting, because we have this debate on tomorrow night, on CBS and it's the first time I'm [going to say this] ...

**Duggan:** So we are your practice?

**Gingrich:** ... Yeah it is, and as you can tell I think out loud and I try to evolve and refine, ...so let me just give you this, just as background I'm going to talk about this tomorrow night.

When you think about national security, my dad spent 27 years in the infantry. I grew up with the Army.

I am the longest serving teacher in the senior military. I taught one and two star generals and admirals for 23 years.

I started working with the Army's Training and Doctrine Command in 1979. So, my background in National Security is unlike anybody else's who is running for President, including the current President. I think I have literally taught every general officer in the last generation at one time or another.

I think we are in REAL trouble. And I think it is much deeper than people understand. If you go to Newt.org and read the 21st Century contract with America

you will see part of this. And I will come around to Middle East in a second.

**First of all:** China is largely a problem about American self discipline. If we re-build our education, we re-invest in science, technology, and engineering and we re-build our manufacturing base, the Chinese can't catch up with us in your lifetime. It's a really about us, not them.

But it's a real challenge because, at the present rate, we are decaying and they are not. And we can't ask them to be as stupid as we are.

And this is a real problem because if the Chinese see an imbalance of power, there are a couple of things that they can do that would be very dangerous. And we need to understand that not because they are evil people, but because they are a natural competitor.

**Second:** We have to really worry about emerging technologies that nobody understands. Hacking is one of those things. The whole concept of cyber warfare and electro-magnetic pulse attack ... we have to worry about those kinds of things.

I think we have to worry about nuclear weapons. I was called by Senator Rudman, the father of homeland security. The Homeland Security Department I want has to be capable of dealing with 3 nuclear events on the same day in 3 different cities. Because, I think you really have to worry a lot about getting hit, if you look at the Iranian nuclear weapons. But the fact is, the Pakistanis have over 100 bombs. And Pakistan is not necessarily a reliable, stable country. I mean this is a country that hid bin Laden for at least six years. So, why do we think we can trust the Pakistanis?

So, that's the background, the other thing I can say is, we have to understand

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the emergence of the Gray World. The underside of the emerging global market is this gray world: Human trafficking, 800,000+ slaves a year across borders, 90% women, mostly for prostitution and illegal arms trafficking, illegal drug trafficking, etc.

If you look at the Mexican drug war, these guys have billions of dollars and sometimes they can buy technology faster than governments can, so sometimes they are better armed, they have better radios. This is serious. So, those are the real parts of real national security.

John Abizaid who was the only four-star general fluent in Arabic, said to me about two months ago (he is former head of the central command) that our strategic deficit is bigger than our fiscal deficit. So, if you have a two trillion dollar fiscal deficit and our strategic deficit is bigger, it's a sobering thought. We haven't come to grips with how big this problem is and how different it is. You are dealing with a worldwide effort to impose on us a set of values we don't believe in and, if necessary, to do it by terrorism and by force. The truth is, the biggest funder of that is Saudi Arabia, which is why I am for an American energy policy designed to minimize the importance of the Saudis.

A rational American strategy would try to make the Strait of Hormuz irrelevant. Because then you could deal with Iran without any problems and you can deal with the Saudis without any problems. That's why a major component of our national security is energy.

The Saudis have been paying about two billion dollars a year to schools, madrasas around the world to teach hatred, including here. They're primary funders of madrassas in the United States, the primary funders of chaplains in prisons which almost always represent 'Wahhabism' which is the most extreme version of Islam.

You've got the Saudis on one front, you've got the Iranians on the other front. There's a great book by Mark Bowden who wrote "Black Hawk Down", called "Guest of the Ayatollah". The sub-title is "the First Shots in Iran's War Against America".

Guest of the Ayatollah is the hostage crisis of 1979. So in Mark Bowden's view, Iran thinks it's been at war with us for 32 years. And we are confused by it. They killed the Marines in Lebanon. They killed American forces in Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. They are the primary funders of Hamas and Hezbollah. They are the primary protectors of Assad. So I look at this pattern ... I believe the odds are very high that we have lost the 3rd Iraq war.

**Newt Gingrich At a Glance:**

**1978: Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives**

**1979-1999: Republican for Georgia's 6th Congressional District**

**1989-1995: House Minority Whip**

**1995: Named "Man of the Year" by Time magazine**

**1995-1999: 58th Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives**

**1998: November 2-elected to 11th term in the House**

**1998: November 5-resigned from the House**

**1998-2011: Political Consultant; Author; Founder of various political action committees.**

**2011-2012: Candidate for President**

The first Iraq war drove Saddam out of Kuwait in 4 days in 1991.

The second Iraq war defeated Saddam in 23 days in 2003. And then, for reasons that I still don't understand, Ambassador Bremer decided that we would radically change Iraqi society without having the means to do it.

We have fought a war for 8 years and I think we've lost it.

I think as we leave, it will become obvious that we've lost it. Nouri al-Maliki (the new head of Iraq) is much more afraid of the Iranians than he is of us.

I mean, this tells you how bad things are: The Iranians held a conference on terrorism and Maliki came from Iraq and Karzai came from Afghanistan to an Iranian conference on terrorism. And the UN Secretary General sent a special envoy as though the Iranians weren't the largest funders of terrorism in the world.

Now, think about the sheer arrogance of that. It's Hitlerian in its' dishonesty.

So I really think we have to re-think from the ground up what we are doing. We have to understand that, in the long run, we are for fundamentally changing Saudi Arabia. We are for fundamentally changing Iran and Pakistan. In the absence of a fundamental strategy, we are just floundering.

I think that there is a grave danger that the Arab spring is going to turn out to be an anti-Christian spring. You look at the decline of Christians from 1,200,000 to

500,000 in Iraq after the American Liberation. So, an American victory meant that over half the Christians have been driven from the country. You look at the Coptic Christians that have been there for 2,000 years being persecuted now in Egypt. You look at the moves towards Sharia in Tunisia and in Libya and you have to really ask yourself, "why is it that western elites think it's an advantage to have extremists take over countries?"

**Christine:** You've been very supportive of the Tea Party from the beginning. This Occupy Wall Street movement has been compared to the Tea Party, I know you disagree with that... the comparison.

**Gingrich:** Well, there is no comparison. The Tea Party people are almost all committed to a stronger, better America. They are almost all committed to studying and learning the constitution. They are almost always positive in their attitude. They are angry, but they are trying to direct their anger to a positive outcome.

The Wall Street groups break into two groups. One which I can sympathize with. People are just in pain, and angry and saying "Why does Goldman-Sachs get billions of dollars and I lose my home" I don't think that's a bad question. It's classic populism.

The other element of the Occupy Wall Street group is a Nihilist, an anti-civilization thugger of people who are astonishingly arrogant. Why doesn't a reporter go up to them and say "Why do you think everybody else owes you a park that you

can live in? Why do you think that you have the right to use somebody else's bathroom?

There's been violence and vandalism. A hot dog stand was vandalized because they could not afford to feed them anymore. I think there is a childish, temper tantrum part of this and their intellectual framework is leftwing.

I don't think we have ever been clear enough about this with Obama. Obama is a Saul Alinsky radical. (BOX)

Obama preaches class warfare. He is a natural step towards the hostile parts of the Occupy Wall Street philosophy ... because he preaches "These people who are successful are bad".

Well, guess what, when the president of the United States tells that to America, he's dividing America. I tell people that I am for the 100%. They ask me if I am for the 99% or the 1%? People ask, "are you for the 99% or the 1%"?

The answer is, and I tell them, "For an American, I am for the 100%, because we are all Americans". It is a European radical concept to suggest that we can be divided.

And to suggest that Henry Ford, when he was a young man, was in the 99%, but Henry Ford when he invented the modern automobile was in the 1% ... so the guy who put all of us on wheels is bad? Bill Gates who put all of us on Windows is bad? Steve Jobs who gave us all iPhones is bad?

I mean, you guys [at the Valley Patriot] are a good example.

**Duggan:** Can you tell us something nobody else knows?

**Gingrich:** This probably won't be new by the time you come out, but it's new now. You can use this on the radio tomorrow if you like. I was talking to Laura Ingraham (radio host) and I came to understand something in talking to her that I don't think anyone else has captured yet. In the newest polls I am tied with Romney for second in the CBS poll and I am second to Romney in the Quinnipiac poll. Cain is now in third. So, [Laura] asks, "when are you going to start taking Romney apart?" And I just want you to think about this and you can use this on the radio tomorrow. Romney is at 15% in one poll and 18% in another. That means that in one poll there is 85% of the people available. And in another there's 82%. So I said to her, I am not going to attack Romney at all. My job is to get the 85%. Let Romney target me. I think that's the way you need to see this whole campaign. Calista and I will be out there campaigning in a very positive way, trying to help Americans save our own country and rebuild the land that we love. And let the other guys decide to attack us.

TRANSCRIBED BY DAWN BRANTMULLER

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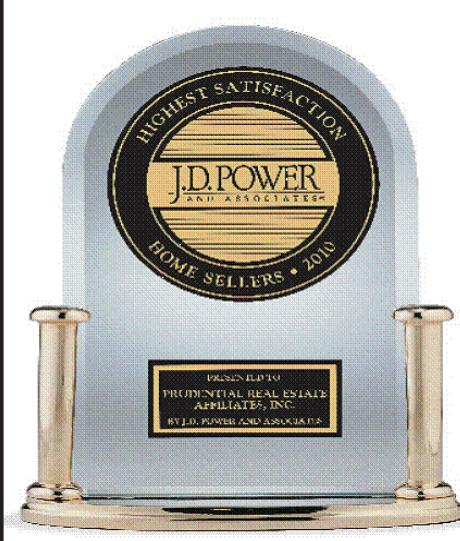
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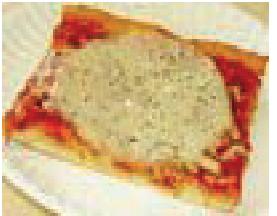


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# How to deal with Phantom Pain

**Rami Rustum, M.D.**  
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

Phantom pain is pain that feels like it's coming from a body part that's no longer there. Doctors once believed this post-amputation phenomenon was a psychological problem, but experts now recognize that these real sensations originate in the spinal cord and brain.

Although phantom pain occurs most often in people who've had an arm or leg removed, the disorder may also occur after surgeries to remove other body parts, such as the breast, penis, eye or tongue.

#### Symptoms

Most people who've had a limb removed report that it sometimes feels as if their amputated limb is still there. This painless phenomenon, known as phantom limb sensation, can also occur in people who were born without limbs. Phantom limb sensations may include feelings of coldness, warmth or itchiness or tingling — but should not be confused with phantom pain. Similarly, pain from the remaining stump of an amputated limb is not phantom pain. By definition, phantom pain feels as if it comes from a body part that no longer remains.

Characteristics of phantom pain include:

- Onset within the first few days of amputation
- Tendency to come and go rather than be constant
- Usually affects the part of the limb farthest from the body, such as the foot of an amputated leg
- May be described as shooting, stabbing, boring, squeezing, throbbing or burning
- Sometimes feels as if the phantom part is forced into an uncomfortable position
- May be triggered by weather changes, pressure on the remaining part of the limb or emotional stress

#### Causes

The exact cause of phantom pain is unclear, but it appears to originate in the spinal cord and brain. During imaging scans — such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or positron emission tomography (PET) — portions of the brain that



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had been neurologically connected to the nerves of the amputated limb show activity when the person feels phantom pain.

Many experts believe phantom pain may be at least partially explained as a response to mixed signals from the brain. After an amputation, areas of the spinal cord and brain lose input from the missing limb and adjust to this detachment in unpredictable ways. The result can trigger the body's most basic message that something is not right: pain.

Studies also show that, after an amputation, the brain may remap that part of the body's sensory circuitry to another part of the body. In other words, because the amputated area is no longer able to receive sensory information, the information is referred elsewhere — from a missing hand to a still-present cheek, for example. So when the cheek is touched, it's as though the missing hand also is being touched. Because this is yet another version of tangled sensory wires, the result can be pain.

A number of other factors are believed to contribute to phantom pain, including damaged nerve endings, scar tissue at the site of the amputation and the physical memory of pre-amputation pain in the affected area.

#### Risk factors:

It's still unknown why some people develop phantom pain after an amputation while others do not. Some factors that may increase your risk of phantom pain include:



Pain before amputation. Some researchers have found that people who had pain in a limb before amputation are likely to have it afterward, especially immediately after amputation. This may be because the brain holds on to the memory of the pain and keeps sending pain signals, even after the limb

is removed.

Stump pain. People who have persistent stump pain usually have phantom pain, too. Stump pain can be caused by an abnormal growth on damaged nerve endings (neuroma) that often results in painful nerve activity.

Poor-fitting artificial limb (prosthesis). Talk to your doctor to be sure you're putting your artificial limb on correctly and that it fits properly. If you think your artificial limb may not fit properly, or is causing pain, talk to your doctor.

#### Treatment

Like most chronic pain conditions, no single treatment approach works for

everybody. A number of medications complementary and alternative treatments out there work for phantom pain. Here are some of the most common approaches.

- Medication — because it is considered a neuropathic disorder, antidepressants and anticonvulsants are often prescribed for phantom pain. NSAIDs, opioids and muscle relaxants are also on the list of medications. As with other chronic pain conditions, finding the right medication can take time and patience. Sometimes successful phantom pain relief takes a combination of these medications.

- Mirror therapy — many therapists use mirrors in their treatments to show the brain into a healthy limb in place of a stump. This usually involves placing both limbs in a mirror box, which makes the amputated limb appear intact. The individual is then asked to perform exercises with "both" limbs. This tricks the brain, and effectively reduces phantom pain for some people.

