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

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## VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

### In Memory of Valley Patriot Hero James Cassidy

TEDD TRIPP

FROM MEMORIAL DAY DEDICATION

NORTH ANDOVER - On the morning of June 6, 1944, the allies finally began the liberation of Europe from the Nazi nightmare.

Tens of thousands of American, British and Canadian troops poured onto the shores of Normandy to engage the Germans and drive them out of France. The allies had trouble at first fighting

through the treacherous area, but by late fall, General Eisenhower's armies were nearing the German border.

As the Americans advanced, Private 1st Class, Jim Cassidy of the Machine Gun Squad were attempting to enter Rylan Town, when almost immediately, they were pinned down by a German sniper perched high on the church steeple. There was little they could do as they hunkered down into their foxholes to avoid the bullets whizzing by. Finally, late in the

day, they moved out and demolished the church. Once again, the squad, in the hands of so many times before, picked up their gear and pushed forward with the rest of their unit during that bitter, cold winter of 1944-1945. 18 year old Jim Cassidy was just one of the many young men who would step forward to risk their lives in the world wide struggle for freedom against the acts. He and his men were typical of what Tom Brokaw call the Greatest Generation.

Jim was born in 1926, he grew up in Worcester. He vividly recalled the day WWII began. On the evening of December 7, 1941, Jim and his brother, Bill, were on their way home from the movies. They noticed on the trolley car that there was talk about the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor and some women were crying. The brothers did not know what or where Pearl Harbor was, but they knew the news was bad. The next day, the Cassidy family learned from their parlor radio, that the country was at war. When Jim turned 17, he tried to enlist in the Navy, but was turned away because of a minor vision problem. So, he returned to high school for his senior year. He graduated early, February 1944 and shortly after his 18th birthday, was drafted

**CASSIDY: PAGE 44**

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Cassidy Receives Bronze Star in 2004





# EDITORIAL

## Sheriff Cousins has some explaining to do

For the last few years The Valley Patriot has sporadically received information about prisoners from the Lawrence Jail (the “Farm”) on Marston Street escaping from the facility.

Each time we are informed by law enforcement officials at other agencies that another escape has occurred, we wait.

We wait, and we wait ... and we wait.

What we wait for is Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins to do the right thing, and let the public know that a prisoner has escaped and is running loose in our neighborhoods.

After all, he is required to do so by law.

But we wait endlessly with no satisfaction because Cousins has not been telling the public when an escape takes place and we believe that has to change.

The most recent incident happened last month when a man named Jason Brown escaped from the “Farm” in Lawrence on Monday, May 30th.

Police were not informed until Tuesday May 31st. The public was informed ... wait... the public was NEVER informed.

The people of Lawrence deserve to know when a criminal escapes in their neighborhood, as do the people of surrounding communities.

We are calling on our friends at the Essex County Sheriff’s department to step up to the plate, do the right thing, and notify the public immediately when a prisoner escapes their custody.

And we urge Sheriff Frank Cousins to explain to the taxpayers, (his bosses, by the way) why he has been so negligent in his duties and refused to notify the people of The Valley when someone escapes. Because we at the Valley Patriot... we’re still waiting!

## Happy Father’s Day

Father’s Day is June 19th. It’s a day to celebrate fathers all across the country. It is a day to spend time with the man who cared for you, protected you, raised you, guided you, loved you, made personal sacrifices for you, and tried to point you in the right direction whether or not you actually listened to his advice.

With all of the broken families today, many people will be celebrating Father’s Day, not with the man who is their birth father but with a man who chose to step in and fill the role of father, choosing to help raise someone else’s children.

That is a special kind of father, because many of these fathers have no rights when a relationship with the mother goes bad and sometimes these men get no thanks at all for the sacrifices, care and kindness they gave for the love of someone else’s children.

To all the fathers out there who have cared for or raised their own biological child and especially to those who took the time to help raise someone else’s, (sometimes with no thanks at all) we say “Happy Father’s Day” to you all!

### News tips

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

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

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

**Corrections;** Please contact the editors at valleypatriot@aol.com

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

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To The Editor:

As we prepare to celebrate the upcoming three year culmination of the Early Reading First (ERF) Federal grant, we would like to share the accomplishments.

Within the ERF program there are various areas of support. These include consultants, who are both experienced and qualified, who work collaboratively with teachers to implement a literacy component into their school day and work with small groups of children to enhance their language and literacy skills. All of these efforts coincide with the mission of the ERF grant, which is to prepare children for a successful kindergarten experience and to become life-long learners.

The ERF grant has provided the Early Childhood teachers with the opportunity to participate in approximately 200 hours of Professional Development over a period of 3 years and some college

coursework.

It also included in-class mentoring to initiate evidence-based “best practices” into the daily curriculum. As participants in this grant, we have seen dramatic growth of children in the following areas: language development, alphabet recognition, cognition, writing skills, phonological awareness, and comprehension skills. The classrooms are happy, thriving learning environments filled with the sound and laughter of children’s voices.

Through the combined efforts of the ERF consultants including Mrs. Gayle Williams, the site directors, teachers, students and parents, this grant has been an overwhelming success and a model of excellence.

Sincerely,

Helen Berry, Kelli Buote, Denise Charlebois, Elaine Ford, Leslie Kalafarski, Joyce Middlemiss, Donna Slipp



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Offers: Page 1



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# It’s time for us to “Let the Mitt Hit the Fan”

**Jeff Katz**  
RADIO TALK SHOW HOST ON RUSH RADIO 1200AM

Sporting his best Brooks Brothers casual while serving up chicken chili in a barnyard, Willard Mitt Romney made it officially official the other day while visiting his home State of New Hampshire that he was once again running for President of the United States. This announcement was completely different from the announcement he made the last time he visited his home State of New Hampshire when he unofficially announced that he was running for President. Additionally, his visit to his home State of Michigan where he officially knocked Obamacare at the same time that he doubled down on Romneycare and unofficially announced that he was running for President was nothing like those other two announcements and of course, I’d be remiss if I forgot to mention that the establishment’s favorite Republican also took some time to visit his home State of Nevada to raise money for his unofficially official run for President. Funny, he never

seems to visit, officially or otherwise, his home State of Massachusetts where people have to try and live under the oppressive yoke of Romneycare.

Mitt Romney has been consistent about exactly one thing in his entire political career and that is his unbridled desire to be President. Nothing wrong with a focused individual, but if you are like me you’d like to know what a candidate believes. That is where the problem with Mitt begins. I can’t tell you what he believes. Abortion? Mitt is for it and against it. Second Amendment rights? Mitt supports and opposes them. The global warming hysteria? Mitt is an adherent to the Al Gore school of man made global climate change and a debunker of the junk science at the same time. Same sex



VALLEY PATRIOT EXCLUSIVE

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

**TALK 1200 BOSTON**

marriage? Mitt is a solid yes, no and maybe on that issue. Government mandates to buy products? Right, once again Mitt is solidly on both sides of the issue. Admiration for the late great Ronald Reagan? Sure Mitt tells us he loved Reagan except of course when he did not. Again, the only thing that Mitt’s position has remained constant and steadfast on is his belief that he should be President.

Aside from the issues, Romney has a few other concerns to address. First is the fact that he is just plain dull. A thoroughly uninspiring speaker who often has the deer caught in the headlights look. Second, is Mitt’s look. I

am secure enough in my own masculinity to point out that Mitt is a good looking guy with great hair. If you were looking for someone to shill for shampoo or just play the part of the President in a TV show, you’d call Central Casting and they’d ship Mitt right out to you. But at the same time he comes across as plastic, sort of like one of those lifelike figures in Disney’s Hall of Presidents. No emotion, no passion. The Romney camp would have you believe that religion is concern number three. While I am sure that there are a few people who would not vote for Romney due to his Mormon faith, I really think this is a red herring. Just as Obama and the Obamatons have claimed that anyone who opposes the dear leader is clearly a racist and a bigot, so too are members of the Romney machine trying to make us believe that opposition to Willard is based on religious intolerance and that is just not true to any great extent.

Before anyone writes Romney off, let’s be blunt about his strengths. The economy

KATZ: PAGE 10

## Which Neuropathy Symptoms Do You Suffer From?

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# Is Obama Intentionally Seeking to Destroy America?

Charles Ormsby  
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

I am not prone to conspiracy theories. I think Oswald assassinated President Kennedy without the active participation of Castro, the Soviet Union, Lyndon Johnson, the John Birch Society, the FBI, the CIA or the mob.

I don't think President Bush aided or abetted the destruction of the World Trade Center on 9/11. Nor do I think that he or Karl Rove or some neo-conservative cabal plotted to lie about weapons of mass destruction before gaining Security Council approval for the invasion of Iraq.

I've even convinced myself that Jane Fonda was just a useful idiot when she went to Hanoi and cheered on the North Vietnamese gunners as they sought to shoot down and kill American pilots.

One of my mentors during my R&D career once told me to never underestimate the likelihood that idiocy was an adequate explanation for what might initially appear to be intentionally evil acts. More often than not, idiocy (or just plain ignorance) did, in fact, turn out to be the likely cause.

I have tried mightily to follow this advice over the last several decades while witnessing the actions and positions taken by so-called progressives (hereafter "statists," since progress is the last thing they will ever accomplish).

I am proud to say that until recently I have succeeded. Despite their constant stream of absurd policy positions, I have steadfastly held my ground and just declared them idiots (when appropriate, adding the adjective "useful" before the noun).

This has not been easy, but I have trained myself when I hear their latest proposals to grit my teeth while muttering: "Idiots!"

But lately, my resolve is eroding.

This article is a desperate plea for help. I feel I'm slipping. In fact, I feel I'm accelerating towards a terrible, inevitable, inescapable conclusion.

Are all statists intentionally seeking to destroy America?

Although every statist occupies some particular location on a continuum of

### Our Dear Lady Liberty, Rise Again!

*Rise again, Rise again, that her name not be lost  
to the knowledge of men.*

*Those who loved her best and were with her till the end  
will make Our Dear Lady Liberty rise again.*

*And you, to whom adversity has dealt the final blow  
with smiling bastards lying to you everywhere you go  
Turn to, and put out all your strength of arm and heart and brain  
and, help Our Dear Lady Liberty, rise again.*

*Lyrics extracted from "The Mary Ellen Carter" by Stan Rogers  
(after substituting the underlined passages)*

possible positions on the road to hell, most are not consciously seeking the demise of America. Some, infested with ignorance and a touch of idiocy but not that much evil, are just a short way down that road. Others having varying degrees of ignorance and idiocy, but infected with more evil intent, are further down the road. Finally, there are those that, despite varying levels of ignorance and idiocy, are dominated by evil intent.

That people whose motives are dominated by evil intent actually exist is not in doubt (the Nazis, Communists and the Jihadist Muslims provide adequate proof, as do the narco-terrorists). The question is: are people who seek to destroy American ideals in current positions of power in the U.S. Government? And, to the specific question raised in the title of this article, is President Obama or are his key advisors among them?

I have tried heroically to deny this possibility since Obama first began his run for the presidency and have fought to sustain this denial up until recent days.

My resistance is collapsing, but at this instant I'm still hanging on by my fingernails. I need the wisdom and level-headedness of my faithful readers to guide me in this struggle.

A decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that I declare the causes which impel me to conclude that our Commander in Chief and his key lieutenants may be purposefully undermining America's philosophic foundation and that their actions are designed to destroy the America that our Founding Founders envisioned.

I claim the following truths to be

few percent of our needs at much greater cost.

\* Failing to get congressional support for cap and trade legislation, Obama seeks to end-run Congress and have the EPA impose carbon emission regulations that will effectively nationalize the American energy industry and further hamstring our economy.

\* Seeing the decline of unions in the dwindling private sector, Obama supports a card-check system that denies American workers the right to vote via secret ballot when unionization is proposed. This is a direct affront to the historic American principle of democracy.

\* Obama's tax policy can be summed up as follows: "What you produce is the property of the state. We would like to take it all, but we know you would stop working if we did. Therefore, we are trying to determine how much to let you keep so you will continue to work." He has NEVER espoused or supported the idea of private property rights. His latest budget speech introduced the notion of "tax expenditures," equating the act of government letting you keep some of your income with "expenditures" as if it was government property being "spent."

\* The stake in our national heart is Obama's massive spending spree. Forty percent of current federal spending is borrowed, an annual amount greater than 10% of our Gross Domestic Product. Every sober economist will testify that this is the road to national ruin. We are doomed if we continue and that is exactly what Obama proposes, both in his original budget and in his revised budget response to various weak-kneed Republican plans. Obama's spending proposals can only be explained as a conscious attempt to destroy America as a world power and undermine our freedoms.

\* As if the foregoing is not sufficient, President Obama recently moved to undermine the security of one of our few reliable allies when he publicly proposed that Israel accept a return to their pre-1967 borders as the basis of renewed negotiations with Hamas. What is his next suggestion? Slipping anthrax into their knishes and latkes?

OBAMA, page 17

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## Marine Recruiters Say They Get Shabby Treatment at High School

Superintendent Reaches out to Marines, says they will be treated respectfully

Sgt Cardona the Marine Recruiter in Lawrence and a number of past recruiters have long complained that the faculty at North Andover High School are not only uncooperative when they enter the building to recruit, "but there's a real level of hostility" Cardona told us.

Cardona and recruits from the other branches of the military have long been complaining to the Valley Patriot about the problems they encounter at North Andover High.

"We go in and they do the absolute minimum they have to," Sgt Cardona continued. "We get dirty looks, snide comments, it's really clear some members of the faculty don't want us there. All we are trying to do is tell young kids about the opportunities available in the US Marines."

Recruiters from the other branches of the military echoed Cardona's concern saying that of all the high schools they try to recruit in "North Andover is by far, the worst." Complaints about treatment by the faculty and administration at NAHS go back to 2008 when the Valley Patriot received our first complaint from an air force recruiter stationed in Lawrence.

"We walk into the building and some of the are very nice but, as soon as we set up an area to meet with students we observe faculty redirecting students away from where we are, shooing kids away from us, telling kids to 'go find something else to do'," Air Force Recruiter Sgt. Moore told us two years ago.

School Committeeman Karin Rhotin said she was surprised to hear that recruiters are given a hard time at NAHS.

"If that is the case I'm happy to look into it and do something about that. That just isn't right," she told the Valley Patriot.

Less than twelve hours after contacting Rhoten for the story, Superintendent Hottel responded with an email that was forwarded to the paper.

"I have called the Marine Corps office and have been assured by a representative there that North Andover High School has a good relationship with the Marines

*"The issue isn't about the school not giving us access," Sgt. Cardona clarified. "It's about the way we get treated when we walk into the building. If you talk to the other recruiters (which the Valley Patriot did) they will tell you the same thing. It is very hard to get recruits out of North Andover High and that's partly because of the interference we get from some of the people who work there."*

~Sgt Cardona U.S. Marine Recruiter

and other branches of the military. We are proud to have the branches of our military communicating information to our students about careers in the military," Hottel's email stated.

The superintendent forwarded an email from Principal Scuzzarella, which read in part:

"I checked with Steve Nugent and Pam Mesquita (School-to-Career) about this information. We allow all the military agencies the same access that we allow colleges and other outside groups. Steve tells me the high school has never allowed recruiting - it is for informational purposes only, just like the college representatives."

"Pam Mesquita told me that for the past couple years she has sponsored a "Military Week." She has set up a week in February when any branch of the service could send a representative during lunch to speak with interested students and provide information."

"There was no deliberate attempt on the part of this high school to not allow the military branches access to students in the appropriate manner."

But recruiters say that "access" isn't the issue. "The issue isn't about the school not giving us access," Sgt. Cardona clarified. "It's about the way we get treated when we walk into the building. If you talk to the other recruiters (which the Valley Patriot did) they will tell you the same thing. It is very hard to get recruits out

**RECRUITING, page 12**

## Town Manager Rees Takes Job in Maine Selectmen say they have big shoes to fill

After ten years of managing the Town of North Andover, Mark Rees has taken a job as the city manager of Portland Maine, leaving members of the Board of Selectmen looking for a new manager with what they called Rees' "financial genius and even temper."

Selectman Dan Lanen said it will be hard to replace Rees, "I will miss Mark, he did a great job managing the town. I really think North Andover would be in big trouble right now if we didn't have Mark there managing the budget during all these local aid cuts.

Unlike most other cities and towns, Mark managed to balance the town budget and not lay off any public safety officers. That's pretty amazing when you think about it. He is great with numbers and as we go forward we are going to have to find someone who has a lot of experience in municipal finance."

Lanen said working with Rees was easy, "It was a pleasure working with Mark, he's always been professional, he's been able to be a voice of reason when things get heated, when things got political. He never took anything personal; he had the perfect temperament for this job. We have big shoes to fill!"

Selectman Lanen is not only a member of the Board of Selectmen but also works for Rees as a North Andover Police Officer. "He was easy to work for as a town employee, he let the police do their jobs and didn't interfere."

Selectman Tracy Watson agreed with Lanen, "Well yeah, talk about big shoes to fill. Mark has overseen some major projects and issues facing the town and he did it with the utmost professionalism. The budgets trash fees, school issues, whatever came up he was the guy I was glad we had managing things," Watson said.

"He's been an asset here for 10 years," she continued. He's the longest town

manager we've ever had and I don't want to lose him, but we don't want to hold him back, either. He always wanted to be a city manager and now he is going to get his chance before he retires.

Mark has this opportunity and he took it, so it's time for him to move on and realize another one of his career ambitions."

"Look at how many layoffs we have had compared to other cities and towns. He kept the ship afloat facially and found a way under very tough circumstances to work with what we have to make ends meet.

"Look at other communities, they have had tremendous cuts in state aid as we have, but he managed it with minimal impact on town services. Look at the projects he's gotten done. Look at the infrastructure, the new police station, two water treatment reservoirs, refurbishing schools, building a new pre-k school, maintaining sewer and water systems and keeping them in top shape, there's a lot he has to celebrate as he leaves North Andover. I don't know how we are going to find another Mark Rees."

Selectman Don Stewart said that he was on the Board of Selectmen when Rees was hired to manage the town and admits it was one of the best votes he ever took.

"I was on the board when we hired him back in 2000. Even back then you knew he had a great financial mind. As far as budgets are concerned he has gone as far as he can in North Andover. I'm happy for him it's a great challenge for him to go to Maine and I know it was one of the things he wanted to do before he retired.

Thanks to Mark our bond rating remains really high. I am sure the people in Portland realized his financial expertise looking at his credentials here in town.

It also helps when you have a town manager who understands the importance of having a good relationship with the

**REES, page 10**



**To the teachers of North Andover High School who give our marines a hard time when they come to recruit:**

The lesson of the classs that you obviously skipped out on was:

**MARINES = GOOD  
TERRORISTS + BAD**

**Shame on you!**

If you must protest, please do it on your own time, then please stand in front of a terrorist so that our children in the military won't have to.

Proudly Signed: Tommy Sharp, North Salem NH  
Proud father of three children  
in the Coast Guard, Air Force and Navy

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# Annual Sheep Sheering Festival comes to Town



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

Top row: North Andover mom encourages her son to pat the sheep, Leo and his daughter from Amici's Pizzeria on Waverly Road serve great stromboli's and subs, Ava Kruschwitz of Plai Kruschwitztow NH, Chase Duchaine and Lila Woekel both of North Andover enjoy the days events. Middle row: Ellen Mosier and Debbie Raffali of North Andover raise money for N. A. High's SOS program, border collies round up sheep. Bottom row: the girls of Little Sprouts offered face painting for the kids, sheep being herded by border collies, a North Andover girl finds an easy way to get around the common.

## Activities From the North Andover Senior Center

The Affordable Care Act lowers the cost of your Medicare Prescription drug coverage (Part D), if you reach the coverage gap (donut hole). This year, you will no longer have to pay full price for your medications in the donut hole. You will automatically receive a 50% discount on brand-name prescription drugs covered by your Part D plan. For generic drugs covered by your plan, Medicare will pay 7% of the price and you will pay the remaining 93%. These discounts apply whether you buy your drugs at a pharmacy or order them through the mail. What you pay for both brand-name and generic drugs in the donut whole will decrease each year until it reaches 25% in 2020. If you have already reached the donut hole, you should already be receiving these discounts. In the Donut Hole, you should not be paying full price for your drugs! If you are, you need a SHINE appointment. Trained and certified SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders) volunteers offer free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to anyone on Medicare. Call the North Andover Senior Center at 978 688-9560 to schedule an appointment. The SHINE program provides free health insurance information, counseling, and assistance to Massachusetts residents of all ages with Medicare and their caregivers. SHINE is administered by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs in

partnership with elder service agencies, councils on aging and other public and private community based organizations.

REMINDER: NEW DATES FOR MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT OCTOBER 15 – DECEMBER 7.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: Tuesdays, 9 -10:30 am starting June 7 – June 28, 4-week session for \$25.00. This course is for the student who wants to buy a digital camera and learn how to use it. Limit to 4-5 students. Call to reserve your seat.

GOLF PASSES: Passes are available to North Andover 60+ Residents Only – No Guests! Proof of residency is required. Buy passes at the Senior Center for \$6. Passes can be used from June 6 – August 29, Mondays after 12 noon. (Note: Golf Course will not be available on 8/15.) 9 holes: \$15., 18 holes: \$20.

MYSTERY LUNCH RIDE: Thursday, July 7, 10 am sign up required.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL: Wednesday, June 15, 12:15 – 1:15 Sponsored by the Exchange Club of Lawrence. Please sign up in advance at the Senior Center, no drop- ins. Wear your Red, White and Blue. Entertainment by Mike Kirsch.

PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM: Friday, June 24, 9 am to 4 pm, Cost: \$13 admission and lunch on your own. Bus: \$3.00 due at sign up

NEW PROGRAM-STRENGTH TRAINING: Starting June 7th for six

**SENIORS, page 43**

ZUMBA WITH TALLIE!

Zumba Fitness hour long classes are offered on Monday at 3:30 (beginner class) which is taught by Mary Russo, Wednesday at 2:15 (Zumba Gold), 3:30 Zumba Basic, and Thursday at 4:30 Zumba Basic (which Tallie Veras Abernathy teaches) and Saturday morning at 9:30 a.m. (which is taught by Mary Russo).

“Until I tried a Zumba class with Tallie over a year ago, I had no idea that the Senior Center offered activities for everyone,” Mary Russo one of the Zumba instructors said.

“This is something many people don’t know about,” she added. “It has become an important and exciting part of my life and a wonderful place to go. Through this experience with Tallie, and with her support and encouragement, I have become a Zumba Instructor myself. If anything, I feel like I am getting younger every time I step foot in the Senior Center!

“We continue to meet and get to know people of all ages and we want everyone to share in this and all of the other amazing programs that the North Andover Senior Center has to offer. It has been a wonderful experience. Instructors like Tallie, are just what the Senior Center needs to bring life, fun, youthfulness and happiness in abundance every day!”



# Labor Unions, What are they good for?

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

As the City of Lawrence prepares itself to begin budget discussions on the FY-2012 Budget, I thought it would be good to review some background information concerning Labor Unions. According to Wikipedia, the Web-based free encyclopedia, labor unions in the United States are legally recognized as representatives of workers in many industries. The most prominent unions are among public sector employees such as teachers and police. Activity by labor unions in the United States today centers on collective bargaining over wages, benefits, and working conditions for their membership and on representing their members if management attempts to violate contract provisions. Although much smaller compared to their peak membership in the 1950's, American unions also remain an important political factor, both through mobilization of members, and through coalitions with activist organizations around issues such as immigrant rights, trade, health care, and living wage campaigns. Today most unions are aligned with one of two larger umbrella organizations: the AFL-CIO, American Federation of Labor- Congress of Industrial Organizations created in 1955 and the Change to Win Federation, which split from the AFL-CIO in 2005. Both advocate policies and legislation on behalf of workers in the United States and Canada, and take an active role in politics favoring the Democratic Party but not exclusively so. American union membership in the private sector has in

recent years fallen under 9% - levels not seen since 1932. Union membership had been steadily declining in the US since 1983. In 2007, the labor department reported the first increase in union membership in 25 years and the largest increase since 1979. Most recent gains in membership have been in the service sector while the number of unionized employees in the manufacturing sector has declined. At the apex of union density, (the percentage of workers belonging to unions), in the 1940s, only about 9.8% of public employees were represented by unions, while 33.9% of private, non-agricultural workers had such representation. In this decade, those proportions have essentially reversed, with 36% of public workers being represented by unions while private sector union density had plummeted to around 7%. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics most recent survey indicates that union membership in the US has risen to 12.4% of all workers, from 12.1% in 2007. For a short period, private sector union membership rebounded, increasing from 7.5% in 2007 to 7.6% in 2008. However, that trend has since reversed. In 2009, the union density for private sector stood at 7.2%. There have been many studies made as to possible causes of the drop in union density; the following is a brief list of some of the findings.

- \* Reduced popularity of unionization among workers.
- \* Changing market structure.
- \* Receptiveness of unions, (where unions are responsible for distribution of unemployment insurance and centralized

collective bargaining.

- \* Access to the workplace.
- \* Employer acceptance.
- \* Fluctuations of business cycles.
- \* Rise and fall of unemployment rates and inflation.
- \* Globalization. (NAFTA)

Now that you have before you a brief background and explanation concerning Labor Unions, what do you think? Are they still necessary?

Personally, I have never had the opportunity to work for a company that was unionized. The only hands on experience I have with unions was when I was a member of the Lawrence School Committee where I participated in some of the negotiations that took place. Of course the largest union we had to deal with was the teachers union. I can remember back around 2007-2008 when we were told that we were going to get a lot less Chapter 70 money and in order to meet the budget gap, the discussion of potential layoffs began. All the unions came to the table and were willing to make concessions to avoid layoffs except one, the Teachers Union. The very first act by the executive board of the teachers union was to march down to the Human Resource Department and get the seniority list. The reason for this is because of their "last one in first one out" policy. This policy is reason enough for me to question their sincerity; I say this because it is in the "NEW" teachers where you find the excitement and enthusiasm which brings in the creative energy attached with "New Ideas" to effectively reach and motivate our children to learn. This is where the

following quote comes from, "Teacher's Unions eat their young".

In my humbled opinion, I think the teacher's union should take the lead and come to the table with a more efficient way to deal with and if need be, dismiss bad teachers. With the way the rules are today, it is next to impossible to get rid of bad teachers. My definition of a bad teacher is one who can't or no longer can effectively motivate a child to learn. For example, when a singer's voice gets very weak and they keep singing well past the time they can reach notes that they were very capable of but now need a large orchestra to cover for them, it is time to stop singing! The same goes for teachers, if they need the Union to keep them at their job, it's time to go!

In conclusion, concerning "Collective Bargaining" what's the big deal? In the private sector, a company makes a job available, with that comes the pay scale and benefits. You are free to except the terms of employment or keep looking elsewhere. Why working in the public sector should be treated different is beyond me! Why do we as tax payers allow public employees to demand special treatment for accepting a job just doesn't make much sense to me, maybe I am too naive? Don't you just love city budget discussions?

God Bless!



*Peter Larocque is a former member of the Lawrence School Committee. . You can call him at 978-682-0900, email him at [peterlarocque@hotmail.com](mailto:peterlarocque@hotmail.com)*

## Random, Mostly Non-Political Observations about The Valley

Jamison Tomasek

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I noticed from Facebook the number of people that grew up in Lawrence and settled in the Merrimack Valley is very high. While this might not just be a Lawrence thing, it seems particularly pronounced here. The Lawrence Diaspora (migration) doesn't seem like a random scattering. Almost everyone who left Lawrence has settled in Methuen (most), Andover (some), North Andover (more than Andover), Haverhill, Salem, NH (a lot it seems) and of course Salisbury and Seabrook NH. As far as one can tell, hardly anyone moves south of Andover or west of Methuen.

Speaking of Methuen even if you don't live or shop (the Loop, Home Depot, and Target have lured by from NH) in

Methuen it still seems like you are always driving through, because the city itself is everywhere, stretching from Pelham to Haverhill. If you want to go to Dracut you have drive through Methuen. If you want to shop on Broadway in Salem NH you go through Methuen.

Andover is a really nice town but if you live there and are not rich or at least very well off there is a major problem in that you feel poor compared to many people that you meet in everyday life. It's also wicked expensive to buy there. Other than that it's a great place to live and raise kids. North Andover is a nice town as well. For some reason the people in this town are more conservative (and the town is run more conservatively) than other places and they are the largest group in the Merrimack Valley Tea Party. Maybe it's

because they have less lefty loonies than Andover, or maybe it's the farming roots of the town.

Downtown Haverhill is on an upswing, with a lot of people moving into apartments in renovated mills, and fueling a restaurant and watering hole boom. Even more than Methuen, Haverhill seems to be everywhere (it is the largest city in MA by area) and there are names for parts of it that sound like towns (Rocks Village or Ayers Village). Side note to people from Bradford: we know you live in Haverhill. Most people do not know that Haverhill made a fateful decision in the 1980's to assume the debt of the city hospital (which was going belly up at the time). That debt is still hanging around the city's neck and impacting the budget.

Dracut is not on the way to anywhere and a lot of people I know have never set

foot in the town. It is probably the most underrated town in the area, full of nice people. Despite having no obvious town center it has a real town feel amongst its citizenry. Merrimack and Amesbury seem like nice enough places. I don't seem to run into many folks from there. Unlikely that anyone in Newburyport reads the VP (gentle sarcastic remark) so I'll leave them be, though I do want to say that although I enjoy visiting, and have been there hundreds of times, I still feel like a tourist (another gentle dig). Maybe if I was crunchier I would feel more at home.

All in all the Merrimack Valley is a good place to live. It's centrally located, close to the beach, has big fat highway right down the middle of it but still has some nature. It is also filled with lots of like minded people who read this paper.

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# City Councilor Goes on Ride-Along With Police

Tom Duggan  
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

Lawrence City Councilor Mark LaPlante (District F) has been one of the more outspoken supporters of the Lawrence police. Last month LaPlante went on two police ride-alongs with Lawrence Police and it's an experience he says all members of the city council could benefit from.

"We are on the council making policy and budget decisions that affect the police and I'll tell you that going out and seeing first hand what these guys go through and what they deal with makes a big difference. I encourage my fellow councilors to do this," he said.

LaPlante did this once before in 2010 when he shadowed a Lawrence Police officer who was in charge of supervising the city's nightclubs. "We went from establishment to establishment to make sure things were on the up and up. It was interesting to see how people interacted with the police in the craziness of the night club scene."

"The first night I went out this time," LaPlante continued, "Monday night I had a chance to go to the police station and get a good first hand look at the facility and what our officers are dealing with in there. I can tell you that the building is in complete disrepair. The men and women who protect us every day deserve better. I also think it hampers their job somewhat,

the building really needs help, and it's unacceptable. I also think they would be able to do a better job if they were in a better building."

The second night Laplante went out riding with Lawrence police was a very busy night. The Valley Patriot followed LaPlante as the officer he was riding with, Sgt. Quaglietta was rushing from call to call.

"I didn't see any violence the nights I was out, there were a lot noise issues, traffic incidents, etc., but no I didn't see any violence as busy as the officers were it was mostly quality of life issues they dealt with," LaPlante said.

"I think it's very important for people to know that we got a lot of noise complaints that night," LaPlante said. "We at the council level hear a lot of stories about how the police don't respond to noise complaints. But, I can tell you they do, and it was a significant number of calls we got that night. The officer I was with actually wrote a ticket for a violation of the noise ordinance."

LaPlante sent a letter to his colleagues on the City Council urging them to see for themselves and do a ride-along with the Lawrence Police.

"If they know 1st hand what these officers are going through on the streets they can better serve the people we represent by seeing who the people are that the officers are up against, what are



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

the real challenges they are facing that we can help with."

"Education is the key to understanding and knowing the challenges they face and not just personnel-wise but outdated or inadequate equipment like laptops in cruisers, the conditions of our cruisers, and the obvious condition of the police station. Also, I think it's important to witness how the officers interact and diffuse situations that could very easily be ramped up and turn much more violent, if not deadly."

"The guys I saw when I went out were very cool under pressure, and were very fair in how they dealt with our citizens. I want them to know that I am very proud that we have such professional officers on the streets of Lawrence."



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

# YouthBuild Event Benefits Veteran's Clinics

Peter Kamberelis  
LAWRENCE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Massachusetts YouthBuild Programs Hold 15th Annual Carpentry Challenge and Service Project to Benefit Veteran's Hospitals and Clinics

On May 10th, 2011, ten programs from the Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition (MYBC) and three out of state YouthBuild programs, one from Rhode Island and

two from Vermont, gathered at the Home Depot in Methuen for the 15th Annual MYBC Carpentry Challenge. The challenge was hosted by YouthBuild Lawrence, YouthBuild Lowell and the Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition.

Teams of YouthBuild participants from each program competed in a Carpentry Challenge that tested their technical, accuracy and safety skills and allowed them

to showcase the construction skills they have learned in the program. All teams were given instructions and materials to build wood frame walls with plywood sheeting and drywall. The team from Fall River took top honors for the third year in a row. Brockton came in second followed by the team from YouthBuild Lawrence in third place.

Additional teams of students also built

10 handicapped accessible picnic tables and benches that were donated to VA hospitals in program communities as part of the Coalition's "Serving Across the State" AmeriCorps Week project. The service element of the Carpentry Challenge was funded in large part through a service mini-grant from the Massachusetts Service Alliance. This service project highlighted

**YOUTHBUILD, page 10**

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# Can Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua Survive?

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT PRESIDENT-EDITOR

With several law enforcement agencies investigating the finances and political dealings of Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua, and the Boston media finally waking up to his political shenanigans, the question most people are asking is: can Lantigua survive?

Let me start by saying that I've known and studied the political genius of Willie Lantigua for about twenty years now.

I've watched him go from a gadfly in city hall who cried racism at the drop of a hat (not much has changed on that front) to political king maker behind the scenes who ran slates of candidates at election time, most of whom won because of his expertise.

He went from being laughed at to being feared. From being dismissed, to being sought out by the power brokers in The Valley long before becoming mayor.

## How Lantigua came to power

Willie Lantigua created City Councilor Jose Santiago. He recruited Jose, ran his campaign, and through his efforts pushed Santiago to the State House as a State Representative.

I worked on several of those campaigns and watched as Willie laughed at conventional wisdom which said his candidate couldn't win over an immensely popular, white incumbent Representative M. Paul Ianucciello.

Lantigua always flew under the radar and he would raise money by putting empty jars in shops and bodegas all over Latino neighborhoods in Lawrence for people to put their loose change in. Change he later collected and used for campaigns he was working on.

While other politicians were raising money at \$50 per person fund raisers and spending that money on radio commercials, newspaper ads and mailings, Willie was getting volunteers to run off Xerox copies of hand made fliers where they worked. He was getting neighborhood kids to drop them in people's doors to save postage and buying them pizza in return

with all that change he was collecting in shops and bodegas.

Willie Lantigua spent years doing favors for people and refused to accept anything in return, knowing someday that all the good will he had built up in the community would pay off.

He slowly earned a reputation, especially in the Latino community, as a guy who could get anything done, no matter what.

Eventually, he turned on his cretion, State Representative Jose Santiago and successfully ran against him, given that most of Santiago's supporters were really supporters of Lantigua.

In a nutshell, that is how Willie Lantigua came to power.

And once he achieved that power, he was swift and brutal with anyone who stood in his way. Candidates or elected officials who were his best friends and confidants one day, would only need to disagree with him once to find themselves out of politics, out of a job and sometimes even out of the city by the time Lantigua was done destroying them behind the scenes.

As a state representative he curried favor with non-profits, night club owners, The Secretary of State, the Attorney General, The Essex County DA, The Governor, and anyone else who could help him at a later date when he needed them.