- Stump stimulation — using TENS, applying pain-relief patches or rubbing the stump can relieve phantom pain in some people. Using hot packs and cold packs can work for some people. Providing an alternate sensation from the stump can interrupt pain signals.

- Cognitive therapies — some people find relief from their phantom pain through hypnosis, relaxation or guided imagery. These approaches can change the way the brain interprets phantom sensations, including phantom pain.

Usually more than one treatment approach is used to get phantom pain under control. Some people, however, may require more invasive forms of treatment. These include additional surgery to untangle nerve bundles at the amputation site, stimulation of the spinal cord or the brain to change the way pain is interpreted and implantation of pain pumps that deliver medications directly to the spinal cord.

Ref: 1.Pain: Hope through research. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. [http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/chronic\\_pain/detail\\_chronic\\_pain.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/chronic_pain/detail_chronic_pain.htm). Accessed Aug. 11, 2011. 2. Weeks SR, et al. Phantom limb pain: Theories and therapies. The Neurologist. 2010;16:277.

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## "New and Alarming Allegations of Police Misconduct in West Newbury"

VALLEY PATRIOT STAFF

Multiple allegations of misconduct, willful disregard for court orders, malicious prosecution and other forms of unprofessional behavior by the West Newbury Police Chief and the department were made public at the November 30th open meeting with Selectmen.

Several citizens, including a former police officer, detailed several instances of unwarranted, unprofessional and defamatory actions taken by Chief Holmes.

The former police officer's career ended three weeks after the same police chief awarded him a plaque designating him "Chief's Officer of the Year".

His personal animosity toward him continued this summer when the West Newbury Police refused to provide backup support, as required by law, as he carried out the duties of Harbor Master on the Merrimac River within West Newbury jurisdiction. On several occasions the officer apprehended boaters operating in an unsafe manner requiring arrest, including OUI while operating a boat. The call for transferring these suspects on shore for processing in West Newbury was ignored by the department and required another town to assist. Other requests for backup have been met with resistance and a lack of cooperation reported to the Selectmen over the summer. Lack of attention to these matters prompted the officer to speak out in public at the Selectmen's meeting.

Another West Newbury resident, a single mother with small children, was visibly shaken as she described interactions with the Chief and other West Newbury police that left her fearful for her safety and the safety of her children, because multiple restraining orders against her estranged husband, and later, an ex-con who was stalking her, went un-enforced and ignored by West Newbury police. The woman submitted documentation for her allegations, including medical reports pertaining to back surgery from being assaulted. No charges were brought forward on the victim's behalf by the WNPD until the Newburyport ADA stepped in and forced action.

Additionally, West Newbury resident Kristi Devine submitted to the public record her report detailing years of

police misconduct, perjury and malicious prosecution that she says has taken an enormous toll on her and her family, both emotionally and financially. The documents reveal that two of the three selectmen were repeatedly advised of this for more than a decade while they served as Selectmen for the vast majority of that time, and took no action. Much of the carnage alleged by Devine was conducted by the now disgraced former Police Chief L'Esperance of Salisbury, in conjunction with Chief Holmes, when she was L'Esperance's supervisor during his 20 years of serving as an officer in West Newbury before becoming Salisbury's Chief.

Earlier in the meeting, Selectman Tom Atwood read a letter from Chief Holmes in response to his request for an explanation as to why the West Newbury Police continue to aggressively file the same charges against Ms. Devine when they have already been dismissed twice. These are current charges after years of West Newbury Police filing charges against Devine for everything from littering to assault and battery, and being falsely arrested and incarcerated on multiple occasions. All prior charges were ultimately dismissed, and Ms. Devine has no convictions after endless attempts by the West Newbury Police to achieve them. In her response, Chief Holmes declined to provide any explanation or rationale for the WNPD actions, referring to confidentiality laws. Ms. Devine immediately offered to waive all rights under those laws to get the truth out.

At the end of the meeting, the Selectmen scheduled a hearing in open session on December 14 to address the concerns of the community that she and her department, contrary to their charter to protect and serve the community, have created a climate of fear and distrust. The black clouds over the WNPD continue to build, as more citizens who live in fear have come forward. It began with the highly publicized L'Esperance disgrace, continued with Ms. Devine's long-standing allegations being consistently dismissed by selectman Cushing as being "just her complaining" and now have reached crisis level with additional individuals cou-

**W. NEWBURY, PAGE 37**

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## Daniel Avila Was Right

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

In the October 28th edition of the Boston Pilot, the Newspaper of the Archdiocese of Boston, Daniel Avila wrote a column entitled, "Some fundamental questions on same-sex attraction". He was highly criticized, and both he and the newspaper apparently bowed to politically correct pressure and issued a public apology. His crime? He wrote that the devil was behind the phenomenon of same-sex attraction. The problem with the apology is that his piece was theologically correct and did not seem to contradict the bible or Church teaching. If there was a flaw it might have needed a little added clarification.

In his apology this sentence, "The Church proclaims the sanctity of marriage as the permanent, faithful, fruitful union of one man and one woman", was sandwiched around this claim: "...the Catholic Church make(s) it clear that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God and have inviolable dignity...(and it) opposes, as I do too, all unjust discrimination and the violence against persons that unjust discrimination inspires."

This is, of course, without dispute and goes without saying but is irrelevant to the theme of his column, which was on the primary cause of homosexual attraction. The belief that God loves everyone immeasurably is a given; whether we love Him back is the only question.

Theologically speaking, it is and always has been the teaching of Christianity, stemming from the apostle John, that God is both Reason (logos) and Love (agape). Hence, He could never be primarily responsible for anything in creation that is unreasonable or imperfect, for He cannot contradict His own nature.

To make sexual beings with a sexual reproductive system ordered to the opposite sex only to purposefully give them a disordered sexual attraction to those of the same sex would be objectively unreasonable. It would make no sense. To claim that God always willed to have some people possess disordered attractions or desires, or that it is natural and good to act upon them, is clearly illogical.

Then why does the phenomenon exist? Science still has not uncovered the secondary causes, but the primary cause must go back to another force, a created force with free will, that would introduce into the perfect order of creation an imbalance, a woundedness, that would taint the original perfection in both human nature and the world.

From this perspective all imperfections, imbalances, and disorders are seen as the result of the fall illustrated in story form in Genesis chapter three. Man as God's image was meant to be in a relationship of perfect union with God that would last

throughout eternity. This perfect union with the Source of life and love would have maintained man's creaturely perfection and kept us free from concupiscence (internal disorder), suffering, and death.

But that was all changed when the tree of knowledge was chosen over the tree of life.

Human nature was tainted and weakened, and thenceforth everyone comes out of the womb imbalanced in some way or another with various imperfections; some obvious and others propensities.

This original sin, which afflicts everyone differently, is ultimately the cause of all objective disorders including same-sex attraction; and is rooted, as Mr. Avila alluded, in the seduction of the devil.

It is also in Scripture and Church teaching that this same devil and his demons, who were all once beautiful angels before they freely rejected God, still prowl about the world for the ruin souls. And what better way than to work on one's weaknesses, vices, or disordered propensities - which may come forth from a hormonal imbalance, a trauma as a toddler, an abusive upbringing, or anything else that may afflict a person by sharing the effects of the fall. Denying that same-sex attractions are disordered is as illogical as attributing them directly to God's positive will. True happiness can never come through the defense mechanism of denial, but only through humility and an openness to the truth.

The good news, for anyone open enough to accept it, is that Christmas reminds us that God came down from heaven to take on our tainted human nature in order to perfect it again. Christ was born in a manger to take on the pain and suffering we have collectively caused ourselves, and to offer the supernatural help it takes to overcome our broken nature so we don't have to be a slave to it.

He was born in Bethlehem to also establish a Church, to offer grace making it possible to govern the self according to what is true and good, and forgiveness in His name to those who seek it after each fall along the way. Jesus overcame the world, the flesh, and the devil and offers that same power to us.

That is good news worth celebrating this Christmas.

 Paul Murano teaches philosophy at North Shore Community College and theology at the College of Saint Mary Magdalen. He is host of *Beneath the Surface* television show at Burlington Cable Access

TV and is co-host of the *Paying Attention* Radio program. Paul is also chairman of Heartbeat Pregnancy Help center in Burlington and is a singer/songwriter/musician. You can email him at PJDM@aol.com

## GROUPON: FROM PAGE 5

bid and give them a chance to "opt out" of the offer?

— Can I withdraw an offer before the end date for any reason, even after some consumers have signed up, and what are the penalties for doing so?

— Can I "cap" the number of vouchers to a certain number of individuals?

— How does the site protect merchants against unauthorized transfer or purchases of vouchers by the same individual using multiple e-mail addresses?

Cliff Ennico (crennico@gmail.com) is a syndicated columnist, author and former host of the PBS television series "Money Hunt." This column is no substitute for legal, tax or financial advice, which can be furnished only by a qualified professional licensed in your state. To find out more about Cliff Ennico and other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit our Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

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# Inflammation - The Truth

**Dr. Jin Sung**

VALLEY PATRIOT CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

Dr. Jin Sung, Chiropractic Physician

Most of us are familiar with the term but do not really understand its ramifications as to how it relates to our long-term health. We are all familiar with the outward signs of inflammation: twist your ankle and you'll soon see swelling, feel pain, and later see discoloration. Most know that you should put ice on the freshly twisted ankle. That will help to keep inflammation under control as well as decrease pain. Actually, inflammation is a necessary response to physical injury. However, when left unchecked, it can cause more damage on a long-term basis.

While this may sound basic to most, the real problems of inflammation are when it occurs deep inside your body and you can't see any outward manifestations.

Since the 1990's more and more excellent research has been performed showing that inflammation is the common driver of most of our chronic health problems. Heart disease, cancer, arthritis, diabetes, Alzheimer's, Autoimmune disease, neurological diseases, pulmonary diseases all have one thing in common: long-term, unbridled inflammation.

In today's traditional healthcare model, you present to your doctor with a list of symptoms, the doctor tries to put a name on your affliction (diagnosis), and then gives you medications to alleviate your symptoms. Since this is the system we have all been brought up in, it seems a logical approach. However, with all the scientific "miracles" and new drugs we have seen, we are suffering with worse health than preceding generations. Children born today will grow up with a shorter life expectancy than their parents and grandparents. The United States as a country is dropping in the world health rankings. This great country has 5% of the world's population and we consume 75% of the world's drugs. If drugs made us healthy, we would be #1. At last count (2010) we ranked 49th in the world. Pretty sad state of affairs if you ask me. Our abysmal ranking is not because we are inherently unhealthy; it is because we live in a country operating with a flawed system of healthcare.

What makes my system different is that we don't care what the name (diagnosis) is; instead we care about why and how you came to have this condition. Heart disease and atherosclerosis are the best example of this. We have all been led to believe that cholesterol is a big, bad monster that will kill us all. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact if your cholesterol levels drop too low, this can be far worse for your health. In today's traditional healthcare model, if your cholesterol goes above 200 your doctor will put you on a statin drug to lower your number. But your doctor never tries to figure out why your cholesterol became elevated in the first place. There could be a dozen different reasons ranging from underactive thyroid to autoimmune conditions and inflammation.

So you take the drug, your cholesterol



ies is to lay down a cholesterol plaque to help the area heal. So now you see the cholesterol is not the problem, the inflammation is.

There are several ways to measure the levels of inflammation in your body. Simple blood tests measuring chemicals like homocysteine, C-reactive protein, and erythrocyte sedimentation rate can give us insight into how much inflammation is present in your body. The next step is to find out why your body is inflamed. The most common reasons are blood sugar dysregulation, gastrointestinal infections (dysbiosis), adrenal gland exhaustion, thyroid problems, autoimmune conditions and immune system dysregulation.

Let's take another example from the thyroid gland. The number one cause of low functioning thyroid (hypothyroid) is an autoimmune condition called Hashimoto's Thyroiditis. In this condition your immune system is attacking your thyroid gland as if it were an invader from the outside like a bacteria or a virus. When a person's thyroid gland becomes sluggish, they make fat more quickly than it can be metabolized. This drives up your cholesterol and triglycerides. Hypothyroidism also has a negative effect on your gall bladder and liver function. This can also increase your cholesterol levels. As your immune system gets fired up to attack the thyroid it produces chemical called cytokines, which increase the level of inflammation in your body. This is a vicious negative feedback loop which left unchecked can be devastating to your overall health.

Don't treat your symptoms; treat what's causing your symptoms. Many times it's chronic, systemic inflammation. Ask the right questions (run the proper tests) and



you get the right answers (solutions for your chronic health problems).

*Dr. Jin Sung is a chiropractic physician who offers a unique, drug-free, and effective approach to the management of chronic health conditions. He utilizes Brain Based Therapy and Functional Medicine approaches to achieve excellent results with his patients. Call 978 688 6999 or visit [www.DrJinSung.com](http://www.DrJinSung.com)*

goes down and you and the doctor are both happy. But should you be? Statin drugs are the most prescribed drugs in this country and we have been using them for decades so heart disease should be on the rapid decline, right? The problem is that heart disease is on the rise. There are many studies showing the horrific side effects of statin use as well.