So why am I giving you this readers digest version of how Willie Lantigua operates? What does this have to do with the question at hand: "can Lantigua survive the media and law enforcement onslaught?"

## The Answer

The answer is, Willie Lantigua is not just a man, or a single politician who was lucky enough to win an election.

Willie Lantigua is a machine. A machine he always keeps well greased. Democrats who want to get elected at the state level know they need Lantigua's guaranteed block of votes in Lawrence to do so, and in return he always gets a heads up when trouble is coming. He always seems to be



ahead of the curve.

And it's evident by the silence of Secretary of State Bill Galvin when election fraud was alleged against Lantigua year after year. It's evident by the silence of Attorney General Martha Coakley (who ran her last campaign out of Lantigua's office on Essex Street) and it's evident by the crickets we've heard coming out of Essex County DA John Blodgett's office.

But with all the favor's Lantigua has banked throughout the years, there is one thing he didn't count on and in my view, still hasn't take seriously enough.

Willie Lantigua has underestimated the integrity of the Lawrence Police, (some of whom have silently watched him for years). He taunts federal law enforcement officials thumbing his nose at them, while professing his innocence and honesty, all the while continuing his law breaking.

## Can Willie Lantigua survive?

Vegas odds say no.

He has arrogantly flaunted his misdeeds in public and even after learning of law enforcement investigations has not changed his behavior one bit.

But, remember, without a recall petition by the voters to remove him, there is nothing in the Lawrence City Charter that says he must resign or can be removed if he is indicted or even if he is convicted and serving time in jail.

Personally speaking, Lantigua seems to be on borrowed time, as it looks like the feds are closing in with real evidence of

real wrongdoing.

But, politically speaking Willie Lantigua could very well be charged with a crime and be out on bail and there is nothing anyone can do to make him step down.

Sure he would suffer financially, he could lose his freedom temporarily, but he would still be the mayor of Lawrence, continuing to bring shame on a once proud city.

And make no mistake about it. If Lantigua were to be indicted and convicted of a crime tomorrow, he would refuse to resign as mayor and serve out the rest of his term collecting his \$100,000+ mayors salary (with benefits) while sitting in a jail cell.

On top of all that, there's a very real chance that the majority of the people who voted for him in the last election would vote for him again, whether he is sitting in a jail cell or not.

So, unless the feds have proof of something so serious that Willie faces life in prison, odds are that when all this is over, Willie Lantigua will do just fine and will still be working on his ultimate goal of becoming President of the Dominican Republic.



*Tom Duggan is president of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, a Police Survivor and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WHAV.NET, Wednesdays from 6pm-9pm. You can email your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com.*

## YOUTHBUILD: FROM PAGE 9

the Coalition's Service Learning Model and enabled students from across the state to attend as YouthBuild and AmeriCorps members and to serve in appreciation of the men and women who have served our country.

YouthBuild offers young people between the ages of 16 and 24 a unique combination of academic instruction and workforce development training. Young people work to attain their GED or high school diploma while building affordable housing in their communities. This approach allows students to develop important workforce and academic skills while they enrich their communities. The Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition provides resources for its member programs in the following areas; peer support and evaluation, technical

assistance, coordination of statewide events, and application for State Line Item or other sources of funding. It also facilitates cross-program collaboration and sharing of best practices.

The Massachusetts Service Alliance, Established in 1991, is a private, nonprofit organization serving as the state commission on community service and volunteerism. Its mission is to catalyze the innovation and growth of service and volunteerism by creating partnerships that maximize resources, expertise, capacity, and impact.

For more information contact: Jennifer Kelliher (MYBC), jkelliher@massyouthbuild.org, 617-445-8887 ext. 27 April Lyskowsky (YB Lawrence), alyskowsky@lawrenceyouth.com, 978-681-0548 ext. 105

## JEFF KATZ: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

is in the tank thanks to a couple of years of Obamanomics and Romney's strong suits include business and bucks. His second strength is that he is not Barack Obama. Regular Americans are hurting thanks to the current occupant of the Oval Office and they are inclined to vote for a replacement. Can they be stirred to action by the man formerly known as Willard? Don't forget that Romney also enjoys great support from the Republican Party establishment. The problem for him is that

all the money in the world may not be enough. The midterm election showed that it is the Tea Party mobilizing voters, not the GOP establishment.

I really don't know who the nominee of my party will be. But I will be very concerned if it is a man with the personality of Bob Dole, the convictions of John McCain and the hair of John Edwards.

## REES: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Board of Selectmen and we did have a good relationship. Someone like that makes it easier for things to run more smoothly. He always seemed to have the answers for us even if it wasn't the answers we wanted.

Stewart says that there were times when he and Rees sparred over financial issues but admits looking back, that Rees was more right on those issues than he was.

"He made all the right financial decisions, even where I disagreed with him sometimes, like I didn't want to raise fees but when it all comes out in the wash he was right about raising the revenue for the town it was something we had to do. It's great when you have faith in your town manager to do the right thing, we did have faith in Mark and he did all the right things for the town. I wish him all the best."

Selectmen said that the search will now begin for a new town manager and it's not going to be easy. "I think he has 90 days under his contract we will negotiate up to 90 but we will give him the leeway he needs," Selectman Lanen said.

"What we are looking for now is someone with very strong finance experience," Selectman Watson added. "That's a huge part of that job. I think

we got spoiled with Mark and when he is gone a lot of people will look back and realize how spoiled we really were

"What's important now is to find someone who can come in with an understanding of how to deal with ongoing projects and setting goals and objectives for the town. Someone who can figure out the towns long term and short term master plan issues, capital projects where growth is going to be how we are going to address the day to day issues facing the town."

Stewart said that he was unsure how the process of picking a new town manager would proceed. "Years ago the selectman picked people from the community and they sat on the screening committee.

Then selectman decided from there."

Watson said that the most immediate need now was to find and interim town manager while the board goes through the process of finding a permanent replacement for Rees.

Members of the board said that Rees almost never took sick and vacation time. "He was there every day, sometimes till 9 o'clock at night. He put in more than 60 hours a week. He put his heart and soul into the job. Portland is lucky our loss is their gain."



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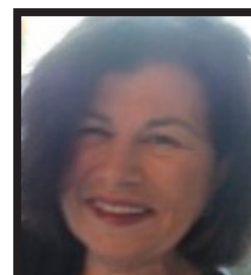
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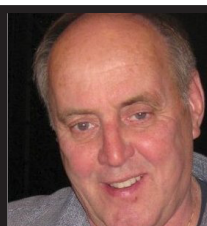
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# Election Season Has Begun in Lowell

Gerry Nutter

VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

Election Season has begun here in Lowell. This year in the City Council Race we have one open seat with the retirement of longtime Councilor Edward “Bud” Caulfield who was truly ‘The People’s Representative” and was the epitome of the neighborhood councilor.

It leaves 8 strong Incumbents running including current Mayor Jim Milinazzo, former mayor’s Bill Martin & Rita Mercier, long serving councilors Kevin Broderick and Rodney Elliot and completing their first term Franky Descoteaux, Joe Mendonca and Patrick Murphy who has yet to confirm he is in the race. Along with some very formidable challengers including former City Councilor / Mayor Armand Mercier, Longtime School Committeeman John Leahy, trying to make the jump to Council, Sal’s Enterprises VP John MacDonald, Longtime Democratic worker and retired Postal Carrier Marty Lorrey, Paul Belley who finished 12th in the last council race, Corey Belanger who is on the Zoning Board and had a strong showing in the Governors Council race,

fellow ZBA board member Vesna Nuon and newcomer Van Pech. Robert Merrill and Fred Doyle are two fringe candidates.

So what are the big issues being discussed by the council? Is it the tax rate? No the city is \$5 Million dollars under the total allowable Tax levy. Is it the sky-rocketing cost of health care for city workers? No, the City Manager has gotten the Unions to agree to a lesser cost program. Maybe it is the mounting debt from borrowing to



make improvements in school buildings and energy improvements? No overall debt is down this year and the city has built up its reserve funds so they are no longer on a State watch list.

The “BIG” issue’s are whether the city should lease space on an elevated water tower to Cell Phone companies, whether a house should have been built on a legal lot size because it ‘doesn’t fit the neighborhood (both items involve the same neighborhood – The Highland section of Lowell) if pit bulls should be muzzled and if the City Manager should release the names and resumes of all applicants who apply to serve on a city

board or commission to the City Council, newspaper and public.

So has you can see not a lot of real meaty, glamorous or controversial issue facing the incumbent City Council or challengers. One incumbent Rodney Elliot who finished 9th by 217 votes and was the only incumbent to pull papers the first day they were available and has been trying in the past few weeks to paint himself as the Councilor who



stands up and questions the City Manager. Rodney is trying to reinvent himself from Fiscal watchdog to Attack Dog –guardian of the people.

The School Committee race is even quieter with 1 open seat and only two challengers. Incumbents Connie Martin, Jim Leary, Jackie Doherty, Dave Conway and Alison Labara are all running for re-election and Kristin Ross Sitcawich and Robert Gignac are the challengers.

The non-tending of an offer to current Supt. Chris Scott or the use of Federal Race to the Top money and the unsettled teacher’s contract are the issues but again it looks like a very quiet race.

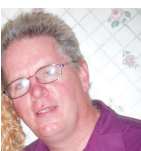
The Greater Lowell Technical School Board has 2 incumbents up for re-Election in Lowell. Mike Lenzi the current chair and former City Councilor who runs a well loved Banquet Hall/Catering

Business and is from a large well liked political family along with former chair David Laffieier who is a retired plumber and is also a well liked gentleman. Neither has publicly declared if they will be seeking re-election and the only challenger who still hasn’t officially announced is well known local Blogger Gerry



Nutter (Hey that’s me!).

Not many big issues in the Tech race, aside from the teachers contract not being settled and the School Committee with a reputation for overpaying the Superintendent but not the teachers. The former Supt. who retired in 2010 was making more money than the Supt of Lowell, Dracut and Tyngsboro Schools and even more than the Town Managers from Dracut, Dunstable, Tyngsboro and more than the Lowell City Manager.



Read Gerry Nutter’s Blog at [gerrynutterslowell.com](http://gerrynutterslowell.com) or email him at [GNutter@docuserve.com](mailto:GNutter@docuserve.com)

## Lowell Small Business Assistance Center Microloan Fund

LOWELL, MA- Karen Frederick, Executive Director of Community Teamwork, Inc., and Stacie Hargis, Director of the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center, announce the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center Microloan Fund Program.

This program will target low and moderate-income entrepreneurs in the Merrimack Valley who lack access to conventional credit but who have the capacity to achieve small business ownership. The Fund will bridge the credit gap, helping businesses expand and grow, and make them bankable. Capacity is determined through business planning and successful financial

analysis; and strengthened and monitored through continued technical assistance.

“The mission of the fund is to help create, strengthen, and expand businesses owned by low and moderate-income individuals in the region, infusing capital into small businesses and contributing to economic development,” says Center Director Stacie Hargis, noting that, “The Center anticipates making its first loan this fall.”

“A generous Parker Foundation challenge grant was the catalyst for the Center to leverage additional private funds to capitalize this Microloan fund,” said Hargis. The Center approached community banks in the Merrimack

Valley, in total, successfully raising \$66,000.

Nine banks contributed at various levels.

Gold Level: Boston Private Bank and Trust

Silver Elite Level: Lowell Five, Enterprise Bank, Pentucket Bank, Eastern Bank

Silver Level: Jeanne D’Arc

Bronze Elite Level: LowellBank, Lowell Development and Finance Corporation

Bronze Level: Washington Savings

To enhance the impact of the Microloan fund, CTI applied for and successfully

received a JOLI (Job Opportunities for Low Income) grant from the Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) to develop the Lowell Initiative to Further Entrepreneurship (LIFE) program, which will support self-employment and microenterprises of participants in CTI programs. These individuals will be trained in family child care, farming, and energy/construction related fields. Through the LIFE program, participants will take advantage of the Center’s entrepreneurial trainings and technical assistance, and then have the opportunity to apply for a microloan to start their business. The JOLI grant brings the total

**MICROLOAN, PAGE 17**

## RECRUITERS: FROM PAGE 6

of North Andover High and that’s partly because of the interference we get from some of the people who work there.”

School Committeeman Karin Rhoten said that there are some teachers who are anti-military and anti war at NAHS but that is common in most educational facilities.”

“I know that we have a number of teachers who were outspoken against the war in Iraq and feel that the military is something subservient to going into college. It’s pretty common in any education environment not just North Andover. But, I am dissappointed to hear that it may be happening here and the recruiters are having a hard time.”

While the Valley Patriot was at Devans Army base interviewing local recruits, our reporter asked for a show of hands to see how many kids represented each local high school.

“How many here are in Lawrence High?” our reporter asked the of recruits getting a resonse of a few dozen hands. Lawrence, Methuen, Haverhill, Middleton, and other surrounding communities were all well represented among the fifty plus recruits attending the pre-boot camp training.

But when our reporter asked “Who here is from North Andover High School?” Not

one hand went up.

One recruit, Chris St. Louis said he graduated from NAHS last year and is now attending Northern Essex Commuity College.

“It is dissappointng that some folks feel the military is step back from higher education. In reality it’s a step forward for many kids,” Committeeman Rhoten continued. “They learn honor, loyalty, love of country and the military teachers the importance of service to others. Those are all things [that] kids coming out of college don’t have today because they just don’t get it in the schools and many kids don’t get it at home.”

School Committeeman Rhoten comes from a military family herself. Her grandfather was a WWII Navy veteran. Her brother is currently in the Navy and her father is retired Air Force.

“Some educators really believe ‘why waste your time in military when you can go on to college and better yourself,’ she said. “But, a career in the military gives kids a college opportunities and with the GI bill and other military benefits it can set a student on the right path. My opinion is that this it’s a great way to better yourself.”

“I tell my 3 sons, I would be proud to see them in ROTC programs. I would

be proud if they ever joined the military. Nothing would make me happier than to see my sons serve their country.”

Rhoten said that she doesn’t believe that the problems recruiters have at NAHS are most likely not the fault of the principal or superintendent. “I can’t imagine that they would know anything about it much less condone it. But it shouldn’t be happening at all.”

Former School committeeman Chuck Ormsby said he agrees.

“If it’s true I’m shocked. We never had any complaints about that when I was on the committee and I would not expect that the principal or superintendent had anything to do with it. You know we have a small group of very liberal, anti-military, anti-war teachers and administrators over there and if they are giving any recruiter a hard time it should be adressed immediately. My sense is that now that it has been brought to the adminitration’s attention that this kind of thing won’t happen anymore.”

Superintendent Hottel says that, “In the Class of 2011, we have 3 students out of 303 graduates who are intending to enter military service, one with the US Army and two with the US Air Force.”

“Our valedictorian of the Class of 2009 is attending West Point. On scholarship night in 2009 we had a very moving presentation from representatives of the US Army of the appointment letter for our

valedictorian.

“I have spoken to a Marine Corps representative and to staff members at our high school. All agree that teachers and administrators at NAHS are very welcoming to representatives of all branches of the armed services.”

While teachers and administrators at NAHS have denied that there has been any hostility shown to any of the recruiters, recruiters say that’s just not the case, however “we are not looking to embarass anyone and Superintedent Hottel did reach out to us when he saw the Valley Patriot posting on this story on Facebook and assured us that we will be treated with respect when we enter the building and that’s all we care about. Our job is to give students the information about opportunities in the U.S. Marines and if this story helps in changing the way we get treated then it’s all good.

Hottel said that he spoke with the Men’s Club at the Senior Center in North Andover, “and I mentioned to them that we especially value and honor our veterans in school events, and that one of the reasons we do this is because we seek to teach respect and service as part of our acclaimed Building Respectful Communities initiative. This is an active initiative at all of schools, from the elementary schools through the high school.”



# Valley Students Attend pre-boot camp training

TOM DUGGAN

Local U.S. Marine recruiters in The Valley got their first look at the latest batch of recruits last month at Ft. Devans Army Base in Massachusetts. The new recruits, called “poolees” (recruits yet to attend basic training) were put through preliminary training to get them ready for the extensive physical demands of Marine Recruit Depot Parris Island.

Recruit poolees arrived at Ft. Devans for three days of basic training preparation where they were expected to meet a quota of sit ups, pull ups, do extensive drills, run the track and were educated to harsh marine culture during a weekend designed to prepare them for their new lives.

Recruits slept in tents at night and were given the same MRE’s (meals ready to eat) that soldiers in combat received.

The Valley Patriot was on hand during the weekend retreat and interviewed a number of high school students from The Valley. Most of which were recruited by Sgt. Cardona of the Lawrence recruiting station on Winthrop Avenue.



Cardona is a Lawrence native who enlisted in 1998 and attended Parris Island boot camp in July of 1999 after spending some time working at Prescott Nursing home in North Andover. Cardona was shipped to Afghanistan eight days after the Muslim attacks of 9-11. “We were the first ones deployed,” Cardona says.

Cardona served a tour in Iraq and Afghanistan and eventually became the

Lawrence recruiter in July of 2007. “The turnaround with these kids is amazing,” Cardona told us. “Some of these kids, when they start, have attitudes, they act like punks, they don’t really understand what life is about, the have no direction. By the time they are ready for Parris Island you see the transformation. They understand their purpose, they understand what is expected of them and that honor, courage and commitment are now going to be a way of life for them.”

## Valley Recruits



**Greg Levesque** of Methuen is a junior at Landmark High School in Beverly and is the son of Lawrence Police Officer David Levesque.

Asked why he decided to join the Marines instead of the other uniformed services, Levesque said he wanted to join the armed forces and joining the Marines was an easy choice.

“Marines are the toughest of the branches,” he said. “My Father is a police officer and he was in the Army, sir, but basically, almost my whole family is in the Marines. My brother is a Marine. My cousin and my grandfather were Marines. It’s a family tradition.”

“I know what is going to be expected

of me,” Levesque told The Valley Patriot “and I know what to expect from the Marines. It’s about working as a team. There are no individuals here.”

“I’m still a junior and my dad won’t sign the papers, so I have to wait till next year to be shipped out, but I’m committed 100% to see this through. I want to be a Marine and I am gong to be a Marine,” the determined teen said.

Asked about the training at Ft. Devans before being shipped to Parris Island, Levesque said he was having a great experience though he admitted, “it’s tough, it’s very tough, but it’s awesome. It gets us in shape, keeps us in shape and makes us more prepared, more motivated.”

Asked if he thought he would be ready for the extensive physical demands of basic training at Parris Island he answered without hesitation,” yes sir I’m ready now.”

Levesque echoed what many of the Marine recruits at Parris Island told The Valley Patriot last October. “I want to be a Marine, but when I get out I want to be a police officer.”

With an infinite number of possible occupations to choose from in the Marines, Levesque says he wants to join the basic infantry unit and then join the Special Forces. “I’m ready for Parris Island, and then I’ll be ready for combat. I’m ready for it.”

He said he expects to be sent somewhere in the Middle East after basic training, most likely Iraq or Afghanistan.

“Neither of my parents is looking forward to that,” he admitted nervously. “But, I made a commitment and I am going to see it through.”

Like many of the young men and women who recently joined the Marines, Levesque said he understands the dangers and the risks involved but “Marines make

a difference,” he said. “That’s what it’s all about, making a difference.”



**Dylan Alves** is a senior at Lawrence High School and lives in Londonderry NH where he recently moved.

“I want to be a Marine, partly because I had a cousin last year who was killed in Afghanistan. His name was Eric Courier from Londonderry NH. He was a hero I want to make him proud, fill the void he left if I can. That’s not the only reason, but it was one of the big reasons,” he said.

“I’m pretty good at physical activity, I’m a small guy but it’s not a problem for me. I want go to combat overseas.”

Alves says the support he is getting at home is split, “but they know this is what I am committed to do. My dad doesn’t think I’m doing it for the right reasons but my mom supports me 100%. I understand his hesitation. It’s a big step, a life changing decision that is going to shape the entire future of my life.”

Alves runs indoor and outdoor track and a few short days after our interview

MARINES: PAGE 18

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# I am helping the VP out by writing about Dracut

Jamison Tomasek  
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

With the retirement of the previous Dracut columnist I knew a few people from Dracut who could help out, but they couldn't produce an article by deadline so I am pinch hitting for Dracut this month. Next month there will be an actual Dracut resident in place. Today I will take my one shot to debunk some Dracut myths.

1) "Dracut is Somerville with Trees" is a very popular catch phrase used by Dracut residents themselves to express their dismay (or resignation) with the contentious nature of Dracut politics. I'm not sure why Somerville was chosen, maybe because for years "Slummerville" has been an easy target for comedians (similar to Reveeh). Dracut politics are rougher than the other Merrimack Valley towns. There are two main political factions in town and people

in each don't like people in the other. Maybe it's better than the "everybody gets along" you see elsewhere that often results in higher town spending. 2) Dracut is a Democratic town was often repeated because all elected official were Democrats (though town elections are non-partisan). Then Dracut went 70% for Republican Scott Brown. Last Spring the head of the Dracut Republicans, Cathy Richardson, was elected selectman, breaking the Democratic lock, and the town voted heavily Republican last November. 3) Dracut is a conservative town and while the last two elections make this seem true, Dracut is hard to characterize as to some extent it is two towns. East Dracut has farms and larger homes built on what were once farms, so it tends more conservative. West Dracut is composed of mostly denser neighborhoods, the inhabitants of most

originating from Lowell, so they tend to be less conservative. 4) Dracut is a suburb of Lowell and there are tons of Lowell connections, but I don't find many people in Dracut that actually work in Lowell. They do go out to eat there or drink (why can't Lawrence have restaurants like Lowell!!). 5) Dracut is not near Andover and based on Senate districts this by law would have to be false, and it actually is. They are across the river from each other. I would be willing to wager that most people in either town do not realize this. 6) The Dracut selectmen like to play musical chairs. If you are following Dracut political news closely you will know that just recently one selectman moved another selectman's nameplate on their meeting room table and then sat in what was her chair so he didn't have to sit next to another selectman he didn't like. While not exactly musical chairs, it

certainly was grammar school behavior. 7) Everyone in Dracut has their own TV show. Dracut has one of the most active cable access operations anywhere. They make it very easy to have your own show. Lots of political types and former political types have popular shows. Like commercial TV if you put something on that people find interesting (for whatever reason) they will watch (Hi Roger Daigle! I was thinking of you when I wrote this and I know you read this paper).

Note I have not said anything about Warren Shaw, [editors note: thank god!] the most well known person in Dracut and a person with his own mythology. I would probably need a whole article to do him justice. Dracut is a great town with lots of nice people and look for more Dracut news from a new correspondent next month.

## Halper Still Making Permanent Waves

David Morrison  
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Donna Halper is a Boston radio legend. She is also a trailblazer for women in Boston radio. Halper, who was one of the first woman on-air personalities in Boston, recently released a book through Arcadia Publishing called "Boston Radio," which chronicles the entire history of Boston's radio legends and stations. I sat down with Halper, who talked about her new book, her contribution to the U.S. breakthrough of the band "Rush," and her broadcasting career that has taken her from the airwaves to the lecture hall.

Q: Donna, you've had such a legendary career. This might seem open-ended, but what was the inspiration that got you interested in radio? Also, how much of a challenge was it being a woman in a then mostly male-dominated radio field?

A: Arnie Ginsburg. As I mentioned in a few other interviews, people have asked me why I put Arnie on the cover (of Boston Radio). Well, I was a lonely kid. I was the only Jew in my neighborhood (of Dorchester). I was a feminist before there was such a thing. Women didn't have many options for work. They were either doctors or teachers. I originally wanted to be a sports writer. People really told me that I couldn't do that. Yet, here was Arnie Ginsburg. He didn't have a deep voice, but rather a high-squeaky voice. Plus, he didn't change his name. As a Jew, that meant a lot to me. Most deejays would hide their ethnicities, but Arnie was just Arnie.

Q: At your Alma Mater Northeastern

University, you became the first woman to be on-air at the Northeastern campus radio station. How much of a struggle was it to get on the air? Plus, do you personally feel that you were a trailblazer for women here in Boston?

A: When I applied for an on-air position at WNEU (the Northeastern radio station), the station manager told me "no." I asked him "why?" Well, they basically told me that, "girls didn't sound good on the air." So, I then embarked on a four-year battle to get on the air. Finally in the fall of 1968, I became the first female student at Northeastern to be on the campus station. Of course, people there were waiting for me to make a mistake, just so that they could say, "See, I told you so." Yet, I didn't. From Northeastern, I was hired as an on-air deejay at a folk station in Cambridge, MA called WCAS, which is no longer around. I would teach during the day, and then go on in the evening. I do feel that I'm a trailblazer whether I want to be or not. See, I didn't want people to hire me just because I am a woman, but I also didn't want people to not hire simply because I'm a woman.

Q: In 1973, you accepted an on-air position at WMMS in Cleveland, and it was you who broke the legendary Canadian band Rush into the U.S. market. What do you think it was about the band that resonated with people in Cleveland?



A: Bob Roper, who was with A&M Records Canada, knew that I was at WMMS. He sent me the first Rush record. He told me that his record label had passed on the band, but had felt that the band "had something." So, he wanted me to give the band a listen. I dropped the needle down on the first track, which was called "Working Man," and the moment that I heard it, I knew that this would be a perfect record for Cleveland. The lyrics were "Well I get up at seven, yeah I go to work at nine. Got no time for living, yes I'm working all the time." Cleveland was a real factory town. At the time, Republic Steel was the biggest industry in town. Of course, when I first played the record, the phones were ringing off the hook. People were asking me when the new Led Zeppelin was coming out. I said "Not Led Zeppelin. Rush. A Toronto band."

Q: Your new book "Boston Radio" from Arcadia Publishing, explores the entire history of radio in the hub from the twenties to present day. Did you learn anything about Boston radio through your research that you yourself didn't know before?

A: My commitment is to the preservation of radio market. I went through a lot of this history. In fact, as we speak, I'm looking at a magazine called "Judge" from 1920. It's not a big deal,

unless you're in radio. I'm always looking to learn about my ancestors in radio, and when I mean ancestors, I'm not talking about blood relatives. By ancestors, I'm talking about the people who came before me in broadcasting. This book, we pay homage to great Boston radio legends like Arnie "Woo-Woo" Ginsburg, Jerry Williams, and Charles Laquidara. Yet, through my research, and in my lectures, I like to tell stories about the smaller and lesser-known entrepreneurs in radio. I don't want them to be forgotten. The key to broadcasting is that it's live and local.

Q: These days, you're an assistant professor of communications at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. What moment in your career had the most impact on people's lives? Also, what lessons do you hope to pass on to your students?

A: I've taught Sunday school, High School, and College. All three are very different worlds. The most important thing that I like to teach my students now at Lesley is context. I like to ask the students "why did this event occur?" For example, we all know that the Beatles became popular in 1964, but I like to ask the students "why?" Of course, the greatest impact that I had on people's lives is Rush. The greatest highlight is that I'm still good friends with the guys in the band. I did something for the band in 1974. That was a long time ago. I promoted the band and got other stations to play the band's record. The guys in the band still give me a shout out. Thirty-five years from what I did in Cleveland is what I am grateful for.

## Local Home Sales Down Versus Last April

When Homebuyer Tax Credit Ruled ...but Sales Up Slightly Compared with March Figures

(MERRIMACK & NASHOBA VALLEYS) — The Northeast Association of Realtors (NEAR) — which represents more than 1,100 Realtors in the local area — reported today that home sales volume declined during the month of April compared with April of 2010 for single family homes, condominiums, and multi-family properties. Sales for all three residential categories, however, were up slightly compared with the sales pace in March. Median sales prices in April also declined for all three property types versus last April, while condominium and multi-family prices were up slightly

compared with March's median prices. NEAR's report is based on data from MLS Property Information Network based in Shrewsbury.

The report showed that the 184 closed single family home sales for the month of April were down by 21.7 percent compared with last April's 235 sales, and the median price of single family homes sold last month dropped by 10 percent to \$269,950, compared with the \$300,000 median price set in April of last year. The number of condominiums sold was down by 22.3 percent in April compared with a year ago, to 87 sales versus the 112 sold in April of 2010, and the median

price for condominiums sold in April was down 4.7 percent to \$180,000, versus \$188,950 last April. Multi-family property sales also declined from 48 last April to 38 this April, a drop of 20.8 percent, and the median price for multi-family homes slipped by 4.6 percent to \$182,500, compared with \$191,250 last April. NEAR President Tom Courtney noted that the April sales figures continue to reflect the immense popularity of last year's federal home buyer tax credits, which pushed up sales last spring. He also said that home buyers continue to "beat the bushes for the best deals, including price and property condition," stating that

area home sellers need to set a price that will compete well in today's marketplace and also work to ensure that maintenance issues are addressed. He added that home staging — whereby a home for sale is "dressed to sell" — has become extremely popular and is considered a highly cost-effective marketing strategy.

The report also reflected that as of May 15, the inventory of homes for sale locally rose slightly for all three residential property types versus the same date last year — rising to 1,660 single family homes, 661 condominiums, and 253

**LOCAL HOME PRICES, page 32**



## GEORGETOWN TODAY!

## Votes, Taxes, Enemies and Reputations

Lawrence “Lonnie” Brennan  
VALLEY PATRIOT GEORGETOWN COLUMNIST

So, what did the spring Georgetown elections and the approved \$1.2 million school override cost you?

If you're the average homeowner (half of whom sat at home and ignored the election), the vote raised your property tax to the point where either this year, next year, or the year after (depending on your property) you'll be doling out upwards of \$100 each week in taxes (\$5,200/year), unless of course you live in one of the less elegant homes. But that's nothing compared to what one well-known community figure lost at this year's election: a piece of his reputation.

Fox 25 did a hit piece. Not an amateur job like we're used to seeing by the likes of the Lawrence Eagle Tribune, but rather, a real smear-job, lopsided, graphic-rich hit-piece which they 'coincidentally' aired the night before the Georgetown elections.

And, the funny thing about this (if you can find something funny about a hit-piece), was an e-mail sent by the former Georgetown Club owner Peter Wojtkun. In his e-mail which was obtained by the Valley Patriot, Mr. Wojtkun not only knew about the exact date and air timing of the upcoming hit-piece, but was able to nearly

word-for-word summarized its contents, almost 10 days before Fox 25 went on the air.

O.K., if you've read this far, and if you have any memory of the former Georgetown Club and its disgraced former owner Mr. Wojtkun, and any memory of the various court records and judgments against Mr. Wojtkun... well, as the expression goes, consider the source. One simply cannot add any more to the plethora of adjectives presented by two Massachusetts judges, in their summaries of Mr. Wojtkun, his actions, and his character attributes.

So, what does the victim, Christopher Rich do to get back a piece of his reputation? In the hit-piece (for lack of a more descriptive term), Fox 25 showcased an ex-con who claimed that he hasn't been nice (dah, no kidding) and that Mr. Rich thought the con was a gangster, and that Mr. Rich wanted to join the club so to speak (say it with gravel in your voice, to the tune of 'a deal you can't refuse' ala The God Father).

The con, by the way, was doing time for check forgery. And no, not his first offense. Far from it. But, the con was a former employee of Mr. Rich's law firm, and as he sat behind bars, looking at spending the better part of a decade

sharing soap for the crimes he committed, he found a way to appeal and got out.

It gets funnier. On the purported secret 'tape recordings' which Mr. Rich said he would love to hear someday "if they exist", they have printed a reference to Mr. Rich's sister Connie: "I don't have a sister Connie," he explained. And there are other inconsistencies too he says. Regarding money to pay off his boat: "I don't own a dime on my boat," he said.

"This guy wanted to embarrass me as best as he could," Mr. Rich said. "I was brought up by two very loving parents, and I've tried to conduct my life the way a good person should," he said.

While the hit-piece certainly was the buzz election 'morn, and of course contributed to Mr. Rich's loss in his effort to volunteer in yet another unpaid town position (he lost by 91 votes), he said life moves on.

Mr. Rich is well known for his volunteer work on the Board of Health, the Personnel Board, and the Planning Board. Mr. Rich is also a familiar face at fundraising events for various charitable organizations, and for the schools. A few weeks after the election, I asked Mr. Rich about his now ex-con accuser and how he gets his reputation back.

"People that know me, know that that's

not me," he replied. People that don't know me, and I have to tell you, after watching Fox 25, I wouldn't vote for me, without knowing me," he chuckled. "I went to polls that day, held my head high, a tough thing to do, I was so embarrassed. I did nothing wrong. A lot of people came by and wished me well, and a lot of people went by and shook their heads."

Regarding the checks shown on TV? "Those signatures aren't even close to my signature," he said. Fox 25 said that Eastern Bank said they were not forgeries. But that's what they do in all civil suits, you deny it, and make the other side prove it. Eastern Bank settled out of court for high-five figures with me," he said.

He's now in the process of compiling several other cases. He can get money back, he can continue his volunteer work on various boards, but where does he go to get back that small piece of his reputation? I guess his friends and neighbors will understand, the rest really don't matter.



Lonnie Brennan is a former Georgetown Selectmen. He can be reached at Lonnie@justlonnie.com.

## Marathon runner honors stroke survivor's battle

HAVERHILL (May 12, 2011) — You may wonder what Rene Fontaine, an 81-year-old nursing home resident, and Steve Seide, an experienced runner of the

Boston Marathon, could have in common.

The answer is that each has faced his own "Heartbreak Hill" more than once.

For Seide, an 11-time runner of the Boston Marathon, the challenge is

apparent.

In Fontaine's case, the battle was to overcome the effects of two devastating strokes and regain the ability to walk and talk.

The similarities were not lost on Seide, who ran this year's Boston Marathon in Fontaine's honor. The 57-year-old North Andover resident has for the last several years run the race in honor of someone who has faced hardship.

This year, he selected Fontaine in connection with the Tree of Dreams program at Penacook Place in Haverhill, where Fontaine resides.

The Tree of Dreams program encourages residents in nursing homes to envision a dream that others then strive to bring to fruition.

On Marathon Monday, Fontaine was riveted to the television in the hopes of catching a glimpse of Seide, who had personalized his running bib with Fontaine's name. Fontaine also kept watch on the Boston Athletic Association's website to track Seide's progress.

On the Thursday after the race, Seide

visited Penacook, at 150 Water St. in Haverhill, to present Fontaine with mementos from the race, including an official Boston Marathon jacket, shirt, pin, program, and medal.

In return, Fontaine was able to congratulate Seide for his performance time of 3:05:20. The two men previously had spoken by phone, but were able to meet in person at the special celebration, attended by Fontaine's family, friends, and staff of Penacook.

If you would like to learn more about the Tree of Dreams program or how you can volunteer at Penacook Place, visit [penacookplace.org](http://penacookplace.org).

Located at 150 Water St., the 160-bed Penacook Place is the only not-for-profit nursing and rehabilitation facility serving the city of Haverhill. Penacook Place has a professional staff of 230 employees. Contributions that support programs like this as well as the purchase of new equipment, renovations and resident activities can be made to the Friends of Penacook Fund, c/o Penacook Place, 150 Water St., Haverhill, MA, 01830.

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# From the desk of Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi

## Methuen Happenings

Here are some of the things happening around Methuen. Thanks to the Valley Patriot for giving me the opportunity to bring these things to you.

The Methuen Relay for Life was held this weekend, and it was a huge success. On day one of the event the student leaders announced that fundraising had exceeded \$250,000. This was truly a student driven effort, with all of our grammar school participating as well. I attended a check presentation at Methuen's CGS, where the students raised over \$2400 by making duct tape wallets and selling them. It was representative of the efforts put in by the entire Methuen Public School student body. The team captains for this year, Lauren Loffredo, Terrena Scannell, and Eric Lacroix, deserve enormous thanks for their efforts. The support they received in this endeavor was amazing, and makes me realize how fortunate I am to be the Mayor of a community like this.