The overlooked issue is the amount of inflammation in your body. High cholesterol only puts you at risk of heart disease when inflammation is present. Chronic inflammation causes damage to the inner walls of your circulatory system. The inflammatory chemicals are like wire scrub brushes scraping the inside of your blood vessels. Your body's response to these scrapes and cuts in your arteries

# Let's talk about Food

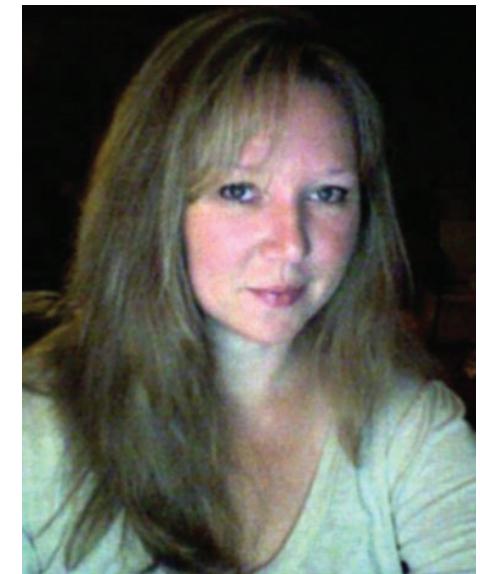
**Pennie Hale**

VALLEY PATRIOT FOOD COLUMNIST

December is a month chock full of events. We all have work parties, family gatherings, travel plans and busy schedules. There are meals to prepare and desserts to bake. Sometimes we give food as gifts and we also receive them. Food seems to be in abundance for most of us. How do we get through (and enjoy) the Christmas season without giving into carb addiction? We don't!

I think that we should all allow ourselves to enjoy holiday food. However, overindulgence is never a good idea. Our caloric intake is hard to track when we're nibbling on cookies, pies, cakes and other treats. Personally, I enjoy all of the different meals and treats and I know that if I control my portions and increase my activity level, I can maintain my weight and not gain.

Some of the foods that I look forward to each year are the colorful sugar cookies, cream cheese chocolate chip bars, pies with whipped cream, meats and cheeses, the appetizers and hot main courses, the dishes at the potlucks, the December 25th streusel and danish, and all of the plates of home-cooked goods that come wrapped in colorful cellophane. Different cultures prepare different dishes. We all have our favorites. The preparing and serving of food is part of what we do as friends and family when we are able to spend time together. Baking with my children is always a fun event and one that I enjoyed with



my mother. When you allow yourself to enjoy the process of cooking and baking, and share what you have prepared, it's a good feeling.

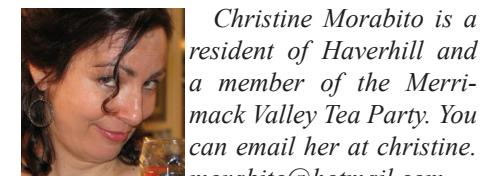
So when we are faced with an overabundance of sweet, delicious food, how do we keep control over that inevitable urge to overeat? That can be tricky. What I plan to do is to start each day knowing that at some point, I will be faced with that challenge. If I start my day off with a small bowl of oatmeal with fresh fruit, I leave room to have a small pastry when I get to the office. If I eat a lunch that's low in calorie and carbohydrates, perhaps I can have a small chocolate chip cookie for dessert. If I have a salad

**FOOD, PAGE 32**

## TEA PARTY: FROM PAGE 19

working in so called sweatshops may be starvation, child prostitution and disease.

As a conservative, I am often accused of supporting "the rich." If that describes inventors, business owners, scientists, job creators, innovators and entrepreneurs, then color me guilty. If, along the way I encounter a poor person who creates jobs and radically improves the lives of his fellow man, I'll gladly support him too.



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

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# Pet Holiday Gifts in The Valley

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

Looking for some gift ideas for your pets in the Merrimack Valley..

**1. Ciao! Bow Wow** – located in the Butcher Boy Plaza North Andover, has tons of great Bling Bling collars, tasty treats and tons of stylish accessories and apparel for your cats and dogs. Open House Thursday Dec 8 and Dec 15 from 4-7PM and receive 10% off all purchases

**2. Bark of the Town** – looking for Patty? Well her shop has relocated from Andover to RT 114 North Andover. Don't forget to get your pooch or kitty all fluffed up for the holiday company !

**3. One Tail at a Time Rescue** - Well if Santa will be bringing home a new family companion I'm sure he will consider adoption ! Contact Kate Valley Patriot's puppy girl for Santa's adoption requests.

**4. K-9 Excursions** – Keep those pooches well behaved ! If your getting a new puppy help them learn the basics with



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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 wiggiewalk@comcast.net. Become a fan on facebook at Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care and follower of www.traceythedogwalker.blogspot.com



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# Pet Holiday Gifts in The Lowell Area

Looking for some gift ideas for your pets in the Lowell and surrounding areas..

**1. The Barkery** – can't forget those stocking stuffers ! Doggie treats are the best and at The Barkery located in Tewksbury you will be able to pick out exactly the treat your pup would want. The Barkery also accepts on line orders [www.thebarkeryonline.com](http://www.thebarkeryonline.com)

**2. The Grooming Emporium** – Lowell's favorite and fun grooming location.. get those holiday grooms and show your pampered pets off to all your company. 1275 Pawtucket Bld 978-454-9663

**3. Lowell Humane Society** - Happy Holidays ! Save a life and adopt a rescue. Contact the Lowell Humane Society and request a visit to see all the cats and dogs ready for Santa to bring home.

**4. Mike's Dog Training** – Pups to Police K-9 ...Mike has been training for many years and is a true professional.

Mike will create a specialized training program that is best for your dog and your family. He travels to your home and will cover most towns North of Boston. 978-337-8551. Very Affordable too !

**5. Peace of Mind Pet Care** – covering areas in Billerica and Chelmsford, Peace of Mind is a wonderful pet care company. Jen has been in business over 4yrs and is insured and bonded. 978-835-2269 If you are not located in these areas visit [www.petsit.com](http://www.petsit.com) to find a sitter near you.

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 wiggiewalk@comcast.net. Become a fan on facebook at Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care and follower of [www.traceythedogwalker.blogspot.com](http://www.traceythedogwalker.blogspot.com)

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# How much is that doggy in the window?

Chris Arnott

OUTREACH COORDINATOR  
LOWELL HUMANE SOCIETY

What child doesn't envision waking up on Christmas morning to find a cute, fluffy friend with a ribbon around its neck waiting under the tree? Here are a few things to think about before making that holiday pet purchase!

• Type – Do you want a pet to snuggle up and watch television with you at night? Or are you looking for an outdoorsy type who can hike and visit the beach with you? Think about how you want your new pet to fit into your lifestyle.

• Time – Does your family have the time to put into a new pet? From house training to chewing, just the daily exer-

cise needs of a new pet can take a lot of time. Take a close look at your family's schedule to decide if you'll have time to train your new pet and give it plenty of socialization. By looking at your available time, you'll be able to figure out what type of animal is best for you!

• Money – Adopting a pet from an animal shelter is a great way to help your community and is also less expensive. Most animals at shelters have some vaccines and are spayed or neutered already! Be sure to check with a local veterinarian to find out what the regular costs for annual care will be and tuck away some extra money in case of emergency- pets have accidents, injuries and get sick just like humans!

• Allergies- Make sure no one in the household has allergies that may cause you to surrender your new furry friend in the future. If you're not sure, visit a friend's house or an animal shelter to pet the type of animal you are thinking of adopting- then go home and wait to see if you get itchy, sneezy or watery eyes!

• Shop or Adopt? Skip the pet stores and head to your local animal shelter! For an adoption fee much lower than pet store prices your pet will already be spayed or neutered and you'll be helping the community! Plus, most pet stores get their animals from puppy mills where the animals are treated inhumanely; who wants to support that? If you decide not to go the animal shelter route, be sure to do your research before taking any animal home.

• No Pets Allowed - Even if you own your home, there may be restrictions on the type of pet you can have in your home owners insurance. Be sure to check

first! If you are a renter, check with your landlord before bringing home a new pet, it won't be good for you or the animal if you find out down the line they aren't allowed!

We encourage you to involve the entire family in the adoption of a new pet! Imagine how excited your children will be when they find out they can be involved in selecting their



furry friend. Consider wrapping items such as a leash, collar, food bowls and toys to place under the Christmas Tree and plan a family trip to select your new pet. Take time as a family searching and researching breeds and realize it may take time to find the perfect fit for your family. In the end the time invested in choosing just the right one will be well worth it! Contact The Lowell Humane Society for help choosing the right pet for your family! You can visit their website at [www.lowellhumane.org](http://www.lowellhumane.org) or speak to an adoption counselor today at 978-452-7781.

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## PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

# Four Years and Counting!

This month celebrates my four year anniversary writing for this fantastic newspaper! First and foremost, I want to give a big thank you to Tom Duggan (editor of the Valley Patriot).

Without the "VP", there would be no Puppy Girl column. Tom has given me an outlet to promote rescue and adoption and I couldn't be more thankful for that. I still remember the first day I met with Tom.

I had just joined my dad in running our golf company called "Swing-Rite" when I contacted Tom about the possibility of him writing an article to highlight our local company.

During our meeting, I happened to mention that I had just become involved with a great puppy rescue group out of Haverhill called "One Tail at a Time."

Well that's all it took. Forget the interview about the golf company! Tom asked me if I liked to write and if I wanted to write a column about saving puppies for the Valley Patriot.

I thought 'what better way to get the word out about One Tail at a Time and dog rescue?'

I also want to thank all of my readers who have been with me from the start of my column in 2007 and to those who I have picked up along the way over the past few years.

Thanks to Tom I've been able to educate my readers on many different topics from: healthy food choices for your dog, to summertime pet safety tips.

Writing my column "Puppy Love" is a hobby for me - and dog rescue is a passion. I can say that it's a really great feeling to be involved with two great pastimes that provide me so much joy.

My biggest goal with writing Puppy Love is to educate and bring awareness to my readers. If you learn just one thing from reading my column, that makes it all worth while. One last thank you to PG, my Puppy Love column editor and



my best friend. Thanks for giving me the confidence and inspiration to keep writing.

So here we are, 4 years later. Many things have changed, but one thing remains the same- there are still overcrowded shelters and millions of dogs are being euthanized every year, simply because there are not enough homes for them. Let's talk about an organization that is trying to help with that problem. If you have read my columns before, it's no surprise what organization I'm talking about.

One Tail at a Time Rescue is doing their 2nd annual home for the holidays (H4H) program. So what exactly does H4H's mean? For most of us, December is a month that is filled with giving, magic, and holiday cheer. But for shelter dogs, it's quite the opposite. It's a "last call" for many shelter dogs. The period of time from Thanksgiving through December 23rd is a low adoption time. People are busy preparing their homes and lives for the upcoming holidays. One of our amazing volunteers and intake coordinator (she's the one who pulls the dogs from the shelter) down in Virginia, Erin Webber, remembers seeing a few very adoptable dogs at her local shelter. A few days later, she then found out they had been euthanized. Upset, she looked into why this had happened. Many shelters close for the holidays and it's a lot easier to deal with feeding and cleaning when you have smaller numbers than a 100% packed shelter. So the shelters "clean out" -if you will. The shelter is also packed due to the fact there are fewer adoptions

during this time. They are also preparing for the influx of dogs and cute puppies that will arrive at the shelter shortly after Christmas. Some of these dogs were given as gifts to sometimes unsuspecting recipients. Or the cute puppy that the kids went crazy over has all of a sudden lost his appeal and the novelty has worn off. Enough with the sad but true reality of the



world of rescue...this is where One Tail at a Time and H4H program comes in. One year (before she approached One Tail with the idea) Erin pulled as many dogs as she could and kept them at her house or boarded them until she found foster or forever homes for them. Last year Erin approached One Tail with the sad facts about the "happy holiday season" for shelter dogs. She also talked to her local shelters and worked out an agreement with them that they would lower the pull and vetting fees, and therefore we could reflect this deal with lower adoption fees.

We wasted no time. Meg Reynolds, the President of the rescue was on board. Our volunteer coordinators - Danielle Castignetti this year and Lisa Cerroni last year- sent out an email to our foster base and pleaded for them to open their hearts and their homes this holiday season. I remember reading the email and within a few minutes, responses from foster homes started to flood in (myself included). People replied "count me in!", "sign us up", "we'll take one!" it was truly overwhelming.

The holidays are a tough time. People are always busy, but the holidays prove to be an extra busy time for most. The fact that these volunteers would take on the responsibility of having a four legged house guest for an unknown amount of time, was just incredible! Not to mention they didn't even know what kind of dog they would be getting. During other times of the year we have a little more time and can often times send emails with the pictures of the dogs we saved and foster homes can "pick" which dog they would prefer to foster. The Home for the Holidays dogs are such an urgent case that we simply

don't have time to take and send pictures and let people decide. We have to know who is on board and then just pull! A few hours can mean life or death for these dogs. The families that have volunteered to foster a H4H's dog have given the best gift this holiday season, a second chance to these amazing shelter dogs. It really doesn't get much better than knowing you truly saved a life. I would like to extend a big THANK YOU to all the amazing people who make up the volunteer group

and foster home base for One Tail

at a Time. I will give my readers an update in an upcoming column about exactly how many dogs we were able to save throughout H4H's program.

If you want to donate to One Tail at a

Time Rescue or "sponsor" one of the dogs that we save (I can email you a picture of the exact dog your donation when to), please send a check to One Tail at a Time Rescue PO Box 155 Boxford, MA. 01921. Remember all donations are tax deductible!

What's great about donating to One Tail is that you know exactly where your money is going. It's going to saving more dogs, paying for vet bills, and buying food and toys for the dogs we save. We are 100% volunteer, so no one gets paid for their time, gas, etc. Keep that in mind when you are thinking about charitable organizations to donate to this holiday.

Isn't it nice to know that 100% of your donation goes towards the actual cause you wanted it to go to? Wishing you and your families a very happy holiday and a healthy new year! Happy Holidays!

You can email Puppygirl at kwswingrite@aol.com



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## Senate cracks down on habitual offenders

BOSTON – The Senate on Thursday unanimously passed a tough and balanced sentencing bill that cracks down on habitual offenders and provides new tools for law enforcement to make the streets and citizens of the Commonwealth safer, announced Senator Barry Finegold (D—Andover).

The bill requires the habitual offender tag to be placed on anyone convicted of two crimes from a list of the most serious offenses, including murder, rape and kidnapping. It also closes a loophole in current law so that sentences served for federal crimes would count toward habitual offender status.

"This bill is a balanced approach to the violence plaguing our cities and towns," said Finegold. "It makes sure the most violent repeat offenders stay off our streets while implementing cost-saving measures that make sense for public safety. Public safety is my first priority and I believe this bill makes common sense reforms to our parole system and crime laws."

Habitual offenders would have to serve two-thirds of any sentence before becoming parole eligible. Currently, they must complete half of their sentence. Additionally, the bill mandates that any habitual offender found guilty of a third offense from the list of most serious crimes would be ineligible for parole.

For anyone serving a life sentence, the bill raises the parole eligibility threshold to a two-thirds vote of the parole board from the current majority vote. Judges must set a parole-eligible date 15 to 20 years into a life sentence. Inmates serving multiple life sentences would not be eligible for parole.

The bill mandates post-release supervision of anyone committed of a felony after the law's effective date. The bill also does the following:

- Reduces mandatory minimum sentences for certain drug crimes under the Controlled Substances Act;

- Offenders currently serving mandatory minimum sentences in state prison for drug crimes would be parole eligible upon completion of the new mandatory minimum sentences contained in the bill;

- Reduces the area considered to be a school zone from 1,000 feet to 500 feet for purposes of enhanced sentences for selling drugs;

- Makes a technical change to the 2008 domestic violence law, ensuring a penalty for a first offense, and creating a stiffer penalty for second/subsequent offenses;

- Establishes the crimes of assault and battery by discharging a firearm, assault with a firearm, murder for hire and strangulation;

- Establishes a "felon in possession" law prohibiting persons convicted of crimes punishable by 2½ years or more in state prison from possessing firearms;

- Increases the amount of good credit that inmates can accrue per program per month from 2½ days to 5 days; Increases the total amount of good credit that inmates can accrue in a month from 7½ days to 10 days; Allows an additional 10 days of credit where an inmate successfully completes a 6-month program; and

- Requires the Department of Correction, sheriffs and the Department of Mental Health to share medical and mental health information when transferring inmates.

To further assist law enforcement efforts, the bill also provides for a limited expansion of the state wiretapping law to include homicide, illegal possession and distribution of drugs, and illegal possession of firearms. It also updates the law to capture text messages and other electronic communications.

One addition to the bill approved on the floor during debate requires level 2 and 3 sex offenders to register in person at a local police department within two days of release.

## Let's Talk about Food: From Page 29

with a healthy protein for dinner, maybe I can have some hot cocoa later on in the evening.

Food is good! It's enjoyable! We all have our traditional dishes that we like to prepare with our friends and family members. I know that my oldest daughter Megan likes blueberry crumb-top pie. My son Nathaniel likes cookies. My youngest daughter Emily likes to bake. She likes trying new recipes and experimenting in the kitchen. She likes cupcakes. My coworkers like candy. Cortney, my best friend, likes dark chocolate covered roasted coffee beans! Tom Duggan, the editor of this newspaper, likes cheesecake!

We can't avoid food. We must eat. When we let our unhealthy food addictions control our food choices on a consistent basis, day after day, that's when we gain weight. When we give ourselves permission to be in "holiday mode" and start celebrating with food at every event and every meal, we can expect that our pants will get tighter and we will see a difference on the scale. I am still trying to lose weight.

I don't want to gain. So this time of year is a challenge for me. And if it's a challenge for me, I know it is for most of you. I don't have an iron will. I will never be one of those people you see out jogging at 5 am. I won't ever say that I have my carb addiction under control because that would be a lie.

I won't ever say that I don't eat carbs at all because that's not practical and more importantly, it's not necessary! Yes if you have an addiction, you must abstain from the substance to which you have become addicted because having just a small amount makes you want more.

But an addiction to food is a bit more complicated than that. You can avoid certain foods but you can't avoid food altogether. And in moderation, treats are okay! I know that I'd rather have a small

piece of pie than sit and think about not being able to have pie. I'd rather have some pudding than throw mental daggers at the people eating pudding! I want to keep enjoying food but I know that I must be careful because I know that gaining weight is not what I want for myself. It's not healthy. And, quite frankly, I like being able to be in a holiday photo without fear that I will look larger than everyone!

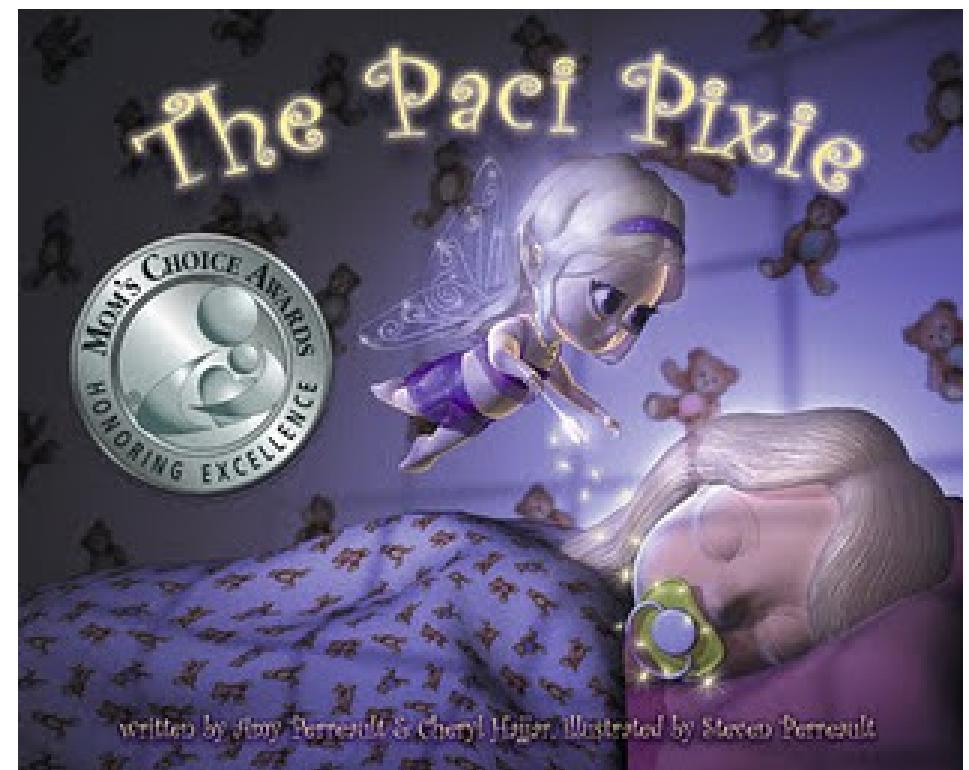
I hope you all enjoy this holiday season. Share and enjoy food with those you love. Relax and make the best of the spirit of the season. If you have an overstock of food, think about sharing it with an elderly neighbor or a shelter. If you are in need of food, seek out your local food pantry or email me and I will try to connect you with resources.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas. If you struggle with an addiction of any kind, I urge you to seek support. If you struggle with a food addiction or disorder, know that I understand. I would like to hear your story.

What I know for sure is that several things help me with my struggles with weight. Talking about it is at the top of that list. Talking about food addictions, disorders, obsessions and unhealthy thoughts about food is a common daily occurrence for me.

Discussions about healthy food recipes and exercise routines are also common. What I would like to do with this column is to offer you, the Valley Patriot reader, the opportunity to share your own personal stories with me.

I am not a food, weight loss or eating disorder expert. I am not someone who is qualified to offer advice or tips. I would, however, love to read your story and possibly share it with other readers and continue my own personal story in a monthly column. If you are interested, please email me at pennielacouture@verizon.net



## Pacifiers, Pixies and Parents Magazine:

One woman's journey from working mom to award-winning author

By - Cecilia Calabrese

Challenges often present people with unique opportunities that they may never have had the chance to conquer. One such challenge provided the spring-board to an award-winning career in writing children's books intended to teach and inspire young minds. Such is the story of local author and single mom, Cheryl Hajjar.

It all started six years ago with a struggle that many parents face on a daily basis: how to get your child to relinquish a beloved pacifier? Cheryl's then three-year-old son, Dylan was resistant to weaning off his pacifier. So she wrote a song that she transformed into a book, which will soon be a series of five books based upon her mythical creations, the Indigo Pixies. In collaboration with her cousin, Amy Perrault, Cheryl created a series of books designed to strengthen and encourage young children through the rites-of-passage in growing up. The family collaboration extends to Amy's husband, Steve Perrault, a graphic designer who did the illustrations in all of the chapters in 3-D animation.

Hailing originally from Methuen, MA, Cheryl graduated from University of Massachusetts, Lowell with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Minor in performing arts, piano. She went on to be a songwriter in Nashville, Tennessee. After returning

to Massachusetts, Cheryl worked for seven years as a school musician in piano. She has also worked for the last eleven years as a real estate agent.

Cheryl's devotion to helping her son grow through childhood milestones has transformed this busy mom into an award-winning author and entrepreneur. The Pixies work their "magic" in helping youngsters transition from a crib to their own bed; giving up dependency on a favorite item (like a "blanket") and drinking from a cup when it is time to give up the bottle. Truly, the assistance offered by this innovative creation is of timeless value to generations of parents. Because of their entertaining and educational qualities The Indigo Pixies were featured in the March 2011 issue of Parents Magazine and won the Mom's Choice Award for Best Children's Picture Book for 2011.

With the launch of an expanded product line in the works, Cheryl intends to remain very busy for the foreseeable future in the world of the Indigo Pixies.

Cheryl's works can be found for purchase in local independent book stores or on line at her beautifully illustrated web site: www.indigopixies.com.

A law degree from Quinnipiac University (currently on hiatus from practice of law for family reasons) and am City Councilor-elect for the City of Agawam.

## LETTER: FROM PAGE 9

him feel better each evening as he boogies away in the all-night gin joints, so be it. But think of this. He had two years to find and hire a permanent school superintendent and he did not. He had two years to develop a game plan to improve the schools and he did not.

And he had two years to re-organize and streamline the bloated administrative bureaucracy and he did not. Now the state will do what the mayor has abdicated.

The sad part is that by the time the schools might see any substantive turnaround in the next 5-6 years on top of the wasted last 2, that would represent a child's entire realm of lost opportunity from kindergarten through middle school. Simply pathetic.

And during all this we basically get silence from the Lantigua community. I will call them that because many Latinos and non-Latinos alike in our city were

legitimately proud to have elected the first Latino mayor in Lawrence and worked actively toward that goal. But are they really happy with the Frankenstein that has been created? Is their silence a result of embarrassment or plain old apathy? Do tell.

When elections are completed, a community hopes a qualified leader is chosen. However, that person actually must lead, must have a plan, and must have the intellectual capacity to bring people together toward a common goal for the benefit of the community. Instead, so far, all we seem to get is a guy who just wants to cash the checks and live the slogan "Party on, dude!"

Can't Lawrence do better than that? Does not Lawrence deserve better than that? What will the next 24 months bring upon us?

You can email Bob at bobokesq@hotmail.com



## Paul Pierce and The “Million Hour Challenge”

BOSTON (Nov. 19, 2011) – One million hours of jumping, running, playing, dancing and MOVING in 2012. That’s what Paul Pierce asked hundreds of youth to take on at a kick-off rally today for the Million Hour Challenge, created by the all-star’s Truth on Health Campaign and The Boston Foundation’s CHAMPS (Coaches Helping Athletes through Mentoring and Positive Sports) Boston Initiative.

The kids spent the morning at Kroc Center Boston immersed in fun and age-appropriate strength, endurance and flexibility exercises, including: crab soccer, “Watch Your Back” tag, an Iron Lung Relay, stretching and yoga. Activities were led by local fitness experts from Playworks, a national nonprofit that works with public schools to create play for children. The attendees were also treated to a hip-hop dance routine performed by Boston Celtics Junior Dance Team Lil’ Phunk and a Double Dutch jump rope demonstration featuring the Beantown Jumpers.

The event participants, young athletes from Pierce’s FitClub34, Boston Public Schools and the CHAMPS initiative, received Paul Pierce Activity Watches powered by Switch2Health to record their physical activity during the event and throughout the challenge year. The innovative device tracks physical activity and motivates kids to be active through rewards and incentives.

“I’m excited that The Boston Foundation CHAMPS initiative has joined Truth on Health in our ongoing mission to fight childhood obesity and motivate kids to make healthy choices,” said Paul Pierce. “The more kids we can reach and inspire to get active, the faster we’ll achieve our goal of logging a million hours, so come on kids, come check out my website at [truthonhealth.org](http://truthonhealth.org) and see how you can join the movement.”

“Our goal is to get as many kids in Boston engaged in the Million Hour Challenge as possible, get them on the right track by giving them the tools and resources they need to get fit, and then use this as a model for a national movement that we can roll out across the country,” he continued. “So I’m challenging all the kids in Boston to join us and show the country how it’s done, and help set an example for the country to make a difference in the lives of our nation’s youth.”

Pierce started the Truth on Health

Campaign to motivate and educate kids on how to incorporate physical fitness and healthy eating into their everyday lives. Its signature component, Fit-Club34, is a rewards-based “fit” club that provides children with the information, resources, and tools necessary to become more active and physically fit. This fall, the campaign joined forces with The Boston Foundation CHAMPS Boston Initiative to encourage more Boston youth to exercise and eat healthy.