The Methuen School Committee and Superintendent Scannell recognized and honored Methuen's Teachers of the Year at our last School Committee meeting. They are, from the CGS Kathleen Johnson, from the Marsh Deborah DelliColli, from Methuen High School Martha Tatro, from the Tenney Dannah Foresta and from the Timony Barbara Jenkins. There is not a more important job that is done by local government than teaching our children, and these teachers exemplify excellence in their field. It has become fashionable to denigrate the work of teachers, but the job they do is not only important, but can



be very difficult. Congratulations to these teachers for making a difference. And speaking of education I was visited last week by the students at Methuen's Adult Learning Center. I have had the pleasure of hosting the students and staff for six years, and I look forward to their visit each year. This program, in

my opinion, is one that does tremendous good for the students and should remain a priority for the future. We have students, many immigrants, who are working hard to better themselves educationally, including English language instruction. My friend Dr. Shirley Callan was a tremendous advocate for this program, and since her passing I can tell you that we all miss her very much. Ruth Byrne and the great staff of the Methuen Adult Learning Center are doing a truly wonderful job with the students, and Dr. Callan would be proud of all of them.

Finally I would like to thank the American Legion and the VFW for their hard work in making the Memorial Day Parade a well attended tribute to our veterans, whose sacrifice has allowed us the luxury of a free press, and all of the other freedoms that we sometimes take for granted. It was an honor to have Gold Star Mother Celeste Vicente and Gold Star Grandfather Russ Currier on hand to join in the Memorial Day Service, and to honor the ultimate sacrifice made by Marine Cpl. David Vicente and Marine Pfc. Eric Currier. Thanks to all who participated. You can view the video of the service at <http://www.billmanzi.com/?p=3944>.

## Rt. 110 Convenience Store Sells Another \$1MIL Ticket!



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Hasmu from Rt. 110 Convenience store on Rt. 110 Methuen sold his third \$1 Million scratch ticket in the last two years. Hasmu says he is very happy to be in America and is using the money he made from selling the winning ticket to send his two sons; Hem and Deep to college. We are a very lucky store, many people win when they play here," Hasmu said.

## OBAMA: FROM PAGE 5

\* Space does not permit me to detail other indictable grievances: the growth of unaccountable regulatory Czars and their fiefdoms, Obama's weakening of our military, his other debilitating foreign policy decisions, and the destruction of our national pride via endless apologies.

An assortment of policy disagreements is to be expected, but those on this list are not consistent with mere policy disagreements in which both parties seek the strengthening of the American Republic or American ideals. Each of these reeks of an innate distaste for individual rights, private property, free markets, and government as a

constitutionally-limited servant of the people. I am on the brink of declaring that President Obama is a Manchurian Candidate who succeeded to the presidency, the leader of an American fifth column, and a traitor in our midst. Could this REALLY BE TRUE? Only the readers of this column can save me from such a seemingly inescapable conclusion. VOTE NOW: Go to [ValleyPatriot.com](http://ValleyPatriot.com) and register your opinion. If you want to comment on your perspective, you may e-mail the author at [ccormsby@comcast.net](mailto:ccormsby@comcast.net). Results will be published next month.

## LOWELL MICROLOAN FUND FROM PAGE 12

microloan fund amount to \$116,000. "This micro-loan program will provide technical assistance and financial resources to local business looking to grow and create jobs in the Merrimack Valley. CTI and the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center should be congratulated for securing this grant and for leveraging these federal dollars to assist additional local small businesses," said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas.

"We are very grateful that our local community banks understood the importance of contributing to the start up of this loan fund to help bring capital to our local businesses," said Karen Frederick.

"This was a great opportunity for our local banks to engage with entrepreneurs who can contribute to the region's economic recovery, but are not able to through traditional credit channels; this is a partnership between the Center, the banks and businesses who will benefit by a path to bankability," said Stacie Hargis, the Center's Director.

The Lowell Small Business Assistance Center (LSBAC) was founded to provide entrepreneurs from ethnically and economically diverse groups with the education, tools and resources necessary to launch, expand and sustain small businesses. A program of Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI), the Center works in collaboration with Middlesex Community College, the City of Lowell's Department of Planning and Development and the University of Massachusetts Lowell. In its years of operation, the Center has provided over 11,400 services to over 2,800 people exploring the possibility of starting a small business, and has helped start over 300 businesses. In October of 2009 the Center embarked on this new initiative to become a Small Business Administration Microloan Intermediary serving low and moderate-income entrepreneurs and existing businesses in the Merrimack Valley. To that end the Center applied for and received a SBA Program for Investment in Microentrepreneurs (PRIME) grant to

develop the infrastructure necessary to support the operation of an Microloan fund. Massachusetts SBA District Director Robert Nelson said, "We are excited to hear of the progress and accomplishments of the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center and news on the recent capitalization of a small business loan fund. Small businesses of Lowell now have an alternative source of capital which is so vitally important to our gateway cities in the Commonwealth." "The Lowell Five is pleased to support this loan program through the LSBAC. On a personal level, I am pleased to come together with other bankers and community members to serve on the loan review committee" said Amy Werner, Senior Vice President, Lowell Five. "The LDFC is pleased to participate in the Microloan Fund Program that will assist small business owners to expand and grow. We look forward to working with Stacie and the Lowell Small Business Assistant Center in this endeavor," said Jim Cook, Executive Director of the Lowell Development and Finance Corporation. "We proudly support the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center Microloan Fund. We believe deeply in the mission of the fund and the opportunities it creates for entrepreneurs in the Merrimack Valley," said Chester J. Szablak, Jr, Chief

Sales and Marketing Officer of Enterprise Bank. Boston Private Bank is especially pleased to help capitalize the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center's Microloan Fund Program with a Gold Level sponsorship", said Esther Schlorholtz, Boston Private Bank's Director of Community Investment. "We have supported the innovative work of the Center for a number of years, and we are excited to be part of their new initiative that will help very small businesses with critical funding and business development support". "Eastern Bank is dedicated and committed to helping businesses of all sizes grow and prosper," said Eastern Bank President Bob Rivers. "We are proud to support this program, which will help grow local businesses and ultimately create jobs in the area." "LowellBank's mission is to support small businesses within our community and we are proud to participate in the Small Business Center's Microloan Fund Program which will help entrepreneurs to fulfill their dreams of operating their own business," Richard E. Bolton, Chairman/ President & CEO of LowellBank. For more information about the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center Microloan Fund Program, please contact Stacie Hargis directly at 978-322-8400 or [shargis@comteam.org](mailto:shargis@comteam.org).



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# Protecting the Taxpayer, Protecting the Future

Ken Willette

METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

As the only candidate who has consistently voted against tax increases and inflated municipal/ school budgets, I will continue to make sensible, cost-saving decisions that will aim to reduce the burden on taxpayers. My plan includes:

- Creating business-friendly standards to attract new business in order to broaden the tax base, generate long-term jobs and reduce the property tax burden on residents.
- Establishing a regulatory relief task force to find out what local laws, regulations and rules may be harming job growth across the city.
- A four-year moratorium on any fee increases, including water and sewer rates.
- A thorough review of the Mayoral budget to provide cutbacks where reasonable.
- Returning the Mayor’s vehicle back to town service, utilizing my own vehicle during official business.
- Pledging to maintain the current Mayor salary until all city workers have restored their salaries to their previous levels before the 10% concessions took place
- Proposing the creation of a water and sewer commission.
- Implementing a full audit of the water and sewer department.

PROTECTING OUR

NEIGHBORHOODS

I am proud to have been brought up in a city with safe neighborhoods and a sense of community. Throughout my years in elective office, my work has resulted in the assignment of a police officer in every public school, the installation of cameras on school buses, and the placement of detailed information of Level 3 sex offenders on our local government website and cable access channel. As Mayor, I look forward to building on these accomplishments in order to ensure that Methuen continues to be a safe place to work and live. My plan includes:

- Supporting the Secured Communities program to ensure that those who are here illegally in the United States and commit a crime are brought to justice.
- Implement a new and updated police management study to pinpoint where our law enforcement resources should be efficiently and effectively allocated.
- Returning to the Broken Windows Theory of Policing-- clean up abandoned lots, attack illegal dumping, eliminate the graffiti on buildings and structures, clean up trash on the streets, hold landlords responsible for code violations and reinforce community policing roots.
- Establishing a community service commission to clean up streets and lots, rehab parks and athletic fields, aid those less fortunate, especially children, and honor our seniors. Many Methuen residents want to volunteer. This commission will encourage and focus that

positive energy into areas of great need. The Mayor will honor a Methuen resident every month for outstanding community service.

- Sending a Home Rule Petition to Beacon Hill that would authorize cities and towns to implement a doubling of speeding fines in established school zones where flashing school zone signs are present.

PROTECTING GOVERNMENT TRUST

With the right ideas and solid leadership, government works. Having represented Methuen in several capacities, I am confident in my ability to ensure that City Hall works in the interest of Methuen residents. My plan includes:

- Seeking the most qualified candidates for all positions and appointments.
- Ensuring that all appointments submitted to the Methuen City Council for approval contain the most comprehensive and factual information readily available.
- Introducing legislation requiring every city department produce a yearly report outlining cost savings that they have implemented and/or have proposed to reduce duplication and waste.
- Mandating a written annual report on the cost savings of single-stream recycling
- Refusing donations from lobbyists and special interest groups.
- Attending all public meetings before the Methuen City Council and the Methuen School Committee except in medical and family emergencies.

- Holding office hours at the Methuen Senior Center and the Methuen Housing Authority.

PROTECTING OUR FUTURE

Having lived in Methuen for most of my life, as a father and taxpayer, my focus is not only on the present state of our city but on its future stakeholders. It has always been my philosophy that we should aim to leave our city in a better condition than that in which we inherited it. My plan includes:

- Providing all of our school children with the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom, by ensuring that the Methuen Public Schools never implement athletic, user and bus fees.
- Studying the possibility of Methuen joining the Group Insurance Commission for quality healthcare that does not burden the taxpayer.
- Endorsing a state casino gaming package that will supply millions of dollars in additional local aid. Opposing any effort to situate a casino in Methuen. Investing additional dollars into public safety equipment and into our classrooms.
- Exploring the creation of a stadium commission, aimed at rehabbing Ranger Stadium, installing championship banners, raising funds through advertising and naming rights, and improving the entire environment for fans, players and visitors alike. Applying the same principles to rehab the infrastructure of Forest Lake for future generations.

with recruit Alves at Ft. Devans, one of our reporters ran into him at the Lawrence Veterans Memorial Stadium. He was volunteering to help out at the annual Special Olympics.

Alves is graduating this month and is expected to ship out to Parris Island for basic training in October of this year.



**Michael McGrath of Billerica.**

“Why do I want to be a Marine” the recruit asked out of breath after just finishing pull-ups?

“My father was a Marine, a lot of people think that is the reason but it’s not. Not really. He wasn’t there telling me to join or pushing me to do this, but it was his influence of showing me throughout my life what life in the Marines is all about. He’s out of the Marines now, but once a Marine always a Marine. I’ve never heard a Marine not say that it was the best decision they ever made and that goes for my dad too.”

“You talk to people who are in the Marines and whether they re-enlist or they go back to civilian life, they all say the same thing. ‘Look at your friends in high school and most of them will end up dead or in jail, some of them will make it but a lot of them won’t because they are going down the wrong path. They don’t know where they are going in life. They don’t have direction or purpose. The Marine Corps gives you discipline, it gives you

purpose. It helps pay for your college, and gives you the skills you need, skills you will benefit from the rest of your life.”

McGrath says he wants to be a combat engineer but admits he is attracted to the idea of being a firefighter or a military police officer after basic training. He is scheduled to be shipped to Parris Island in October.



**William Savard** is a senior at Methuen High School who joined the Marines this year and said he is excited about being part of the military “elite.”

“My grandfather is a retired Marine,” he said. “I want to serve my country and be the best person I can be. My job is motor T I like working on cars, that’s the best part of being a Marine, you can pretty much do whatever job you want, because there are so many opportunities.”

“Not only that, being a Marine looks great on your resume when you get out. It’s a great experience, it gets me away from the streets and keeps me out of trouble. A lot of my friends are out hanging around all the time, wondering what they’re going to do with their lives, doing drugs, whatever. I’m going to be a Marine and do something with my life.”

Asked if he was ready for the reality of real combat and making life and death decisions, Savard said “yes sir, I know it’s war and I know what it means. I mean, I don’t really know because I haven’t been there but I get that it’s life and death and I know I can handle that.

Savard said he was referred to the

Marines by Lance Corporal Joseph Foley who is serving in Afghanistan right now. Foley, Savard says is also from Methuen High School.



**Eric Vorce** is a North Andover resident and a senior at the Greater Lawrence Technical School and is scheduled to be shipped out to Parris Island on October 17th.

“I joined because my dad was in the Marine Corps it’s been my childhood dream since I was a kid. I grew up around it and fascinated by everything it’s about. It’s a culture and a way of life, and I am as ready as I am ever going to be. I can’t wait to get to Parris Island.”

Vorce says he wants to go into aviation mechanics, a lucrative career both in and out of the service.

“You can basically work for any airline when you get out,” Recruiter Sgt. Cardona said. “If he wants to go into aviation mechanics he’s picking a good MOS. (military occupational specialty). There are a lot of civilian opportunities in that field.”

Vorce continued, “I know we are at a time of war. And a lot of people are saying it’s a stupid idea, but it’s not a stupid idea to me because, we are going to go out and help people, make the world a safer place. It’s about fighting for your country and doing the right thing, working together.



**Chris St. Louis** graduated from North Andover High School in 2010 and just finished his first year at Northern Essex Community College.

St. Louis said he thought about joining the Marines in High School but decided to try college first.

“The Marines pay for college they give you direction, when you are a Marine that really means something. It means you are the best of the best. They are the toughest, and I want to be the best. I had a pretty rough upbringing and I need the discipline, I know the Marines can help give me what I need to be successful in life.”

St Louis says that he wants to ultimately be a police officer when he leaves the service and plans on using his time in the military to get the training he needs.

“I want to be an MP (military policeman) and when I get out be a police officer. I don’t think I could do that without the training and discipline the Marines are going to give me.

St. Louis says that he understands he will be in combat situations and could lose his life in battle but admits, “that can happen here too. I want to serve my country and be part of this [the war on terror].”



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RONNIE’S RANTS

Random Thoughts

**Ronnie Ford**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Naomi Klien’s “The Shock Doctrine” is a New York Times best seller.

It is a scary book explaining the many machinations and illegal activities that has contributed to our topsy-turvy economy today. The manuscript pointed out documented happenings that point to profit at all costs, inclusive of which is murder and torture.

Robert F. Kennedy, the younger brother of President John F. Kennedy, wrote a book called “The Enemy Within”. In this book the Attorney General states when hearing about a deal made between the Teamsters and Freuhaupt Trucking Company, adroitly leaving out the membership of the union, exclaimed “Say it isn’t so” reminding him of the hit tune of the same name.

That is how I feel, “Say it isn’t so”. The people we rely on to protect us are making their own deals and forgetting the people they are sworn to protect. Now, we all know that most of our agency members, CIA, ATF, FBI, Immigration ect., are committed to the protection of this country. However, there are some that we have to concentrate on.


Focus on nailing the people we cannot trust. Even if it takes a glorified internal affairs nation wide, this is something we have to take care of. Maybe some Congressman or Senator will take the first step. But it has to be done. It will take plain old guts to flush out the tax illusive monies in the trillions lying about the Cayman Islands, Switzerland, the Bahamas and a multitude of other

locations. Plenty for everyone who earned legal disposable income that will strengthen the world. “God help us in this endeavor”.

I don’t know about you, but I am totally disgusted with the shenanigans going on in the City of Lawrence by elected officials and their minions. Just because you were elected does not give you carte blanche to run amuck destroying the Police, Fire, City employees, and anything else you can get your mitts on. The Great City Of Lawrence is no longer great. It is the laughing stock of Massachusetts and beyond. Why it is not safe to ride through the city, never mind stop anywhere in it? You are likely to get shot or stabbed. And, where oh where are the State Representatives and Senators, and our Federal Elected Elite? Hiding their collective heads in the sand, afraid of speaking out lest it should tarnish their image? Ha! Remember the feet you stepped on to get to your positions, are the feet that will kick your rumpty dumps on the way down!! Clean it up, throw the bums out!

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



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

The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

Wakes & Fenerals

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

\*Wakes have not always been the solemn decorous occasions they are today. Often they were occasions of merriment and excessive drinking especially on the death of an old person who had lived a full span of life. Work stopped in the town land as a mark of respect to the dead person. People crowded to the corpse house, and in addition to the prayers and morning they spent the two nights of the wake singing, dancing telling stories and engaging in a variety of games, such as riddles, mimes, hand knuckles, feats of strength, endurance and agility. Practical jokes were played such as causing the corpse to move. Under the influence of drink these games were often rough leading to bad feelings and ending up in rows occasionally.

There were many omens of impending death in a family - a light moving away from the house, a bird pecking at the windows, a holy picture falling from the wall, a black frog coming in the back door, or a crowing hen. Prior to a death in the area, The banshee (spirit who warns of death: in Gaelic folklore, a spirit of a woman who appears, wailing, to signal that somebody in the household is going to die) cried on the occasion of a death in certain families.

A wake was an occasion for hospitality on the part of the bereaved family. It was incumbent on them “to bury the dead decently”. Not to do so would be an insult to the memory of the dead and slur to the family reputation. Families often incurred debts, which took years to pay, but burial expenses were never reneged on and were paid as soon as possible. The abuse of drink at wakes was a problem at this time, and the “carry-on” was often irreverent and totally unbecoming for such an occasion. Up until the early

years of the last century, local carpenters were still making the coffins that were made for the burial. The corpse was never left unattended and three candles burned besides the bed during the entire wake. Snuff, clay pipes and tobacco were passed round at the wake, the recipients saying each time, “Lord have mercy on the dead”. In later years the custom of holding a wake for two nights was discontinued and the corpse was taken to the church on the evening before burial. \*Keash and Culfadda, a local history, pgs 196

One day as I was shopping in Tansey’s, a grocery store in Gurteen, County Sligo, all of a sudden the lights went out and the curtains were drawn. being new to the country I thought the store was about to be closed for the day, but much to my amazement, a funeral was passing by and out of respect for the person that died, the shop was showing respect for the person in the coffin.