The Massachusetts Million Hour Challenge will promote health and fitness by engaging youth in a statewide effort to complete one million collective hours of physical activity. The goal is to inform communities across Massachusetts including youth, families, service providers and educators about the growing problem of childhood obesity, while uniting youth around a common goal to instill healthy habits for a lifetime.

“CHAMPS is about providing quality activities that set a tone for kids to develop a lifelong commitment to an active, healthy lifestyle,” said Paul Grogan, President of the Boston Foundation. “We’re thrilled to partner with a star athlete like Paul Pierce and his Truth on Health Campaign to offer this unique challenge. We think the innovative Paul Pierce Activity Watches will really help motivate kids and encourage healthy activity by allowing them to ‘keep score’ on their efforts. And we hope the habits they embrace this year will last a lifetime, teaching them that being active every day is both fun and beneficial.”

More than 2,000 kids statewide – all members of the CHAMPS Boston certified coach’s network and other Truth on Health partner organizations including the Alliance for a Healthier Generation – will join FitClub34 and receive a Paul Pierce Activity Watch to record their exercise. Each member will commit to a goal of engaging in 60 minutes of activity per day, five days per week. The Truth on Health and CHAMPS Boston will offer grants and capacity-building assistance for organizations whose kids log the most activity hours.

Pierce created FitClub34 to serve as a template program for professional athletes to embrace and roll out in their hometown cities across the country.

For more information, visit [www.truthonhealth.org](http://truthonhealth.org) or [www.champs-boston.org](http://www.champs-boston.org).

## SHAWN HANSEN’S COMEDY CORNER:

### Shawn Hansen

VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Halloween is a holiday where people can dress up in a disguise to portray a character of someone else.

After the collapse of the Boston Red Sox this past season with the team derailing their way away from the playoffs, Nightmare on Elm Street came to town.

Finishing the season with an overall record of 90-72 in third place was the beginning of the end for Manager Terry Francona, General Manager Theo Epstein, Bench Coach DeMarlo Hale, and Side Line Reporter for NESN Heidi Watney, and Closing Pitcher Jonathan Papelbon... not to mention the fact that Jason Varitek, Tim Wakefield, and David ‘Big Papi’ Ortiz are still free agents.

With this said Spooky World presented Fear at Fenway after the derailment of the third place Red Sox lost the chances to advance to the 2011 playoffs, and said goodbye to the aforementioned names.

Anyways, going to Fear at Fenway was excellent as there was an estimated hundred or so ghouls, and goblins jumping out from wherever they were hiding to frighten those who dared to trespass on their property.

Mike Krausert who is a director at Nightmare New England said this event was the first Spooky World at Fenway Park, and the entire display of haunted rooms, vortex’s, 3D Houses, and cemeteries were all put together in three days.



Brighton.

With the skeletons left in the closet behind ones self when finishing the Fear at Fenway, everyone had to squeeze through a rubber room as Spooky World, and Red Sox fans stood on the soil of Fenway Park when making it through the room.

Shawn Hansen’s Writers Comments: “Witnessing Spooky World Presents The Fear at Fenway made me jump a handful of times as some ghouls, and goblins threw me off guard because I wasn’t expecting them to jump out at me. I think that next years Fear at Fenway should include John Lackey, Josh Beckett, and a bucket of fried chicken.”



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# Timmy Trot 5k

## Connie Molinaro

The morning after Thanksgiving was a beautiful sunny day! To most people this is marked as "Black Friday" and people rush onto the highways to get to the stores for the deal of the season, but to me and a group of my friends, we marked this day by supporting our dearest friend and co-worker in a benefit for her dad.

Lt. Timothy Oliveira was a firefighter at the Salisbury fire house for over 27 years. On July 29th he was critically injured while on duty at the station and succumbed to those injuries on July 31st. In the months to follow Lt. Oliveira's tragic death, his family thought of ways to honor this great man, and so the Timmy Trot 5k was born. 246 people registered and vowed to support this man's memory either by walking or running to raise money for his memorial fund-150 of those registered the day of the event! The family, especially Mr. Oliveira's daughters, Nicole and Kaylie, and beloved wife Pam, were overwhelmed by the love and support being shown for Tim that morning. The mood was electric and we were all so excited to do this for Nicole and her family. Even 2 other friends and I who

have NEVER thought of doing a 5k-were thrilled to be doing the event. But this is what you do for those you love.

A few days later, the 22nd Annual Firefighter of the Year ceremony in Worcester, MA, was held. 150 firefighters were honored for going above and beyond the call of duty, and Lt. Tim was 1 of 3 fallen firefighters honored posthumously that night.

The donations are still coming in from the road race and the family is making decisions for the best distribution of the funds raised from this event. This 5k will become an annual event in Salisbury, the town Tim called home, and his legacy will live on-not just in the hearts of his family-but in the community he so proudly served. It was obvious from the outpouring of support that bright sunny morning, that Lt. Oliveira was there and feeling the love being shown to him and his "girls" and extended family.

For more information or to make a donation to this great cause, please go to: [www.timmytrot5k.com](http://www.timmytrot5k.com)

Below is a message from the website:  
What an event!  
We just want to thank each and every



one of you for your support and making this a very successful memorial event for Timmy!

A special thank you goes to the Salisbury Fire Department, surrounding fire departments, emergency management and the Salisbury Police Department. We couldn't have done it without you.

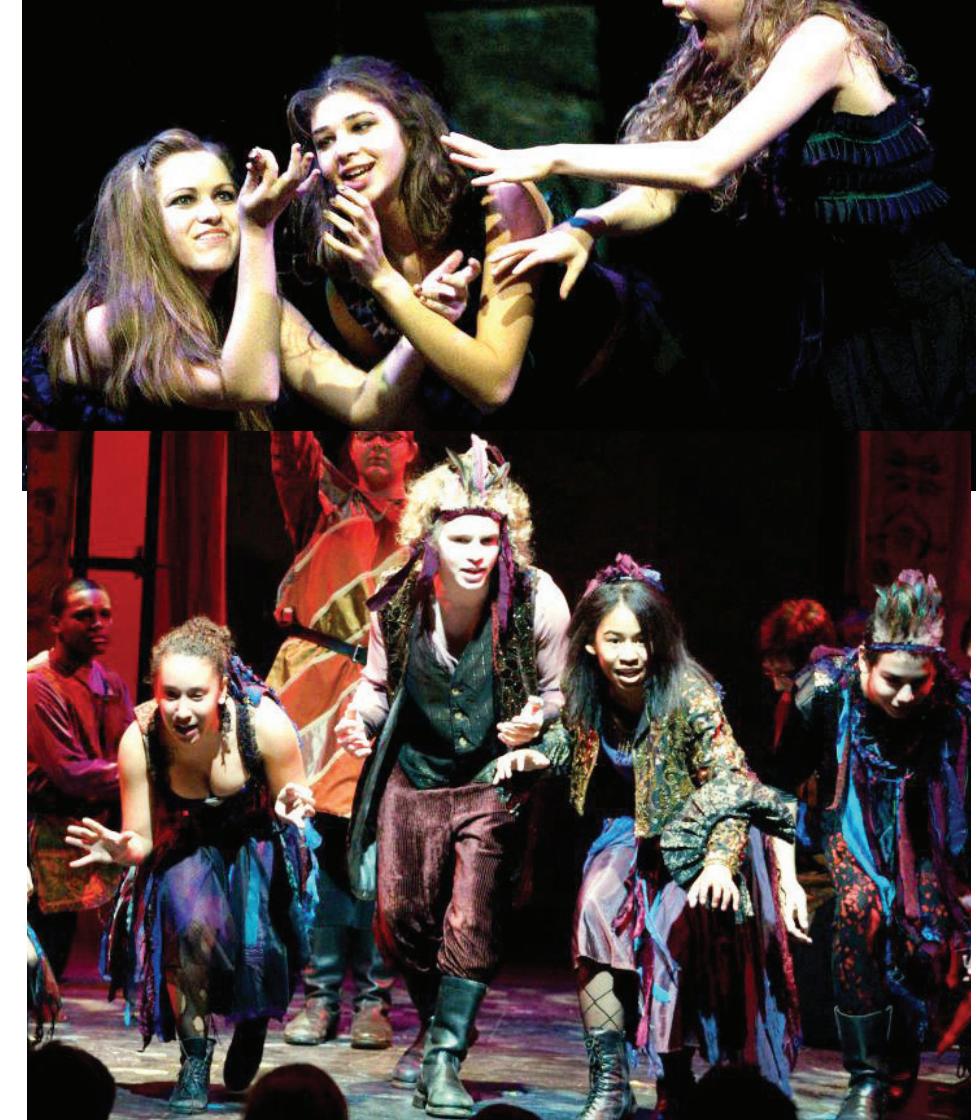
A special thank you to J&C Entertain-

ment, Charlie's Pizza/Salisbury Sunoco for their patronage the day of the race. You made it happen!

And finally, thank you to all the volunteers, you all worked very hard: Timmy would be proud.

We will see you all next year. Keep an eye on the site for memorial fund merchandise, like t-shirts, sweatshirts and more.

## Shakespeare at North Andover High School



## Nate Richards

VALLEY PATRIOT HIGH SCHOOL COLUMNIST

The drama department at North Andover High School is like no other.

From putting on shows such as, Sweeny Todd, Romeo and Juliet and upcoming Legally Blond the musical, the diversity keeps growing.

This year was no different as the North Andover High School Drama Guild had the unique opportunity to present to their peers with Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream; a comedy of love, confusion, and epic entertainment in the forest.

Every year North Andover gets the distinct honor of welcoming two outstanding directors from Shakespeare & Co. located in Lenox Massachusetts.

Tom Jaeger is back and we welcome a new face, Connor Morney. Together they would help North Andover High students produce an outstanding show.

Everyone involved in the play worked extremely hard to make this years performance a success. After weeks of lengthy rehearsals that tested both the cast and the crew's ability to understand the "modern" English language, we were ready to put on a marvelous show.

Two shows on Saturday November 12 and one show Sunday November 13 resulted in an audience response that was

more than we could have hoped for.

From the play within the play, to the quarreling lovers and the mischievous fairies, it was full of laughter and toppling set pieces.

Everyone involved packed up their bags and prepared to jump on a bus heading towards the home of Shakespeare and Co. located in Lenox Massachusetts.

The cast and the crew would stay in Lenox from Friday November 18th to Sunday November 20th.

Every year Shakespeare and Co. gathers students from ten schools from all over to come and perform for their annual Fall Festival of Shakespeare.

This was in no way, shape or form a competition. Students make friends with the actors, stage hands, light and sound folks. The shows themselves are stunning to watch. The audience in every show was brought back in time and able to hiss at the bad guys and woo at the loves' scenes. They meet again with the same anxiety and the excitement next year.

As someone who was apart of this magnificent experience I want to thank everyone who was involved in making this years Shakespeare production one of the greatest.

# Live the WOW!

**All You Have To Do Is BELIEVE! Yes, That Means in Santa Claus ... Flying Reindeer, Elves and the Possibility of Peace on Earth. People Living the WOW! Really DO Believe! ALL Year Long.**

Thomas Connors

VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Come alive to the Art of Believing during this Christmas Season. Conjure up those magical visions of sugarplums and Rudolph flying over roof tops. And of course, the jolly old Man with his white beard and red suit and silver bells and twinkling lights create a most special time of year.

All these things make for proven commercial success. In fact, the commercialization of Christmas has been so successful you, too, let the real message of the Season slip by with little thought or notice. Presents to be bought and parties to attend take your attention away from the real potential energy the Season brings. And that is the Power of Believing!

**Believing may be sparked at Christmas but the type I'm talking about energizes you to Live the WOW! each and every day if you let it be your guide.**

Just like people Living the WOW! you can take the spirit of the Season and transfer it to the other 364 days of the year. Why bother? Simple. The positive energy that Believing can bring to your Life and the lives of those you love is so powerful that to ignore it is truly irresponsible. Believing can make the difference in who you become and what you actually accomplish in your Life.

With all that is going on in the world around you it is so easy to pooh, pooh oth-

er people's reason for success. Attributing their getting ahead to having been born with a silver spoon in their mouth, who they knew to get where they are and even illegitimate means, are nothing more than baseless excuses. They serve no purpose other than a feeble attempt to let you off the hook for not making all your dreams come true. Rather than let this golden of all opportunities slip by you once again this Holiday Season, become determined to maintain the spirit of Believing into all of next year. Commit to making it a WOW!

**If Three Wise Men Believed so much in following a Star to find their New Born King, certainly simple people like you and me can stir up enough Belief to make a difference in the lives of those we touch each day.**

Making their way across unbearable desert heat and sand as well as being easy targets for thieves, they never doubted for a moment that they would reach the Child. And they did. Just as they Believed they would.

And so, with frankincense, gold and myrrh, they bestowed their gifts upon the baby in the manger. They welcomed Him with the most fitting of treasures. And the world has never been the same ever since.

**I Guarantee your Life will also never be the same once you learn to Believe in yourself and your ability to Live the WOW!**

Look, I know Life has not been easy for millions of people out of work all across this country. I know chances are you are one of those people. I also know that you might be in a job you don't want to be in but are afraid of leaving it. You're thinking you might not find another job. You may need the healthcare benefits.

You could also be in a situation where you made great money in the recent past but had to settle for a job paying much less. You may have lost your home or are on the brink of doing so.

No matter how bleak your tomorrow may look today, keep on Believing. Believe in yourself and know that all this will pass. You will be proud again. You will breathe a lot easier. You will once again be the unique gift the Good Lord gave to the world to fulfill His Promise. Believe. You will get through this.

**For over thirty years I have seen people from all walks of life conquer seemingly insurmountable barriers to success. And the one thing they all had in common was ... they Believed!**

Success at American Training is all about Believing. It is about Believing in you. It is about Believing in every one of my Colleagues to guide each Guest, Student or Resident with education, training and support to show them just how much LIFE can Matter.