I’ve been to many wakes and funerals in Ireland but the most significant and heart wrenching was that of a thirteen month old little angel who died from spinal meningitis. The wake was held in the grandparent’s home. The waiting line of neighbors, classmates and friends of the mother and father was overwhelming. As I entered the home and made my way to the bedroom, the grandparents, aunts and uncles greeted me with simple gestures of thank you, what could they say during their hour of numbness and grief....What could I say to make them feel better?

As I approached the bedroom I could see the mother and father sitting on each side of the bed with the white coffin between them, holding the little girl. I broke down in tears as I said a little prayer for her and

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# Hundreds Attend Taste of Methuen



Photos left to right: Nick Bonnano and Matt Fitzgerald of Mann Orchards makes a pulled pork sandwich. Methuem Mayor Bill Manzi chats with the owner of Borelli’s Deli, Valley Patriot President and owner Tom Duggan with Methuen City Councilor Jennifer Kannan. Bottom Row: Mike Condon of Sweetheart Inn and Bob Gangi of Flavor Fresh Fruit Salad, and the owners of Royal House of Pizza.

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

NATIONAL - How Mitt Romney Could Win – I know most conservatives in the republican party have a big problem with Mitt Romney Because of his State-forced medical care plan here in Massachusetts. That’s an issue I will write about next month, but for now let me give you conservatives who are down on Romney because of Romneycare something to think about. Barack Obama has but one accomplishment to his name after two and a half years in office. His federal socialist healthcare plan. If Romney were to be the republican nominee to face Obama in the next election, Obama would have NO accomplishment he could use to separate himself from Romney. Romney will be able to effectively take off the table the one thing Obama can crow about to Independent voters. What that means, is that Mitt Romney’s biggest weakness right now in the Republican primary among conservatives and Tea Party patriots, could very well be the one issue that draws in Independents and conservative Democrats in a final election to defeat Obama. Just food for thought while all you conservatives are ripping him up on the radio airwaves. Who would you choose in a final? Obama or Romney? If that is the choice for conservatives after the primaries, the choice is pretty clear!

LAWRENCE - Roger Towmey’s Adopt a Park Program - Lawrence City Councilor has resurrected a program in Lawrence that has been very close to my heart since I worked for former Lawrence Mayor Kevin Sullivan back in 1986. Twomey has secured private donations to beautify squares and parks in the city bringing back the concept of Adopt-a-Park. Of course, Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua wouldn’t sign off on the program unless his name was put on every park and square being fixed up with private money. Towmey says he doesn’t mind though, “It’s a small price to pay to get this done. I don’t care who gets the credit,” Twomey said. “I just want to find a way to save money and beautify the city.”

LAWRENCE - Speaking of Twomey – While I have to give credit to Councilor Twomey for his tremendous efforts to fix up parks and squares and providing constituent services at a level far above other councilors, he still has to explain some of his abysmal votes over the last few years. Twomey voted for the budget that laid off fire and police last year, he voted to make tax cheat Patrick Blanchette the Economic Development Director, and he has voted to confirm every single appointment Mayor Lantigua has put in front of him. So has Mt. Vernon Councilor Eileen Bernal, and At-Large Councilor Dan Rivera... who not only joined Twomey in those votes but also voted to take the fire chief’s position out of civil



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service. If anyone credible runs against any of these councilors (who come up for reelection this November) they are going to have a hard time convincing the voters that they have been in “their” corner and not Willie Lantigua’s. Good luck councilors! I will be there at every event asking you to explain your votes and you ought to be ready with real answers!

NORTH ANDOVER - In case you were wondering how Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua got his bill passed at the state house to take the fire chief’s job out of civil service you can thank one guy: State Representative David (where-is-he) Torrisi.

METHUEN - So far there are only three candidates for mayor of Methuen; Al Dinuccio, Steve Zanni and Ken Willette. With so many educated and qualified people in Methuen I am a bit puzzled as to why there are so few running for the top job in the city. Former Senator Jim Jajuga is not running, Senator Baddour has no interest, State Rep Linda Dean Campbell isn’t running and the one person I thought would be the front-runner walking into this race early, (Chris DiBella) has not been heard from anywhere on the political scene. I find it hard to believe that this race will end with just three credible candidates (and no I do not consider Kevin Thompson a real candidate). So, where is all the talent in Methuen these days? Bill Manzi is leaving big shoes to fill, I get that but three candidates for mayor six months out of an election is not very good for a vibrant city like Methuen.

NORTH ANDOVER - Leadership Vacuum – Here’s one for the books. In the last month the residents of North Andover have learned Police Chief Richard Stanley is leaving for Wareham, Town manager Mark Rees is leaving for Portland Maine, Last year they lost fire Chief Dolan (who retired) and on Memorial Day we learned that Veteran Services Director Ed Mitchell is retiring from his post. This leaves a

huge leadership vacuum in town which could significantly change the direction of the town.

LAWRENCE - Fire Department celebrates Firefighter Memorial Sunday on June 12th.

The Lawrence Fire Department will celebrate the 117th Firefighter Memorial Sunday at the Central Fire Station on Lowell Street, beginning with a Mass at 8:00 a.m. celebrated by Fr. Patrick Armano followed by breakfast at the Relief’s Inn on Market Street.

Firefighter Memorial Sunday is held each year on the second Sunday in June to honor all the active and retired Lawrence Firefighters who have passed away during the last year and has been a tradition for more than 100 years. Memorial Sunday has been a longstanding tradition of firefighters across the nation. It is a day to reflect on the many contributions made by firefighters to protect their fellow man and property.

The Annual Memorial Sunday events are sponsored by the Mutual Relief Association of the Lawrence Fire Department, a fraternal society organized in 1878, to provide a small benefit to the wives of deceased members at a time when firefighters were unable to obtain life insurance. Guest speaker will be Fireground Photographer Christopher Barnes. Also included in the breakfast program will be the awarding of the Jeff Ness Memorial Scholarship.

In the tradition of the fire service, the bagpipes will be played by Firefighter Raymond Kenyon, Jr (ret.).

In the event of rain, the service will be



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8:00 a.m. celebrated by Fr. Patrick Armano followed by breakfast at the Relief’s Inn on Market Street.

Firefighter Memorial Sunday is held each year on the second Sunday in June to honor all the active and retired Lawrence Firefighters who have passed away during the last year and has been a tradition for more than 100 years. Memorial Sunday has been a longstanding tradition of firefighters across the nation. It is a day to reflect on the many contributions made by firefighters to protect their fellow man and property.

held indoors at the Central Fire Station.

NORTH ANDOVER - Strawberry Fields Forever. Celebrate Strawberry Season with Free Hayrides to the Strawberry Patch and Complimentary Wine, Prosecco & Strawberry Dessert Tasting! Red, ripe and savory strawberries are back at Smolak Farms! Celebrate the return of strawberry season on Saturday, June 11th, 2011 and Sunday, June 12th, 2011 from 7:00AM to 5:00PM at Smolak Farms as they commemorate the re-opening of the animal play area for the kids. Children will also have the chance to hitch a ride for free on the wee wagons from 10:00AM to 3:00PM and plant their very own strawberry plant in a personalized gardening pot from 10:00AM to 2:00PM.

A family affair, take complimentary hayrides to the strawberry patch where families can spend the day wandering amongst the berries, plucking their own selection to take home and enjoy!

While the kids are playing, explore ways to pair your newly picked strawberries with complimentary wine and Prosecco tasting provided by Wine ConneXtion of North Andover, MA from 1:00pm to 2:00pm.

Get a taste of the new Strawberry Cannoli dessert now available at the Smolak Farms Farm Stand, recipes will be provided! Proceeds from the sale of the dessert will benefit the Mass Farmers Markets Fourth Annual Strawberry Dessert Festival ([www.strawberrydessertfestival.org](http://www.strawberrydessertfestival.org)), running through Sunday, July 3rd, 2011! \*Please note that Mother Nature will determine the opening of the Strawberry Patch! Smolak Farms is located at 315 South Bradford Street, North Andover, MA. Free admission

Speaking of Smolak’s – Have you ever wanted to have the luxuries of living on a farm- food grown freshly from your own soil and raw, roving-natural Shetland wool at your disposal-but without all of the chores, like hauling bales of hay? Now is your chance! Join Smolak Farms in North Andover, MA for their first annual Family Farm Festival!

On Saturday, June 18th, 2011 from 9:00AM to 4:00PM celebrate with a day in the country while getting a first-hand look at the great all natural, hand-made products that come straight from the farm!

Held rain or shine, snuggle up to cuddly farm animals such as goats, Cormo sheep, chickens, bunnies and alpacas. Children will be able to hold and play with the animals while they are educated on how their new furry friends contribute to farm life!



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Guests can enjoy fun farm activities such as milking a goat, spinning wool and planting herbs in their very own planter box! Take a part of the farm home and don't forget to roam the special selections of yarn, goat's milk soap, sculptures, or knits from Smolak's all natural fiber vendors. The Farm Stand will be offering homemade lunch items such as sandwiches, pizza and more, to nourish for a day of hard work on the farm! Saturday, June 18th from 9:00AM-4:00PM. \$2.00 for parking and free admission.


MORE FROM SMOLAK'S - The newest restaurant just north of Boston, Massachusetts isn't a restaurant at all. Smolak Farms located in North Andover, Massachusetts has partnered with Edible Boston, Gilt City Boston, Le Cordon Bleu Boston, Yelp!, Vermont Fresh Network and New England Cooks to create "Whim," an outdoor dining experience.

Unlike the typical "pop-up restaurant" Whim will be a permanent installation, hosting dinners every Wednesday night starting June 29th, 2011 and continuing on through August 24th, 2011 featuring some of New England's best chefs!

Whim is different in several ways explains the owner of Smolak Farms, Michael Smolak, "We've held off on doing a dining series because we wanted to offer something distinctly different. With the success of our chef demo series last year drawing over 400 people each night, we felt the audience was there, but we wanted to make sure we did something distinctly different, that would allow the chefs involved to flex their creative muscles and showcase our farm and what we do here. We have a lot of pots on the stove, no pun intended. Our guests are going to walk away with a memory from this experience and feel as if they are receiving a value," said Smolak.

Guests of Whim at Smolak Farms will be served a three-course dinner under the stars as some of New England's best chefs cook "in the rough" with only a commercial grill and a La Caja China at their disposal.

"Being part of this is the culmination of everything I am a passionate about. Cooking outdoors and in the rough, bringing bold and unique flavors to new audiences and taking food from here with flavors from there regardless of the



With the media and law enforcement on to him Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua professes his innocence.

challenges is what I'm really looking forward to," said Celebrity Chef Andy Husbands of Tremont 647 who will be cooking at Whim on July 27th, 2011.

Another unique component of Whim is that each week the featured chef will be cooking for his/her own charity. Chef Tony Bettencourt from 62 Restaurant & Wine Bar summarizes, "As chefs I think we love these type of culinary challenges, given the opportunity to not only prepare a dinner for guests in a unique situation, but to give back to some of our favorite charities just makes it a home run for me."

Beyond enjoying an evening of fabulous food, guests are invited to take a post-dinner hayride through the Smolak Farms orchards as part of their \$60.00 per person ticket price (excluding gratuity and beverages).

Each chef will be armed with culinary students from Le Cordon Bleu Boston to help them execute the dinner to an audience of 100 guests each Wednesday evening, and then we get to the reason why the restaurant is called "Whim." The menu for Whim is only unveiled that evening and is completely vetted through the chef's culinary filter.


"This is a chance for diners to experience our cooking and learn about who we are. We cook in accordance with the best ingredients of that day and give you a real picture of place and season, showcasing the vibrant flavors of New England," said Chef Jason Bond who will kick off the series on June 29th, 2011.

For more information on "Whim" - The Restaurant at Smolak Farms please visit [www.smolakfarms.com](http://www.smolakfarms.com). Tickets can be purchased directly via: <http://www.giltcity.com/boston/smolakfarms>

WHERE: Smolak Farms, 315 South Bradford Street, North Andover, MA

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### Lawrence General Pediatric Center Donation



The Lawrence General Hospital Auxiliary presents a very generous gift of \$20,000 for the new LGH Pediatric Center to President & CEO Dianne J. Anderson. The Auxiliary also wants to say "thank you" to all the LGH employees who participated in their successful fundraising events and sales throughout the year.



Micky Ward "The Boxer" with Lowell City Council candidate John Macdonald at his fundraiser at Athenian Corner last month.



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# Special Olympics Held At Veterans Memorial Stadium In Lawrence



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

American Training held their anual Buiness awards last month at the Andover Country Club. (L to R) Tom Connors CEO of American Training, Olympic medalist Jimmy Pedro, and the staff of American Training.

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PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

# At 88 Wallter Pomerleau Gets High School Diploma from Lawrence High

At 88, Lawrence resident Walter Pomerleau is most known for being the “Mayor of Mount Vernon” for his years of organizing and running the Mount Vernon Neighborhood Association. Now he will be known as the oldest

graduate of Lawrence High School ever. Last month, Lawrence High School Principal Edward Reynoso presented Pomerleau with his high school diploma at the Lawrence High School

Alumni Scholarship Dinner. Reynoso explained that Pomerleau was supposed to graduate in the class of 1940. But working two jobs and trying to take care of his family meant he continued to slip in his grades

before joining the US Coast Guard the country’s last line of defense during WWII. Veteran’s Services Coordinator Francisco Urena had full military honors standing at the podium as he thanked Pomerleau for his service to his country and his community. “Walter joined the US Coast Guard and headed for New Jersey where he served with a crash and rescue unit. He also served in Philadelphia. During his 3 years in the Coast Guard he achieved the rank of Seaman First Class,” Urena said. Walter attended Lawrence High School at a time when there was a war going on, He wasn’t able to graduate and he also worked numerous hours every day and was unable to achieve his high school diploma,” Rick Parthum of the Alumni Association said.

Lawrence High Principal Edward Reynoso explained to the crowd why Pomerleau was receiving his diploma so late saying the following;

“Mr. Pomerleau graduated from St. Anne’s Grammar School in 1937 and because we were in the middle of the depression he had to go to work. He worked at St. Anne’s Club until 11pm every night He was doing this while he was going to Lawrence High School. At the same time he was also delivering milk, which went on from midnight to 7 am. So you can see his studies were not a priority at the time. But he kept his class schedule for three years. But in his senior year, a few months before his graduation, one of his teachers informed him he would not be able to graduate because he was failing his fourth quarter. Obviously he was falling asleep but he kept his class schedule, going to work, school and work again to support his family.”

“Walter should have received this diploma with the class of 1941, but because of his work and trying to support his family he was never given his diploma. So, 70 years later we stand here in front of you and we recognize him today. We thank the Lawrence School Committee for allowing us to do this as we present Walter Pomerleau his diploma from Lawrence High School.” This diploma certifies that Walter Pomerleau has satisfactorily completed the Course of study prescribed for graduation and is therefore entitled to this diploma. Given this 2nd day of June 2011.” Pomerleau choked up while Reynoso read his diploma out loud and was congratulated by friends and family while receiving a standing ovation from the young crowd of Lawrence High Graduates. “Hey, Walter, now you can get a job,” long time friend Frank Incropera joked as Pomerleau left the podium.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

North Andover Selectmen Bill Gordon, Tracy Watson, North Andover Patrolman and Selectman Dan Lanen and outgoing Town Manager Mark Rees with seals of each branch of the armed serves. The seals were presented by the Selectmen to outgoing Veteran’s services director Ed Mitchell (not pictured) at the Memorial Day Ceremonies last month. The ceremony was dedicated to Commander Jim Cassidy who passed away last month.



Methuen Police Officers Frank LaScola, Matthew Tarness, and Paul Ramirez were on hand with Officer Ken Leone (not pictured) at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Services in Washington DC. last month, honoring those who lost their lives in the line of duty.

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# President Barak Obama’s Divided States of America

**Christine Morabito**  
MERRIMACK VALLEY TEA PARTY

After we elected our first black president, I recall Rush Limbaugh correcting a caller who predicted that henceforth, liberals would finally stop playing the race card. Rush disagreed, arguing that race relations would worsen, not improve. In Limbaugh’s opinion, you would now be unable to criticize the president without being called a racist. As usual, Rush was right.

Cue the Tea Party.

Suddenly millions of average, mild-mannered Americans, many of whom had voted for Obama were magically transformed into deranged racists for having the audacity to speak out against a government that was harassing the people with higher taxes, oppressive regulations and an expanding welfare state.

Obama himself perpetuated the slander by speaking mockingly of “folks waving tea bags around.” He said there were dark aspects of the Tea Party that were not only anti-immigrant, but were troubled by what he represented as president.

Then the divisive rhetoric jumped the shark. Obama accused Cambridge police of being racist because they dared to question his friend Henry Louis Gates, who became belligerent when he was discovered breaking into his own home. Admitting he did not have all the facts, in the president’s opinion the police “acted stupidly.”

In my four decades on this earth, I have never been accused of being racist until Barack Obama came to power. I have also never seen my country more divided by race or political ideology.

Attorney General Eric Holder actually used the term “my people,” meanwhile mysteriously dismissing charges against members of the New Black Panther Party, who militantly intimidated voters during the 2008 election. Who is he protecting?

In an effort to incite black racism, Panther leader Shamir Shabazz went on a videotaped rant about killing “crackers” and “cracker babies.”