Take Marco. A Guest of ours for 25 years. Confined to a wheelchair you would think he lived a life of despair and resentment. Hardly. Marco gets around in his powered chair and has a perpetual smile wherever he goes. Whether it is at his part-time job, out in the community dining or during his social activities with friends. At no time does he stop Believing

his Life can be a WOW!

**Despite where you might be right now, make this Christmas a WOW! Not by extravagant spending. But by making the most of what you do have and helping someone who has even less.**

When all seems lost and impossible. When you are sure you are at the end of your road. Look back on this and every Christmas Season of the past to draw up the wherewithal to once again BELIEVE. Then follow through by volunteering to help those who have so much less than you.

Take Santa's "Ho, Ho, Ho!" to heart. Look for Rudolph guiding his sleigh on Christmas Eve and pray for Peace on Earth. Only this year do it with confidence and all the assurances that whatever is not quite right in your world will turn itself around. Better days are ahead.

Then when you realize how much you actually have going for you, despite any and all setbacks, you will look back a year from now and be grateful you never stopped Believing ... in yourself and a special someone else.

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@AmericanTrainingInc.com or by writing to him at Tom Connors, American Training, 102 Glenn Street, Lawrence, MA 01843} © 2011. You can also visit Tom at his BLOG ... TomConnorsThinkPad.blogspot.com

## A Way to Prosperity

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

According to Webster's Dictionary, prosperity means prosperous condition; good fortune, wealth, success, etc. To prosper means to flourish, to succeed, thrive, grow, etc. in a vigorous way. Prosperous means having continued success, prospering, flourishing, well-to-do, well-off, conducive to success; favorable, prosperously.

Biblically speaking, a well known scripture, known to many of us, and seen many times at sporting events, is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In this verse we have God giving out of love. Because He loved, He gave and because He gave his only begotten son out of love, today as a result of His giving, He has many sons and daughters. In the son and daughter category, God became very prosperous, successful and wealthy.

The scriptures go on to say in Ephesians 5: 1, "Be ye therefore followers, (in the Greek, this means imitators), of God, as dear children;" So as God's children we are to be imitators of him. As God out of love gave resulting in him becoming prosperous, we too should give out of love which would result in us becoming prosperous. Continuing on with giving, we read in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 the following, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." In these verses we see the Apostle Paul admonishing the believers to give from the heart, not grudgingly, meaning out of reluctance, hostility, grievance or malice. Also not of

necessity, meaning feelings of habit or custom or of law.

Paul was saying that God would have us give because we truly from our heart want to, with no strings attached. Paul goes on to say that God loves a cheerful or hilarious giver! Giving from the heart, out of love cheerfully with the emphasis being on the giving and not what we will get in return, even Jesus Christ himself said that, "it is more blessed to give than receive" Acts 20:35.

Then God who is able make all grace abound towards us so that we will have all sufficiency in all things to abound to every good work! This tells me that you or I cannot out give God. When we give out of the right place in our hearts, with the right attitude, an attitude of love, God will make sure we will have all sufficiency, (not lack) in all things.

The question that remains is, to whom or where should one give? The answer is wherever or to whom God tells you. That's between you and God alone. It's nobody's business but God and you. God's spoken Word has a lot of power. Look at Genesis 1:1-31, see how many times it says, "and God says..." When God spoke things happened! When God speaks to you and tells you who or where to give, things will happen!

In conclusion, we read in Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his (not yours) riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

I trust that you notice that none of the above has anything to do with politics. Your prosperity has nothing to do with who occupies the White House or City Hall. All of God's Promises are for you! No ifs ands or buts! So shall it be!

During this Christmas Season, I challenge all of you to have fun trying to out give God!

God Bless you all and have a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year!



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# News from the American Legion

## John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

The madness has begun again. The holiday shopping madness that is. Somewhere along the line we have lost the thought that the Christmas season is about family, love, neighbors and friends. When did it all become about shopping at all hours of the night? And people assaulting one another and even using pepper spray to get to the head of the line! Don't get me wrong, I am the first to follow the slogan, "never pay full price". Yet most of us encourage this madness.

And for some this is a time of depression. We think of family and friends who have died. Yes, we all have some in that category. But should we not remember the good times we had with them? I know I dearly miss parents, grandparents, cousins and other family and friends. Yet I will think of the good times we had and what I was able to learn and accomplish because of them. And what would they be thinking and saying if they were here with us today.

This holiday season, let us focus on the positive. Please remember the troops who are serving our country in many places across the Globe. Numbers of them will

not be with their families this holiday season. One of many sacrifices they are making for us. And their families are part of the sacrifice.

It is a tradition in the American Legion to have the State Commander's banquet in November. Therefore, mine was held on November 19th in Marlboro. Invitations were sent to US Senators Brown and Kerry, Representative Nikki Tsongas. Kerry did respond, unable to attend. Brown sent a representative to speak.

No response from N. Tsongas. On the state level, Senators Baddour and Tarr, Representative Dempsey and Campbell were invited. No response despite my personal contact with both of them within a month of the event. Some of the Haverhill City Council were invited. No response. This was all despite the notation that not only was I the first American Legion State Commander from Haverhill I was the first from Essex County since

1950.

Nor can we forget what is happening in politics. As I have mentioned in previous December articles, congratulations to all those who won the elections last month. Those who did not win should also be congratulated for their efforts and their desire to serve the community. The pay, if any, is minimal with long hours and often very few thanks. It takes a lot of commitment to do the job.

The Congressional Super Committee. I was one of 3 Legionnaires from Massachusetts, part of a group called to Washington in early November to meet with representatives of those on the super committee. Each state that has a member on this committee sent someone to DC. We did get to meet with Senator Kerry's legislative director for about 35 minutes. Yet, somewhere along the line, politics got involved in the decision process.

I personally lay the blame on both

parties and the administration. You can decide for yourself who is at fault.

It is pretty plain however to see who is paying the price. You and I.

In my personal reflections, what a shame that in Haverhill for example, less than 25% of the eligible voters came out to vote. Yet many will later complain about something the elected officials are not doing. What is the solution? By making our voices heard to the state and national legislatures. By phone calls and emails. They have heard our voices in the past and will need to hear our voices in the future. Let's not forget that there is a big election coming up next November. I hope there will be a large turnout of voters and that we all pay attention to what votes and actions are being taken whether it is at the National, State or local level.

May God bless our troops and their families as they continue to protect us from those who would do us harm and take away our freedoms.



John Lenotte is the American Legion, Commander, Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4 Haverhill and Vice Commander, Dept. of Massachusetts. You can Email him at [JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net](mailto:JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net)



## Salem Home Care Owners Honored By Enterprise Bank

### Celeste Begley

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Rosaleen Doherty and Jay Kenney, the owners of Right at Home, In Home Care and Assistance in Salem were honored on November 9, 2011 at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium as finalists in the Enterprise Bank's third annual Celebration of Excellence. The awards gala hosted 1500 individuals from the Merrimack Valley business community to honor the finalists and winners in 10 different award categories.

In the past few years, Rosaleen and Jay started training their staff to better relate to Alzheimer's and dementia clients through an experience called the Virtual Dementia Tour, a nationally developed interactive experience using goggles, taped gloves, and static through headphones to simulate how it might feel to have dementia. To

help caregivers and families of dementia patients better understand what their loved ones are dealing with, the Right at Home team has took the Virtual Dementia Tour on the road throughout the Merrimack Valley and North Shore, training over 1000 professionals in, friends and families in

2011 at no charge. Enterprise Bank chose Right at Home as one of three finalists for the Community Service Award.

Right at Home serves the Merrimack



Valley through their location in Haverhill, MA. Right at Home also has locations

serving the North Shore, Colonial Gardens- Beverly and the Wakefield/Melrose area. They offer in-home care giving and healthcare services for seniors. Visit Right at Home at [www.rightathomemass.net](http://www.rightathomemass.net)

rightathomemass.net or call 877-500-CARE for more information. Learn about the Enterprise Bank Celebration at [www.EBCOE.com](http://www.EBCOE.com).

About Right at Home of the North Shore, Merrimack Valley, Wakefield/Melrose and Colonial Gardens (Boston North) Right at Home is an award winning family owned and operated private home health agency. It was started by Jay Kenney and Rosaleen Doherty on the North Shore and is in its 10th year of operation. They have expanded to three offices serving almost 500 families per week with senior home care services.

Right at Home offers in-home companionship, personal care and nursing care to seniors and disabled adults who want to continue to live independently. They directly employ and supervise all care giving staff, each of whom are thoroughly screened, trained, bonded and insured prior to entering a client's home. Right at Home serves all of Essex County and cities and towns North of Boston in Middlesex and Suffolk Counties. For more information on Right at Home, visit [www.rightathomemass.net](http://www.rightathomemass.net) or read the Rosaleen Doherty's care giving blog at [www.rightathomemass.net](http://www.rightathomemass.net) and click BLOG.

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## Exit & Succession Planning can create additional wealth For Business Owners Part 1 of 2

### Michael Salach

PRESIDENT, THE BAY STATE CONSULTING GROUP, INC.

& THE PRESIDENTS ROUNDTABLE

F. Scott Fitzgerald once said "the rich people are different from you and me".

Ernest Hemingway responded "Yes, they have more money and they know how to keep it".

John Babson, Founder of Babson College, said "it's not in the knowing, it's in the doing".

So what's the point of these three comments?

Well here's an example - Ralph Steinbrenner's, owner of the New York Yankees, death of a heart attack at the age of 80 in 2010 came during an unplanned yearlong gap in the estate tax, the first since it was enacted in 1916. Political wrangling had stalemated efforts in Congress to replace the tax that expired in 2009.

Forbes magazine had estimated Mr. Steinbrenner's estate at \$1.1 billion. The federal estate tax in 2009 was 45 percent, with the \$3.5 million per-person exemption. If he had died in 2009, his estate could have faced federal taxes of almost \$500 million depending on how the estate was structured. Now, you didn't think a billionaire would leave the net value of his estate up to chance, do you?

I'm not suggesting that Steinbrenner was able to plan his exit, to gain a tax advantage, but somehow the adage "that the rich get richer" seems to apply.

Even though Steinbrenner is an extreme example – it attempts to make the point - F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway got it right – some people know how to create wealth while others know how to create it, keep it and pass it on to other generations. John Babson recognized that many owners intuitively understand how to create wealth, but, and it's a big but, most business owners do not have a strategy to retain wealth. "It's not in the knowing, it's in the doing." Smart people make mistakes and sometimes they are really big.

As a business owner, the question is what category do you fall into? Do you have a plan to optimize your wealth?

Wealth optimization requires you to build your asset base - in this case it's your business - while understanding the options that allow you to exit your business and retain the value it took you years to accumulate.

So what is Exit Planning (Succession Planning)? When should you begin to Plan? What is the Planning Process?

What is Exit & Succession Planning?

Often referred to as business succession planning, exit planning is the development of a strategy (plan) and a roadmap (process) that enables the business owner to maximize value and leave their business on their own terms.

Do You Need Exit Planning?

Not if you don't care how much wealth you retain, but at some point, every busi-

ness owner will leave their business. The average business owner has 75% of their net worth tied up in their business and 80% of businesses are not saleable today for what the business owner expects. The transition out of the business will be the most significant financial event of their lives. Preparing your business for sale can be a hectic affair with few options, triggered by an unplanned event and constrained by time. This typically leads to many unpleasant tradeoffs and a result that falls far short of the owner's objectives. The alternative is a systematic approach initiated 3-10 years in advance and driven entirely by your personal exit objectives.

When Should You Start Your Exit Plan?

The short answer: three to ten years before your planned exit.

Owners must begin thinking about the Exit Planning process when two streams of thought begin to converge. The first stream is a feeling that you want to do something besides go to work every day - either you would like to be someplace else - doing something else - or you simply no longer get the same kick out of doing what you are doing.

The second stream is the general awareness that you are either approaching financial independence, or making significant strides toward reaching that goal, or can achieve financial independence by selling your business. When these two streams converge, thoughts flow inevitably towards exiting the business. Hopefully, when that happens, your Exit Plan is in place and you are actually able to leave the business when you want to. That, in a nutshell, is the purpose of Exit Planning - to leave your business on your terms and on your schedule.

What is the Exit Planning Process?

There are several exit planning models; the process outlined below follows the BEI Seven Step Exit Planning Model. The goal is to develop a plan that will help you transition out of your business on your own terms so that you can leave when you want, for maximum value and minimize the tax consequences of the sale. Proper knowledge and preparation can possibly mean millions of dollars to you when you ultimately leave your company.

Next month we will identify and explore the Seven Step model.

If you would like more information about the Exit Planning process and what is involved, please contact me, Michael Salach at The Bay

State Consulting Group Inc. 508-523-8300 or email Michael at [msalach@baystate-consulting.com](mailto:msalach@baystate-consulting.com). Michael is also a Professor of Strategy Formulation and Market & Customer Analysis, at the University of Massachusetts – Lowell. He also instructs at Northern Essex, Business Planning, North Shore Community College, and Entrepreneurship and conducts Workshops for The Small Business Development Center – Salem State University – Enterprise Center.



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## Ask the Reverse Mortgage Guy

### Bob Irving CSA® 1ST INTEGRITY MORTGAGE

Bad information still circulates among seniors even as federally insured Reverse Mortgages from HUD reached record levels through 2009. While 2010 & 2011 saw less dramatic growth, these myths continue to originate from well-meaning but misinformed relatives, friends or even trusted advisors and media sources... who recall times past when the HECM reverse mortgage did not exist, was not insured and these reverse mortgages were not regulated by the federal government.

Last month we talked about the top ten reverse mortgage myths still circulating. Here are a few more. Perhaps the assumption that there are only 10 of them is the greatest of all reverse mortgage myths!

#### MYTH #11 - IF WE WAIT, RATES

**WILL BE LOWER:** Rates are already at 50 year lows. Predicting future rates is difficult even for the experts. And with home values still declining in many regions, a home worth \$300,000 today could lose 10-15% in value over the coming months. Since the appraised value of your home is a key factor in determining how much money you qualify for, waiting for interest rates to be more favorable might prove to be a major mistake.

#### MYTH #12 - MY SOCIAL SECUR

**RITY OR OTHER BENEFITS WILL DECREASE:** Money from a reverse mortgage is borrowed money; not income. This money is usually not considered disqualifying for Social Security or Medicare. But for some special needs based benefit programs monthly draws must be spent and not accumulated. If you qualify for state administered Medicaid, SSI or for a subsistence program like fuel assistance you should consult your tax advisor. Generally,

you should draw only a monthly amount equal to monthly expenditures to avoid accumulating excess funds.

#### MYTH #13 - ONLY FOR SENIORS

**"IN NEED" OR "HOUSE RICH, CASH POOR":** Today, reverse mortgages are used by homeowners from all walks of life to enhance retirement years. Even seniors with million dollar homes have used reverse mortgages in estate planning in conjunction with advice from financial planners. The HECM is increasingly viewed as a financial tool by seniors and their advisers.

#### MYTH #14 - WE WILL HAVE TO PAY TAXES ON THE MONEY:

Cash proceeds from a reverse mortgage are income tax free.... because it is already your money. In general, no taxes will be due on money received from a reverse mortgage. Funds do not need to be reported on your income tax return. But consult with your financial or tax advisor for confirmation as there may be exceptional circumstances.

#### MYTH #15 - WE PLAN TO LEAVE

**THE HOME TO THE CHILDREN:** Do the children really want you to do that? Seniors are encouraged to discuss reverse mortgage decisions with children. Often, the children are happy to learn that parents have a financial

**MYTH #16 - OUR CREDIT OR INCOME WOULD NOT QUALIFY:** The Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) program has only "light" income or credit requirements. Generally, any open bankruptcies must be resolved or dismissed and income must be reported at time of application in order for the lender to determine your capacity to pay ongoing real estate taxes, insurance and home maintenance

## WEST NEWBURY FROM PAGE 28

rageously coming forward despite their being intimidated by, and fearful of retaliation by WNPD.

At this point, it appears obvious to all, except perhaps Selectmen Knowles and Cushing, that only an independent investigation of the WNPD by a respected

outside authority will suffice to reveal, and stop, once and for all, the mismanagement and police misconduct permeating the town of West Newbury, and spreading to surrounding towns as L'Esperance so clearly represents.



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## TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK: FROM 21

Caponigro Performs at Methuen Village: Methuen Village at Riverwalk Park, a senior community offering assisted living and state-of-the-art Alzheimer's care, invites the public to a performance by accordionist and electronic keyboard player Dave Caponigro on Friday, December 23 at 7:00 p.m. Advance RSVP encouraged. Methuen Village is located in the heart of downtown Methuen at 4 Gleason Street. For more information, call 978-685-2220 or visit [www.MethuenVillage.com](http://www.MethuenVillage.com).

**ROYAL HOUSE OF PIZZA SANTA CLAUS DAY** will be on December 22nd from 11a-3p. Santa will be there at Royal House of Pizza for this annual tradition. See Ad Page 14.

**7,100 MASS HOSPITALITY JOBS LOST** Aug-Oct. The Restaurant and Business Alliance (R.A.B.A.) called attention to over seven thousand hospitality jobs lost in the Commonwealth in just ninety days. "Losing 7,100 hospitality jobs should be an indicator that we need immediate action," said Dave Andelman, President of the Restaurant and Business Alliance. Dave continued, "We need common sense stimulus such as a Meals Tax Holiday, repealing the ban of educational dinners for doctors, and extending the Movie Tax Credit to catering services."

"Without these and other initiatives, we will continue to hemorrhage hospitality jobs." Find more information at [RestaurantAndBusinessAlliance.com](http://RestaurantAndBusinessAlliance.com).

### 47% OF MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS SAY THEY ARE EATING OUT LESS

The Restaurant and Business Alliance (R.A.B.A.) calls attention to the new Suffolk University Poll on the economy citing 47% of Massachusetts residents admit that they are frequenting restaurants less than they were just one year ago. This revelation comes on the heels of over seven thousand hospitality jobs lost in the Commonwealth from August to October. The hospitality industry makes up roughly 10% of the Massachusetts work force.

"My concern is if nothing is done now, we will see increased layoffs and losses in tax revenue," said Dave Andelman, President of the Restaurant and Business Alliance. "We need common sense stimulus



SUBMITTED BY D. PERIGNEY, A VALLEY PATRIOT READER AND VIET NAM VETERAN. THANK YOU MR. PERIGNEY

such as a Meals Tax Holiday, repealing the ban of educational dinners for doctors, and extending the Movie Tax Credit to catering services."

The ironically named, slender State Representative Ryan Fattman added, "The legislature must act to 'free our food' with a meals tax holiday. Suffolk's poll demonstrates that families are on a restaurant diet. But instead of shedding pounds, Massachusetts is shedding jobs."

Find more information at [RestaurantAndBusinessAlliance.com](http://RestaurantAndBusinessAlliance.com).

### NORTH SHORE BUSINESS FORUM - BUSINESS COMMUNICATION STYLES

DANVERS, December 16 – Deb Brown, will speak at the North Shore Business Forum on December 16 on deter-

mining your best business communication style. The North Shore Business Forum meets at 7:30am at the Danversport Yacht Club, Rt. 62 East, Danvers, MA. The \$10 admission fee include a continental breakfast and pre-registration is not required. For more info - [www.nsbforum.org](http://www.nsbforum.org)

### CHRISTMAS COCKTAIL SOCIAL

- Tower Hill Neighborhood Association cordially invites you and your guest(s) to the second annual Christmas Cocktail Social, Saturday, December 17th, 2 - 5pm at the Muddy Waters Pub & Restaurant (same location as last year, formerly Casey's Hideaway) 940 Riverside Drive, Methuen/Lawrence line Please R.S.V.P. by Monday December 12th.

Be sure to order plenty of hors d'oeuvres. Keith - 603-548-9929 [towerhillman@hotmail.com](mailto:towerhillman@hotmail.com) Dan - 978-902-0595. [mragpicker@verizon.net](mailto:mragpicker@verizon.net) hors d'oeuvres - cash bar - raffles - adults only

American Training Inc. showed its support of other local charities by holding a canned goods drive during the first week of November. In keeping with their unique business philosophy, colleagues from Vanway, the transportation branch of the American Training family, were stationed

at the Haverhill Street Market Basket in Methuen, dressed as a turkey and a soup can, encouraging people to donate what they could.

This is the 5th year Vanway has held the food drive. Thanks to the generosity of Market Basket patrons, hundreds of pounds of non-perishable food items were collected this year, which will be donated to Neighbors In Need, the Salvation Army, the Lowell Food Pantry to help make Thanksgiving for those in need a little brighter. Vanway has been on the move since 1987 with a fleet of 62 vehicles, providing transportation to all branches of American Training, Inc.

Headquartered in Lawrence, American Training Inc. is a non-profit organization that supports a diverse population throughout the North of Boston area with programs designed to help them lead meaningful lives. ATI programs support unemployed workers in need of technical training; young parents and youth in need of direction; and people with disabilities or mental illness who want to more fully participate in their community, or who need a place to live.

## HOTTEL FROM PAGE 8

and the spirit of the Freedom of Information Law. It would take a team of people ten days or more to sort through 4,500 emails printed on paper," said Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan. Duggan says that doing a quick computer search for certain key words like "meals tax" and "Special Town Meeting" would allow the emails to be sorted and the information compiled in less than two days.

"And that is why they don't want me to have anything electronically," Duggan continued.

"It's clear that there is obstruction going on here and it's kind of an insult to my intelligence. It makes me more suspicious than was when I initially requested this first batch of emails."

Duggan would not say specifically what it is he expects to find in the emails but said that the Valley Patriot does not expect

to pay the \$7,099 bill.

"We already pay the superintendent \$190,000 a year to deal with public relations. That's his job and that is what we pay him for. And yet, now he wants me to pay him another \$6,000 for his time to do the job we are already paying him to do? He really thinks it's justified to do the same thing with a \$90,000 computer tech who is already being paid by the taxpayers. So in essence Superintendent Hottle wants to use a combined resource of TWO employees worth \$260,000 a year to produce an electronic copy of 30 days of public emails."

The Valley Patriot resubmitted the email request after consulting with legal counsel and several government officials and intend to have a report in the January edition.

## WILLETTE FROM PAGE 10

We also advocated for more detailed monthly reports on the activities of school resource officers, as well as administrative tests on cameras on school busses. Public safety remained a paramount concern to every school committee member, and we wanted to have school resource officers catalog incidents on various grammar school grounds and the high school. The cameras on the school busses have been pulled on a monthly basis to ensure functionality. While 90% of the cameras have been working properly, it is important to achieve 100% functionality and compliance with school committee policy. I was proud to recommend both police officers in the schools and cameras on the busses, so I definitely had a vested personal interest in holding everyone accountable.

We have made tough decisions the last two years. We had the unpleasant task of dismissing teachers to balance the FY11 school department budget, which was especially heartbreaking given the complete lack of cooperation from the teachers' union in agreeing to modest concessions that would have saved every job. However, I must commend most unions, including recently the teachers' union, for providing at least one year (and sometimes more than one year) of zero percent

cost of living adjustment. The exhaustion of remaining stimulus funds, the lingering unemployment rate, the gradual yet still fragile economic recovery, and the growing need to rein in federal spending all predict greater and greater sacrifices at the local school budget level for a few more years to come.

Superintendent Scannell has promptly and effectively communicated unexpected crises, major budget developments, policy trends and action items to the school committee in a professional and dignified fashion. I am very pleased with her service, as she works tirelessly to communicate our goals and philosophy to stakeholders, taxpayers, staffers, parents and students alike with an equal amount of respect, understanding and firm leadership. I am also confident that the newly elected members of the Methuen School Committee, with their diversified backgrounds and unique perspectives in education, will continue to serve Methuen residents with respect, transparency and openness.

I will continue to remain actively engaged in civic life, and I look forward to commenting on Methuen issues in the Valley Patriot in the months ahead.

# 63 North Andover Students Win AP Scholar Awards

Sixty-three (63) students at North Andover High School have earned the designation of AP Scholar by the College Board in recognition of their exceptional achievement on the college-level Advanced Placement Program (AP) Exams.

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program offers students the opportunity to take challenging college-level courses while still in high school, and to receive college credit, advanced placement, or both for successful performance on the AP Exams. About 18% of the more than 1,600,000 high school students in more than 16,000 secondary schools worldwide who took AP Exams performed at a sufficiently high level to merit the recognition of AP Scholar. Students took AP Exams in May 2011.

The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on student's performance on AP exams. Fourteen (14) NAHS students qualified for the AP Scholar with Distinction Award by earning an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and grades of 3.0 or higher on five or more of these exams. Members of the Classes of 2011 and 2012 recognized as AP Scholars with Distinction are: Julia Cataldo, Kevin Cavanaugh, Margaret Chen Shivani Seshmukh, Kristen DiTroia, Danielle Emmons, Garrett Galvin, Hannah Kim, Eileen Ly, Raymond Shih, Alexandra Specht, Nick Thomas, Kati Tudisco and Brian Varga.

Thirteen (13) NAHS students qualified

for the AP Scholar with Honor Award by earning an average of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and grades of 3.0 or higher on four or more of these exams. Members of the Classes of 2011 and 2012 recognized as AP Scholars with Honor are: Jennifer Caputo, Matt Cavallaro, Tim Chiang, Sapna Contractor, Courtney Galvin, Deepthi Kumar, Peter Novello, Emily Phan, Peter Shaheen, Kathryn Solomon, Nihala Thanikkal, Michael Weisman and Elisabeth Ziehl.

In addition, thirty-six (36) North Andover High School students qualified for the AP Scholar Award by completing three or more AP Exams, with grades of 3.0 or higher. AP Scholars from the Classes of 2011 and 2012 are: Kim Bernardin, Katrina Buchta, Samantha Calderazzo, Lydia Carnevale, Emily Casey, Dan Connolly, Chris Driscoll, Paul Fionte, Elizabeth Gardell, Kiera Googins, Morgan Hancock, Ryan Holasek, Kevin Hood, Caitlin Houlihan, Aishwarya Jagtap, Kara L'Italien, Meagan Langton, Demetri Lemonias, John Manteiga, Laura McCarthy, Lauren Miller, Michael Moroney, Shelby Mosier, John Murphy, Matt Noyes, Zack Peterson, James Polino, Yelena Ravvina, Alice Rodgers, Kathleen Spanos, Alex Sullivan, Emaan Syed, Gwen Vozeolas, Jennifer Wen, Kaitlyn Whyte and Cody Young. North Andover High School is proud of the accomplishments of these students.



## Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000  
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

November 18, 2011

Re: Level 5 District Designation: Special Board Meeting

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am inviting you, along with other interested Lawrence parties, to speak before the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Board) on Monday evening, November 28, 2011, from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA. The Board will set aside the major portion of the November 28 evening meeting to hear comments about whether the Board should place the Lawrence School District in Level 5 status. We ask that all speakers limit their comments to 5 minutes, to allow the Board to hear from many community members. The Board also encourages interested individuals and groups to submit written comments in advance of the meeting, and will consider any written comments received.