I was recently reminded of the deep divide when I attended an Elvis Costello concert in Boston. Being an Elvis fan since the 80’s, I frankly never cared what his political philosophy was. I justified the exorbitant cost of the ticket, thinking I deserved a night out, free of politics. So, there I was thoroughly engrossed in the experience when the night took a dark turn. On stage was a small television playing only static. The backdrop was a screen displaying a test pattern. Elvis sarcastically remarked “As you can see the TV is set to FOX News.” He went on, announcing that the backdrop was dedicated to Glenn Beck “because that’s about as much sense as he’s ever gonna make.” Talk about a buzz kill. I realize that musicians are entitled to their opinions, but I assure you I did not pay \$140 to have my ideology insulted. Furthermore, I question why he would risk alienating a large segment of his fan base—unless he truly believes that his audience feels the same way. I am not sure how he reconciles Beck’s 3 million followers or Fox News being on top of the ratings for the past 9 years.

Perhaps Costello has been influenced by our divider in chief, who has been pitting one side against another from



the very beginning. Remember Joe the Plumber? He was wrongfully investigated and humiliated by government officials after he challenged Barack’s “spread the wealth” remarks. In an effort to break his spirit, “Joe” was made an example of for disagreeing with our thin-skinned president. This tactic, while not new, has been supercharged by Obama’s accomplices in the media and leftist worker bees like ACORN, AFL-CIO, SEIU, the Socialist Party USA and MoveOn.org, who have devoted themselves to nourishing the fetus of their king.

Obama has been out of step with average Americans on virtually every issue. He supported the wildly unpopular plan to try 911 mastermind, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, in Manhattan rather than before a military tribunal. Most Americans understood the risk this posed to New York City and were opposed to allowing this terrorist a platform to spew his hatred. The president also promoted building the terrorist-funded Ground Zero Mosque against the will of the people.

Even more bizarre has been our president’s attack on entire organizations, as he has done with Fox News, the Chamber of Commerce and Americans for Prosperity. During the health care debate he accused doctors of unnecessarily removing body-parts to realize bigger profits. And what’s with suing Arizona for enforcing existing

immigration laws? He told Hispanic supporters, “We’re gonna punish our enemies” and “reward our friends who stand with us on issues that are important to us.” What kind of president speaks of his detractors as enemies? He recently threatened “hand-to-hand combat” if Republicans gained control of the House and/or Senate. This graceless rhetoric is more befitting a union boss than a president.

The obscene way Obamacare was passed woke people to the realization that despite a CNN poll showing 59 percent opposed it, Obama intended to have his way with us -- for our own good, no doubt. I am stunned by the arrogance of Washington elitists who think they can run the enormously complex health care industry better than the private sector. The ugly truth is that nationalizing health care will cost over a trillion dollars, increase taxes and force insurance rates to skyrocket.

Barack Obama is a strict ideologue with pathologically high self esteem. What makes him dangerous is that he is perfectly willing to accept short term political gain at the expense of unifying his country and keeping us safe. Unlike the people he governs, our 44th president does not believe in American exceptionalism. Allowed another term, he may just get his wish.

Please attend our Merrimack Valley Tea Party meeting: Speaker: Christen Varley, president Greater Boston Tea Party  
Wednesday June 15th @ 7 p.m.  
VFW Hall, 32 Park Street, N. Andover

 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](mailto:christine.morabito@hotmail.com)

# Time to Flush the Bathroom Bill

**Christen Varley**  
TEA PARTY ORGANIZER/ACTIVIST

In the summer of 2009, I testified in opposition to AN ACT RELATIVE TO TRANSGENDER EQUAL RIGHTS, also known as the Bathroom Bill. I spent 10 hours in a Judiciary Committee hearing while waiting to voice my opinion on what I believed to be an example of good intentions run amok. What I witnessed and heard that day only strengthened my opposition. While it was heartbreaking to listen to the stories of discrimination and abuse suffered by people struggling with myriad of personal issues, I could not help but question the legislation’s unintended consequences. This bill tramples on our freedom, threatens our safety, offends our modesty and exponentially increases the likelihood of discrimination towards and abuse of unsuspecting citizens.

It is now 2011 and the Bathroom Bill (House Bill 502) is still hanging on despite losing more than half of its sponsors on Beacon Hill. On Wednesday, June 8th, the Judiciary Committee will again host a hearing on the legislation. This time around, I will be accompanying concerned citizens who will testify against the bill. I am flabbergasted to think this is still a burning issue considering the state of the state’s economy and the ongoing scandals plaguing state government but the Commonwealth’s one party system has never been known to be practical. Though the Bathroom Bill continues to have some support in the statehouse, it is time to flush the Bathroom Bill once and

for all.

The primary problem with the bill is the lack of a clear and concise definition of “transgender”. It may be obvious to a transgendered person what that definition is but to the remainder of the 99.75 percent of the population, it is perplexing. This legislation grants protections and hate crime provisions based on “gender identity or gender expression”. Below is the definition, as written in the legislation:

“The term “gender identity or expression” shall mean a gender-related identity, appearance, expression, or behavior of an individual, regardless of the individual’s physiology or assigned sex at birth.”

You can see how there might be some confusion. It gets worse. The phrase “people of diverse gender identities or expressions” is repeatedly used to create a new class of person protected by hate crime laws. This would be comical if it wasn’t so dangerous.

The proponents of this legislation claim to want to protect transgender people from discrimination and abuse yet they see no problem with allowing the rest of the population to be exposed to the threat of accusations, litigation, and criminal charges as the result of a simple misunderstanding or mere confusion. If you walk into a restroom and find a person of the opposite sex standing there, will you or will you not question their presence? If you go to the locker room at your gym and encounter a person of the opposite sex in your sex’s assigned



locker room, are you not concerned? Do you want your children accessing public facilities – including those in their public schools? Have the creators and sponsors of this legislation considered the business owners and employers affected by this legislation? How do they protect their employees, customers and themselves?

Where do the rights of one person end and the rights of another begin? Common sense cannot be legislated and neither can common decency. This bill pits citizen against citizen. It is unnecessary and, quite possibly, unconstitutional. The Bathroom Bill creates far more problems than it solves. And it creates these problems for decent, law abiding, respectful citizens with no regard for their modesty or safety.

My opposition to the Bathroom Bill has not changed. It has, however, expanded. As a Tea Party activist, I am

greatly offended by the loss of liberty we face with the passage of such ridiculous legislation. None of us are mind readers yet we are expected to be able to divine the thoughts of others or face criminal charges? The safety concerns and the untenable risk of litigation aside, this “thought crime” bill is an egregious abuse of power by overzealous legislators pandering to special interests and should not be tolerated. I am no fan of hate crime legislation but basing hate crime definitions on visible characteristics is at least understandable by the general public. This legislation affords no such luxury. This bill takes what is already a distressing and questionable circumstance and creates more opportunity for victimization of our citizens. I urge you to contact those State Representatives and State Senators on the Judiciary Committee and ask them to vote against this bill.



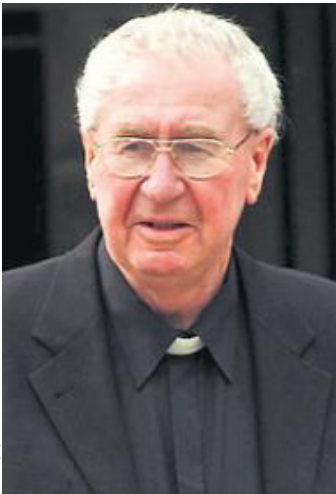
Looking Back at the Priest Scandal

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The scandal within the Catholic Church was one of ignorance and evil. No question. It was the cause of much confusion and pain. But two evils do not make a good. The second evil I speak of is the mischaracterization communicated through the media about it. The facts seem to clearly indicate the scandal had little to do with pedophilia. According to the APA pedophilia is the disorder of sexual attraction to pre-pubescent children. The overwhelming majority of cases involved were of ephebophilia, a term that refers to sexual attraction to minors who are post-pubescent, i.e. teenagers and young adults. Secondly, an overwhelming majority of the priests involved in these incidents were accused of sexual molestation of adolescent males, not females. This adds up to mean that the nature of the scandal was homosexual. Why the media downplayed or ignored this fact you can make the call.

Since the scandal broke and the clean-up began, less than one-half of one percent of priests have been dismissed or resigned. According to the findings of John Cloud (“Pedophilia,” Time, April 29, 2002) these abuse numbers are around eight times lower than in the general population, but regardless, even one case is way too many - particularly with those that are ordained to teach in Christ’s name the moral law of God. This law the Church officially teaches with the authority of Christ includes that all sexual activity contradicting its natural end and outside of the covenant of marriage between man and wife is the matter of mortal sin. Regardless of how the sexual revolution tried to make this truth politically incorrect, and despite how difficult our broken nature finds it, the Spirit will not allow the Church to shirk



her duty in teaching the truths necessary for salvation. It is a matter of divine faith that Christ gave His Church the gift of infallibility but not impeccability; which simply means the Holy Spirit keeps her free from error on matters of faith and morals but not free from sin. That is for each individual to work out in his cooperation with the spiritual means God gives him. Like her Head the Church is divine and human; unlike her Head the human part can sin. What has the Church officially stated about ordaining men to the priesthood who have a homosexual orientation?

A document released by the Sacred Congregation for Religious in 1961 states: “Advancement to religious vows and ordination should be barred to those who are afflicted with evil tendencies to homosexuality or pederasty, since for them the common life and the priestly ministry would constitute serious dangers.”

In 2005 Pope Benedict approved a Vatican letter that states the following: “The [Church and the] Catechism distinguishes between homosexual acts and homosexual tendencies. Regarding acts, it teaches that Sacred Scripture presents them as grave sins. The Tradition has constantly considered them as intrinsically immoral and contrary to the natural law. Consequently, under no circumstance can they be approved. Deep-seated homosexual tendencies, which are found in a number of men and women, are also objectively disordered and, for those same people, often constitute a trial. Such persons must be accepted with respect and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. They are called to fulfill God’s will in their lives and to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord’s Cross the difficulties they may encounter. In

PRIEST, page 41

Ye Gay Ol’ Valley

Love is a Battlefield

D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

My daughter just finished her sophomore year at Westfield State University. She had one more project to finish up due a week after she came back home. It was for her Ethnicities class. Proudly, she chose to research and report on the gay rights movement. The first date mentioned in her power point is the 25th century BCE. Imagine that; we’ve been struggling for almost five thousand years. She ended it by asking me and my wife questions about our experience as members of the gay community. I’ve come a long way since coming out in 1994, but her questions sure brought back old emotions.

After being asked questions that dug up old skeletons and opened old wounds, I wondered why our fight for equality has lasted this long and has yet to be accomplished. Every time the GLBT community gains a right they should have had by simply being human, there is someone who wants to take it away again. Case in point: New Hampshire couples gained the right to marry just over a year ago and ever since, there has been an effort to repeal it. In fact there is a thick wave of fear in the air about the safety of New Hampshire’s same-sex marriage law. Why? Back in February hearings were scheduled in the Legislature to do just that, repeal the law, but it was tabled until January of 2012. The reason for this is because it will be the first time there is a presidential election where the primaries will begin in two states that have legalized same-sex marriages, Iowa and New



Hampshire. These primaries will take place on February 14, 2012. Interesting timing, don’t you think? Why can’t they just let sleeping dogs lie? I understand that the voters didn’t make this decision nor should they have. The civil rights of the minority should not

be determined by the majority – ever! This is why the legislature has the power to do this. However, polls conducted by New Hampshire Freedom to Marry and released by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center have shown that the citizens of the Granite State approve of gay marriage 2:1. So, why even entertain this? Even if the repeal does not pass and the law is kept in place, gay and lesbian couples are still not recognized by the federal government. This is yet another battle to win. There are over one thousand benefits denied these couples by the federal government. Insurance breaks, tax breaks, veteran’s discounts, social security survivor benefits, and assumptions of a spouse’s pension are just to name a few. A number of heavy hitting Republican candidates have made it clear that they are opposed to same-sex marriages. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich has been very open about his opposition and has called President Obama’s refusal to support the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional. That’s right, Mr. “I’m for family values”, who left his first wife when she was diagnosed with MS, had an affair on his second wife and left his wife when she was in the hospital with cancer, is against same-sex marriage because it will degrade traditional marriage. Sorry Newt, BATTLEFIELD, page 41

President Barack Obama is no friend of Israel

Blossom Stiefel


VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

On Thursday May 19th President Obama delivered a speech to demand major concessions from the only democracy and our only ally in the Middle East. Obama’s plan is that the borders of Israel should go back to pre-1967 boundary lines as a starting point to negotiations with the Palestinians. He is asking Israel to surrender territory crucial to its very existence. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quick to respond, calling Israel’s pre-1967 borders “indefensible”. In a 1982 speech, President Reagan echoed Netenyahu’s words, saying, “In the pre-1967 borders Israel was barely 10 miles wide at its narrowest point. The bulk of Israel’s population lived within artillery range of hostile Arab armies. I am not about to ask Israel to live that way

again.” In 1967 Israel was attacked by its Arab neighbors. Within six days Israel had defeated Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. They gained significant territory, including the Arab controlled parts of Jerusalem. When the Israelis took back Jerusalem they united it and all people are free to worship there: Muslims, Jews, Christians, everyone. Israel has been the one country in the area willing for years to negotiate away land in return for recognition of its right to exist and promise of peaceful coexistence with its neighbors. But clearly, this strategy has had disastrous results in the past, and there’s no reason to expect that it will work now. In an effort to attain “peace” in the region, Ariel Sharon (the Israeli Prime Minister at the time) proposed “The Disengagement Plan” or “Gaza Expulsion


Plan” in 2004; it was adopted by the Israeli government; it was executed immediately. By September, 2005, all Israelis had been evicted from the Gaza Strip and from four settlements in the Northern West Bank. As soon as Israel gave up the settlements, rockets started raining down on the Israelis. The enemy was using their “new land” as a launching site for their rockets and terrorist attacks. Land for peace with their neighbors has never worked out for Israel in the past, and there is no reason to expect it will work out in the future, particularly based on the pre-1967 borders. A few years later Israel was attacked again. In 1973, Egypt and Syria launched an offensive on the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur. Again Israel was successful in defeating both countries and gained more territory in the process. Even though Israel was victorious, both wars were the result of Arab aggression. These were two Arab led wars to annihilate the Jewish state. But Israel has proven its willingness to return territory gained in the wars. Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt after negotiating a peace settlement with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. But instead of encouraging that position, Obama wants unilateral territorial concessions from Israel in

return for empty promises. Israel has been asked to surrender land and they were supposed to get peace. They have repeatedly surrendered land to the Arabs. What have they gotten in return? Suicide bombers, terrorist attacks and rocket attacks. Israel, the only state in the region that meets the criteria for “self determination” –an honest judiciary, an independent media, credible political parties, free and fair elections—must now negotiate its fate with those who want none of these things and only want to destroy Israel. Barack Obama is the Palestinians’ dream come true. Obama’s speech was a significant shift in United States policy and seemed certain to anger Israel and the free world. The Palestinians are emboldened by this President and his administration. The arrogance of President Obama’s speech on the issue of Muslim outreach was a blow to Jews living in the United States and especially to those living in Israel. This is perceived as not only a rebuke to Israel, but an overt move to weaken them militarily and to put them on the defense against Islamic radicals. Obama has abandoned Israel, now it’s time that Israel’s supporters in the United States abandon him.



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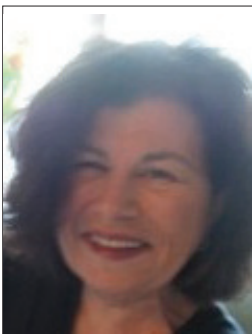
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THE DOCTOR IS 

## Suffering from Headaches, What You Sould Know

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

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

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

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

Such problem could be either a disorder in its own right or a symptom of an underlying medical condition or disease. The medical term for headache is cephalalgia. Headaches are one of the most common and universal human ailments, described in the Bible as well as in medical writings from ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, India, and China. Severe chronic headaches were once treated by the oldest known surgical procedure, known as trepanning or trephining, in which the surgeon drilled a hole as large as 1-2 in diameter in the patient's skull without benefit of anesthesia. Evidence of trepanning has been found in skulls from Cro-Magnon people that are about 40,000 years old.

Demographics-Headaches in general are very common in the adult population in North America. The American Council for Headache Education (ACHE) estimates that 95% of women and 90% of men in the United States and Canada have had at least one headache in the



Dr. Rami R. Rustum, M.D. is the Director of Merrimack Pain Associates at 50 Prospect St. in Lawrence. You can contact him at: ramirustum@comcast.net. Tell him you read his column... he likes that!

past 12 months. Most of these are tension headaches. Tension headaches may begin in childhood in some patients, but most commonly start in adolescence or the early 20s. The gender ratio for episodic tension headaches is about 1.4 Female: 1 Male; for chronic tension headaches, 1.9 F: 1 M.

Migraine and cluster headaches have distinctive demographic patterns. Migraine headaches are less common than tension headaches, affecting about 11% of the population in the United States and 15% in Canada. Several studies done in the United Kingdom and the United States, however, indicate that doctors tend to underdiagnose migraine headache; thus the true number of patients with migraine may be considerably

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

Classification-Doctors divide headaches into two large categories, primary and secondary, according to guidelines

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

### I- PRIMARY HEADACHE:

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

The two most common types of migraines are known as classic and common migraine, respectively. Classic migraine, which accounts for 10-20% of the cases of migraine, is distinguished by a brief period of warning symptoms 10-60 minutes before an acute attack. This prodrome, which is known as an aura, may include such symptoms as seeing flashing lights or zigzag patterns,

**RUSTUM, page 33**

## The State of Senior Care Funding in MA

**Scott Plumb, Senior Vice President, Massachusetts Senior Care Association**

*The following speech about the state of funding senior care in Massachusetts was given at the Blair House Legislative Breakfast last month at the Blair House in Tewksbury.*

We are very grateful to have Frank, we are very grateful to representative Macelli, Senator Baddour and Senator Tarr.

We know who our friends are, all 3 of you are our friends, you've been constantly supportive and we very much appreciate it.