At the Board's regular meeting on Tuesday, November 29 from 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. I may recommend that the Board place the Lawrence School District in Level 5 status (what State statute calls "chronic underperformance"). Prior to any final action by the Board to place a district in Level 5, the Board's regulations on School and District Accountability and Assistance require that "school district and municipal officials, including the school committee, as well as the local teachers' union or association president or designee, a representative of the local parent organization, and members of the public shall have an opportunity to be heard by the Board before final action by the Board to place the district in Level 5." 603 CMR 2.06 (1)(f). The November 28 session is the opportunity to be heard by the Board.

I am taking Mayor Lantigua's call for receivership under careful consideration, keeping the needs of students in Lawrence at the forefront of my deliberations with the Board. If the Board votes to place a school district in Level 5, then as Commissioner of Education, I am authorized to appoint a receiver for the school district. I am committed to ensuring that all Lawrence students receive a high quality education, and will continue to work with Lawrence officials to achieve this end.

If you are interested in addressing the Board on Monday, November 28, please email JC Considine at [jconsidine@doe.mass.edu](mailto:jconsidine@doe.mass.edu) or leave a voice mail at 781-338-3112 by Friday, November 25, 2011. We will confirm receipt of your request by 10:30 a.m. on Monday. Please note that depending on the number of requests received, the Board may not be able to hear from all parties that evening. As stated above, we encourage interested individuals and groups to submit written comments in advance of the meeting.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education



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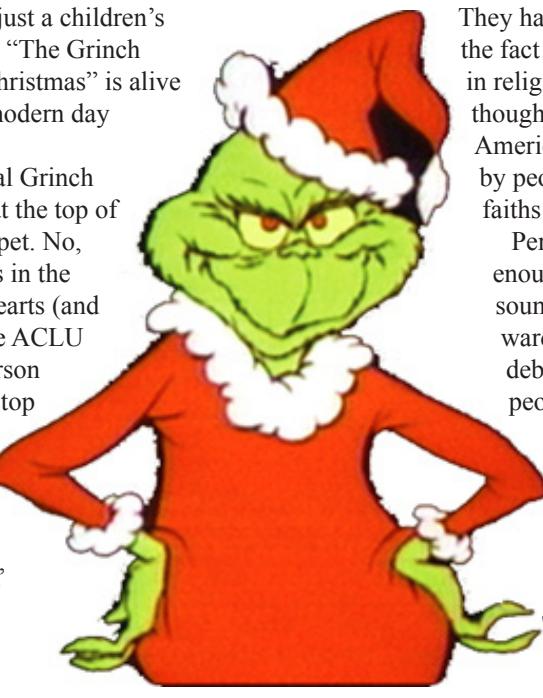
## PAYING ATTENTION with TOM DUGGAN

# The Grinch is REAL!

Warning: This column may offend anyone bothered by truth, goodness and holiday celebrations!

No longer just a children's fantasy story, "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" is alive and well in modern day America.

But, the real Grinch doesn't live at the top of Mount Crumpet. No, no, he resides in the cold, black hearts (and offices) of the ACLU and every person who tries to stop others from celebrating the season of giving, the season of charity and the season of happiness for children and their families.



And, just as the fictional Grinch came down off Mount Crumpet to steal Christmas from the "Whos down in Whoville," these real life Grinches come out from their caves every year to file lawsuits and steal Christmas from children everywhere they can.

What's so amazing about today's Grinches is that they are just as mean and just as irrational as the fictional one. To these people, God is to be shunned, goodness is "offensive" and the mere thought of another person celebrating a holiday rooted in religion...that's just plain loathsome.

Dr. Suess himself couldn't have possibly imagined that his creation would someday be a reality in the form of modern day religious bigotry. But here we are, a culture under attack by a very small minority who cringe at the site of a Santa Claus or a Christmas angel.

Now, the Christmas-hating Grinches are even filing lawsuits and complaining about people who put up Christmas displays on their own private property, using local zoning regulations to restrict the mirth and merriment of their fellow citizens. They've even found ways to use condo and neighborhood associations to adopt intolerant bylaws that discriminate against people of faith and even the faithless who enjoy the American holiday tradition.

### WHY?

Well, they are offended of course. As if the sight of pine tree with colored lights is the same as using a racial slur; or the sound of children singing Jingle Bells is equal to hearing Hitler Youth songs about exterminating Jews.

Wait, on second thought, the ACLU and the Christmas-haters have defended the "rights" of Nazi's and the Klan to offend, which I guess begs the question: How is a Christmas tree or a Christmas song more damaging to society and more offensive than racist Nazi symbols and songs?

How is it that "offensiveness" is the standard for stopping Christmas displays but not so much for the hateful demonstrations of racists and fear mongers? Doesn't free speech apply to everyone regardless of the type of speech? Or is speech only prohibited today when it's about goodness, religion, God, Christmas and other "objectionable" evils to these confused and empty souls?

The answer to that is simple. This has nothing to do with sensibilities or offensiveness. It has nothing to do with protecting the constitution or stopping a government established religion.

It's really about the narcissistic few

who want to erase the words "...or the free exercise thereof" from our first amendment's freedom of religious expression.

They hate God and they hate the fact that Christmas is rooted in religious tradition. Even though to many, it is a secular American tradition practiced by people of many (and no) faiths at all.

Personally, I have had enough of the sanctimonious sound bite arguments, backward thinking and dishonest debate. I've had enough of people forcing the rest of us to sanitize society from words and symbols that only evil could possibly find "offensive."

All the while, the "offended" are lecturing the rest of us about being tolerant of weird sexual life-styles, compassion for criminals and "accepting" those who view things differently.

It's time to stop giving in to these people and say enough is enough.

We shouldn't be fearful of offending someone with the goodness of Christmas. We shouldn't be afraid to say to anyone "offended" by a pine tree with lights that they need serious psychological help.

People who so intolerantly demand that the majority bow down to their lack of beliefs (or their hatred for faith and goodness) and then force us to remove everything that offends them should be shunned year-round.

The fact is, Christmas is rooted in Christianity but it is also celebrated by atheists, agnostics, Jews, and others. It is, to some, a secular American holiday which has evolved and taken on a whole new meaning than just the birth of Jesus Christ. Allowing the free exercise of Christmas celebrations on public property does not establish a government religion. Anyone who says otherwise is fooling themselves in order to fool the rest of us.

But we are not fooled.

It's not we who celebrate Christmas who are offending others. Goodness is not an offensive trait. In the real world we have to recognize that it is those who hate God and Christmas who are being offensive. It is they who should be more tolerant of symbols and songs, the values of which they certainly do not share.

It is the Grinch who must tolerate the will of the majority not the majority who must be inconvenienced by a monster who takes great joy in depriving others of happiness.

Just imagine.....

....if the Whos down in Whoville, instead of celebrating Christmas over the objections of the "offended" Grinch, removed Christmas from their little town square so as not to offend him with their infernal "singing" and happiness heard all the way up on top of mount Crumpet?

Would Whoville be a better place?

Is America?

.....Merry Christmas!



Tom Duggan is publisher of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, former political director for Mass Citizens for Alliance, a Police Survivor and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program from noon-2pm on WCAP every Saturday. You can email him [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com).

# HERO IN OUR MIDST, ADM. DENTON: FROM PAGE 1

"war atrocities," Denton boldly proclaimed: "Whatever the position of my government is, I believe in it, I support it, and I will support it as long as I live."

He paid dearly for his courage. "During the all night torture that followed," he wrote, "I prayed to die."

Not by might—but by moral strength

"The North Vietnamese had one objective: break our will." In any war, as the Prussian military strategist Carl von Clausewitz wrote, "It is principally the moral forces which decide" victory.

"Since my principal battle with the North Vietnamese was a moral one, prayer was my prime source of strength. Another source was my country; no sacrifice was too great on her behalf," Denton wrote.

"The strength of our nation is more than material strength. We are a strongly moral people, and our country is based on spiritual strength. Lose that and we lose everything," he said.

"Founded on faith in God, the United States has been blessed as no other nation. God is denied by the Communists, and this denial is reflected by the way they treat their own subjects."

"We learned to outwit our captors although they held all the cards because our will was superior to theirs."

As senior officer in command, Denton

instructed POWs: "We will die before we give them classified military information."

"Since communications are at the heart of any resistance, we increased ours through taps, scrapes, coughs, sneezes and hacks. We spent all Christmas Eve 1967 sending Christmas greetings to each other."

The North Vietnamese were incredulous. "Although we were completely under their physical control, we flatly refused to cooperate with them.

"They wanted to subdue us. They failed. We increased our tapping."

As a result, "our captors became our prisoners."

#### Going from strength to strength

Determined to resist at all costs, Denton knew he must do two things. "Build my physical strength, by running in place and most important, build a reservoir of psychological strength first

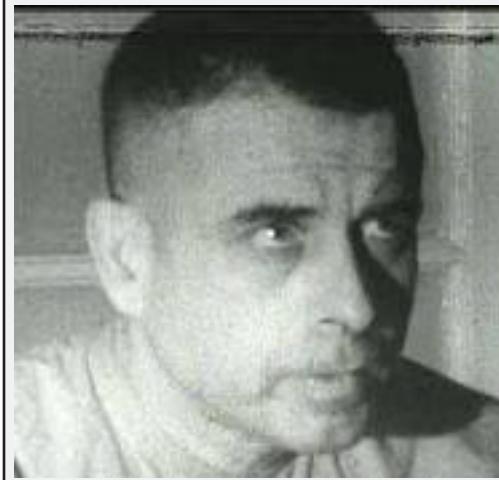
through prayer and meditation, and then through communication with other POWs."

He developed a daily routine. "I would pray, exercise, plan escape, eat, nap, communicate with the POW in the next cell, and then start the cycle again.

"On Sundays I would shout the Lord's Prayer at the top of my lungs after asking everyone to join in.



President Reagan said of Denton: "We don't have to turn to our history books for heroes. One who sits among you epitomized that heroism at the end of the longest imprisonment ever inflicted on men of our armed forces."



**Televised photo of Denton blinking his eyes in Morse code to spell out "t-o-r-t-u-r-e" in May 1966 broadcast from North Vietnam. He was tortured nearly 8 years.**

cell, his legs in irons 18 hours a day, "Jesus was with me in that cell all the time. I enjoyed an inner serenity that would boggle your mind. I prayed. God answered in amazing, miraculous ways, as He always does to desperate prayers."

#### Songs in the night

One POW wove a cross for Denton of bamboo strips taken from a broom. This touched him deeply. When guards found the cross and destroyed it, he was devastated. Yet a work crew, brought in to make ventilation holes smaller, secretly collaborated to fashion a more intricate cross for Denton, beautifully woven from straws.

"Before solitary," he said, "I had faith in God. After solitary, I knew God in a personal way. If we have everything and don't have Jesus, we have nothing."

Many times, guards ran out weeping, refusing to torture Denton anymore. Once a guard, returning to resume the torture, found the iron bar already half-way through Denton's Achilles' tendons. Seeing the look of total peace on Denton's face, he left screaming, "No more! He won't break!"

#### Dedicated servant

Denton set up a foundation that supports One Nation under God, national security, humanitarian affairs. He served as U.S. Senator (R-Alabama), 1981-1987. As Peter Marshall said, "Only when you have something to die for, have you something to live for."



*Helen Mooradkanian is our new Valley Patriot Hero columnist and a former business writer. She is also a member of the Merrimack Valley Tea Party. You can email her at hsmoor@verizon.net*

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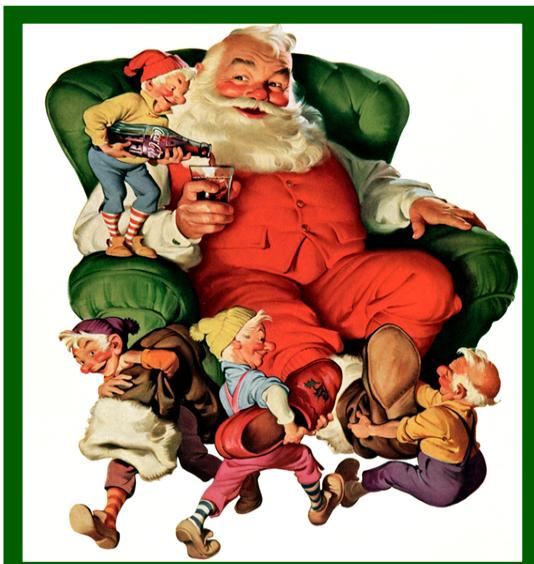
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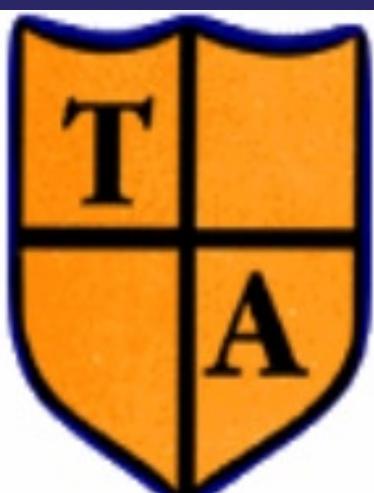


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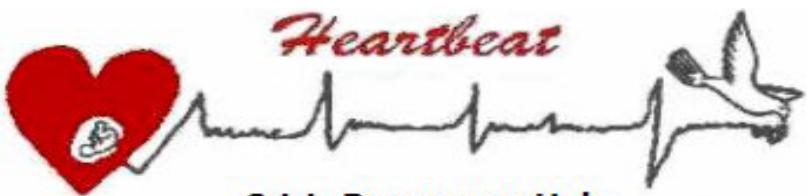
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