The Senate, last night, passed an amendment restoring most of our unfunded user fee, we are very pleased at that action. It now goes to a conference committee, the house passed a similar measure but with considerably less money in it. So, our goal is to hang on to the Senate version in conference committee and then bring it back and see what happens with the governor.

The last time we came out of the legislature with money to fund our user fee, the governor vetoed it and he used the funds to pay for illegal immigrant health status, and common health.

So, it's a classic example of provider right adequacy being sacrificed for eligibility.

Nobody is saying that illegal immigrants don't need healthcare, but not with our provider tax money.

So, we are hoping that the governor, if it does get through the legislature, will NOT veto it, if he does, we will go back and we will try to override. So, this was a very important step last night and we are

very appreciative for the State Senate for taking that.

The situation our nursing homes are in today is not bleak, but it's very challenging. In Massachusetts, we used to have 590 nursing homes. Today, we have 430. So, we've lost 1 out of every 4 nursing homes. If you look at the homes that have closed over the past 10-15 years, they've tended to be high Medicaid census homes in urban areas. The very homes that low income people need the most.

You know, the administration would say "Well, they closed because their occupancy has been soft, but that isn't really the reason. Many of the closed homes were fully occupied, 99% occupied. The only problem was they were 99% Medicaid. When you are losing, on average, \$35.00 per day, on Medicaid, which is what nursing homes are losing in this state and you are 99% Medicaid, you are not long for this world.

So, we are hoping that this action, this year will help us stabilize the system and deal with that unfunded user fee.

It isn't a rate increase, it's only us asking the state "look, you tax us, you do a provider tax, we pay you a tax, and at least Medicaid should pay us a portion of that tax back again". So, we are hopeful that we will get that. As Frank pointed out, the Federal picture is scary, downright scary. We are alive today, because of Medicare. You know, it used to be years ago, Medicare was an afterthought in Nursing Homes. It was 1% of our patient days, and then we worked on a Medicare maximization strategy. Gradually these strategic positions in Nursing Homes

changed, they began to do a lot of post-acute care and now we are close to 20% Medicare.

Medicare, as you know, is a very good payer, a positive margin payer and we make the point that Medicare payment has to offset and inadequate Medicaid payment and the two of them have to be linked together.

CMS has decided that the change they made, last October, to Medicare rates for Nursing homes, Rug MBS3.0 and Rug 4 was not revenue neutral and that it was a revenue increase, they estimate of 12.8%.

They looked at 3 months worth of data, not a year worth of data, which they usually base their decisions on and they have come out with two options, which I affectionately refer to as "Armageddon" and "Nirvana". There's really nothing in between Armageddon and Nirvana. Armageddon is 12.8% reduction in Medicare rates adjustment to try to make the changes last year revenue neutral.

In Massachusetts, that would be, hang on to your hats here, a total of 140 million dollars. So, take \$140 million dollars and divide by 430 nursing homes and you will see that this would be cataclysmic. So, that's one option that they are entertaining comments on.

Another option is what we call "Business as usual", they give a small cost adjustment factor and we would move forward.

The position in the American Healthcare Association on this and our position that we are advocating with Senators and Congressmen is; "look, 2 things. First, of all, you can't make a change like this with

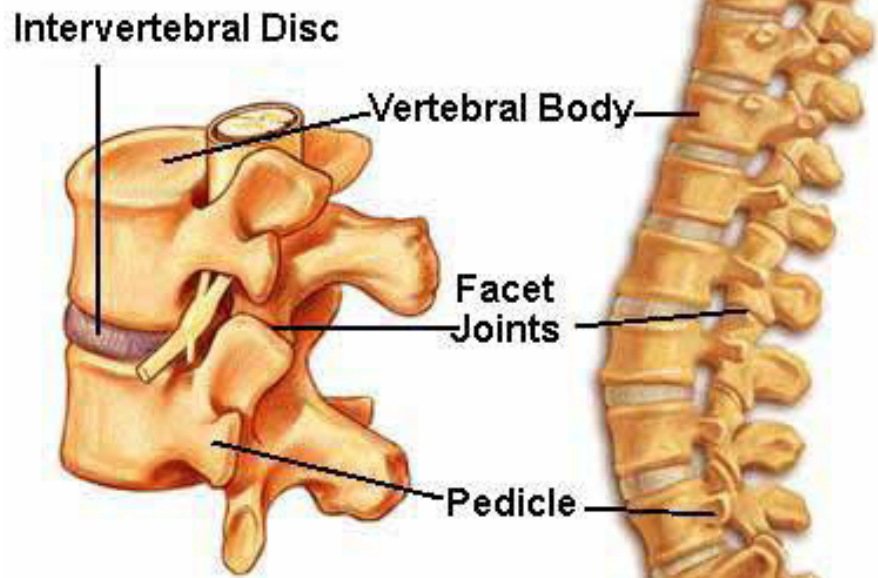


3 months worth of data. You need a year's worth of data. Collect data for another 9 months and then, if the number is still there, then make a change next year and, when you do make a change, like you do in all other industries, like Homehealth and everything else, phase it in. Don't do it all at one time, because it would be cataclysmic".

So, that is our push, we are trying to get Senators, Senator Kerry, Senator Brown, we've talked to them to sign onto a letter to Donald Berwick at CMS, asking them to do option #2, which is the phase in our

**BLAIR, page 36**





# Treatment for Spinal Disc Herniation and Degenerative Discs

**Dr. Jin Sung**  
VALLEY PATRIOT CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression is a revolutionary new technology used primarily to treat disc injuries in the neck and in the low back. This treatment option is very safe and utilizes FDA cleared equipment to apply distraction forces to spinal structures in a precise and graduated manner. Distraction is offset by cycles of partial relaxation. This technique of spinal decompression therapy, that is, unloading due to distraction and positioning, has shown the ability to gently separate the vertebrae from each other, creating a vacuum inside the discs that we are targeting. This “vacuum effect” is also known as negative intra-discal pressure. The negative pressure may induce the retraction of the herniated or bulging disc into the inside of the disc, and off the nerve root, thecal sac, or both. It happens only microscopically each time, but cumulatively, over six to eight weeks, the results are quite dramatic. The cycles of decompression and partial relaxation, over a series of visits, promote the diffusion of 1. water 2. oxygen and 3. nutrient-rich fluids from the outside of the discs to the inside. These nutrients enable the torn and degenerated disc fibers to begin to heal. For the low back, the patient lies comfortably on his/her back or stomach on the decompression table, with a set

of nicely padded straps snug around the waist and another set around the lower chest. For the neck, the patient lies comfortably on his/her back with a pair of soft rubber pads behind the neck. Many patients enjoy the treatment, as it is usually quite comfortable and well tolerated. Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression is very effective at treating bulging discs, herniated discs, pinched nerves, sciatica, radiating arm pain, degenerative disc disease, leg pain, and facet syndromes. Proper patient screening is imperative and only the best candidates are accepted for care. Spinal Decompression has been shown to be effective for the treatment of back pain, sciatica, leg pain, herniated disc, degenerative disc disease, bulging disc, spinal stenosis and radiculopathy.



Dr. Jin Sung is the owner and treating physician at Functional Chiropractic, Inc. The office is located at 126 Merrimack Street in Methuen MA behind Heavenly Donuts. Dr. Sung can be reached at 978 688-6999 or you can get more information about the practice at [www.DrJinSung.com](http://www.DrJinSung.com)

# Asthma during pregnancy

**Dr. Thomas Johnson**  
VALLEY PATRIOT ALLERGY COLUMNIST

Asthma is a fairly common health problem for pregnant women, including some women who have never had it before. During pregnancy, asthma not only affects you, but it can also cut back on the oxygen your fetus gets from you. But this does not mean that having asthma will necessarily make your pregnancy more difficult or dangerous to you or your fetus. Pregnant women with asthma that is properly controlled generally have a normal pregnancy with little or no increased risk to themselves or the fetus.



Many asthma treatments are safe to use when you are pregnant. After years of research, experts now say that it is far safer to manage your asthma with medicine than it is to leave asthma untreated during pregnancy. Talk to an allergist specializing in asthma and your doctor about the safest treatment for you. If you have not previously had asthma, you may not think that shortness of breath or wheezing during your pregnancy is asthma. Diagnosis is easily made with adequate lung tests. If you know you have asthma, you may not consider it a concern if you only have mild symptoms. But asthma can affect you and your fetus, and you should act accordingly.

Like all people with asthma, pregnant women should have an asthma action plan to help them control inflammation and prevent and control asthma attacks. Part of a pregnant woman’s action plan should also include recording fetal movements. You can do this by noting whether fetal kicks decrease over time. If you notice less fetal activity during an asthma attack, contact your doctor or emergency help immediately to receive instructions. I personally advise the use of a finger SaO2 meter to monitor oxygen levels. As asthma increases in severity SaO2 (blood oxygen) levels drop and when a woman is expecting the one who suffers the most deprivation of oxygen first is the unborn baby. For severe asthma supplemental oxygen may be supplied to treat periods of low blood oxygenation. Feel free to consult our practice newsletter and webpage ([newenglandallergy.com](http://newenglandallergy.com)) for medication alerts, advisories updates and further advice for more information or with concerns regarding asthma and your pregnancy.

If your asthma is not controlled, you could also be at increased risk for high blood pressure and preeclampsia, a condition that causes high blood pressure and can affect the placenta, kidneys, liver, and brain. If your asthma is not controlled, your fetus could be at risk for low birth weight, premature birth, and even death. The more control you have over your asthma, the less risk there is. Pregnant women manage asthma much the same way non-pregnant women do with the exception that special attention is directed at the health of the developing baby.

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# Live the WOW!

**Peace of Mind! The Most Valuable, Priceless Possession any Person can have here on earth. Learn that Lesson now if you want to be one of those Lucky People Living the WOW!**

Thomas Connors  
VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

It's never too late!

In fact, NOW is the best time to start mining the most priceless GEM on the face of the earth. It's something so valuable and treasured that once you have it you'll never part with it. Money alone can't buy it. For most people, it remains an elusive and never to be found possession that evades them. People all over the world have gone to their graves still longing to have it.

The irony is this; all any one of these people had to do was look within themselves and discover its abundance.

It all begins with accepting and **appreciating who you are and where you are in life; knowing full well you can become anything you want to be.**

God above thought so highly of you that He made you in His image.

He also made sure you had the wherewithal and maturity to recognize that life, no matter your status, is indeed a wonderful gift from above. He wants you to recognize the amazing things happening all around you each and every day. He hopes you become fully aware of the tiny miracles happening in nature, right outside your door. He helps you cherish friendships; even if that means there is only one person you can fully confide in.

By being happy with whom you are and where you are in life, you begin to open the door to letting Peace of Mind in. Once you are no longer

soured on life's lemons but rather become satisfied with the person you see in the mirror you will then be free to challenge yourself to reach out and grasp hold of all life has to offer. And since risk and unavoidable failure are necessary for success to happen, you will have the confidence and attitude to bust right through barriers.

**People Living the WOW! know the powerful effects Peace of Mind can have on the quality of their life. That is why they pursue it enthusiastically.**

We all know people who seemingly have it all. They are well-educated and appear to have everything going for them. They have more wealth than you or I could hope for. Yet, they are miserable. They cringe at the thought of facing another day. They find fault with the people they meet and the places they've been. They drag down everyone they are close to. They are missing the key to a happy, meaningful and outrageously memorable life. They have no Peace of Mind.

That is why, when you finally possess it, you never let it go. How many times have we heard of people who have made a fortune and then turn around and give it all up to lead what they call a normal life. They give it all up because they come to realize that Peace of Mind is much more valuable than all the fancy cars, fancy homes and fancy clothes money can buy.

**Peace of Mind is so powerful it can actually affect your fate! Lack of it can kill you physically and mentally.**

Worry, fear, wanting. These three

can kill you.

Think about the parent who worries incessantly about their children; where they are, who they're with, what they're doing. The person who fears they will go broke. The person who wants more and is never satisfied; for whom enough is never enough. All these characteristics can undoubtedly lead to high blood pressure and depression as well as debilitating phobias.

Peace of Mind protects you from all that.

**Commit to Living the WOW!  
Make Peace of Mind your first step toward that goal.**

Start at the place you know best; right at home. If you are a parent make today a **WOW!** for you and your child. Actually DO something TOGETHER. Don't let the clock run you. Focus all your efforts on your child. And I don't care how young or old they are. IF you can't allow yourself to spend that kind of time or make that kind of effort for the one you love most and who loves you back, then let that be a sign you need to work harder on Living the **WOW!**

Think about how you look at life. Make your approach to it a **WOW!** Are you wishing and wanting your life away rather than acknowledging all the great things that you DO have? Learn to accept this fact of life; you will not get happiness or riches in abundance until you show your appreciation for what has already been given to you. People Living the **WOW!** greatly

appreciate what they have.

That's why at American Training we celebrate achievements and milestones in people's lives. We want to generate ideal conditions for Peace of Mind to settle in. We encourage people to be happy with who they are and where they are in life. We encourage them to live in the moment. Only then will they be able to build a better future.

**Living the WOW! requires a special determination to get through those inevitable storms of life. Peace of Mind provides that boost.**

Life is not always wine and roses. There are a few thorns that get in the way from time to time. Peace of Mind doesn't eliminate the ups and downs. But, the Peace of Mind that comes with Living the **WOW!** does allow you to recognize that no matter how many thorns come your way, no matter how many downs there are, that great and better times and outrageously memorable moments are right around the corner.

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



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# Legislative candidates report spending \$16.9 million in 2010

SOURCE: MASS OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN AND POLITICAL FINANCE

BOSTON – The largest field of legislative candidates in 18 years reported spending nearly \$16.9 million in the 2010 election, a 34 percent increase from the previous state election in 2008, according to an OCPF study of campaign finance activity by 433 House and Senate candidates.

The 2010 totals fall short of the record-setting spending total of \$17.6 million in 2004. Total fundraising in 2010 was nearly \$15 million, \$2.5 million more than in 2008, but \$2.3 million less than the record set in 2004.

The increased spending totals in 2010 correspond with a boost in contested seats. Of 200 legislative races in 2010, 118 were

contested by more than one candidate in either the primary or general election, 47 more than in 2008.

OCPF’s General Court study examines campaign finance activity undertaken by candidates for House and Senate in calendar year 2010. OCPF has issued a report of this type after every state election since 1990, all of which are available on the agency website (click here).

The 2010 study focused on total and average receipts and expenditures, and how those numbers translated to electoral success in such categories as political party and incumbency.

Incumbents were the most successful group in 2010. All 32 Senate incumbents running for re-election won, and 121 of 134 House incumbents running for re-election were successful.

The successful Senate incumbents averaged \$102,936 in expenditures in 2010, 38 percent higher than non-incumbents. In the House, 134 incumbents averaged \$39,898 in expenditures, nearly twice the average for non-incumbents.

The field of 256 Democratic candidates outpaced the 134 Republicans in total and average receipts and expenditures.

In Senate races, 52 Democrats reported expenditures of \$120,307 on average, more than four times higher than the \$28,655 average reported by 36 Republican candidates. Democrats averaged \$96,843 in receipts, compared to \$27,628 for Republican candidates. In House races, 204 Democrats averaged expenditures of \$35,019 compared to \$22,235 for 98 Republican candidates. House Democratic candidates averaged \$32,274 in receipts, and Republicans

averaged \$21,544. Winning and unsuccessful campaigns reported wide spending differences, on average.

In the Senate, 40 winners averaged \$130,999 in expenditures, compared to \$37,868 for non-winners. In the House, 159 winners averaged \$39,621 in expenditures, compared to \$18,160 for non-winners. One House race, the 6th Worcester District, was not decided in 2010 and all three candidates were listed as unsuccessful. A special election was held May 10 to fill the seat.

Of the 433 legislative candidates in 2010, 95 were seeking one of 40 Senate seats and 338 were running for the 160-seat House. The number of candidates in 2010 was the highest since 1992, but short of the highest number of legislative candidates recorded in an OCPF study, 507 in 1990.

## Senate Committee releases FY’12 Budget Recommendations


### Economic Impact and Lack of Influence on Doctors cited in repeal, issue now moves to the State Senate

Creating next year’s budget was the most challenging yet; the state’s slow economic recovery – combined with the loss of \$1.5 billion in federal stimulus funding – meant that painful cuts and difficult choices had to be made. The Senate budget closes a \$1.9 billion budget gap through funding reductions, ongoing revenue initiatives and one time revenues. It reduces or eliminates 277 line items and level funds another 221 line items from the prior year’s levels. The Senate plan, however, maintains a strong commitment to our most vulnerable residents who rely on state programs to preserve their quality of life and provide a better future for their children.

Although the Senate budget contains many new cost savings measures and reform initiatives, the most noteworthy is the Senate effort to create a new, expedited process for municipalities

to achieve savings in health insurance costs either by transferring coverage to the state’s Group Insurance Commission (GIC) or by implementing co-payments, deductibles and other health plan features that are no greater than the median co-payments and deductibles in the GIC. Cities and towns that opt to use this new tool will be able to respond to their fiscal challenges, saving jobs and preserving local services.

While providing this valuable new tool to the Commonwealth’s cities and towns, the Senate plan also preserves a meaningful voice for municipal employees and retirees in determining their health care costs. It requires that a municipality collectively bargain with both employees and retirees who would be impacted



by any savings proposal, and further requires that the municipality include a plan to mitigate or cap the impact of changes on employees, retirees, low-wage workers, and heavy users of health care. The Senate included important health care protections for workers such as provisions for Health Reimbursement Arrangements, Flexible Health Care Spending Accounts, and a prohibition on mid-year plan design changes by the Group Insurance Commission.

I also want to add that as an elected official, I have been enrolled in a GIC sponsored health plan for nearly ten years. My health insurance is no different than any other state employee; I pay the same premiums and deductibles as all other GIC enrollees. My plan is no different than one

of the many that municipal employees or retirees would be offered should these changes become law.

There are no easy answers as to how to bring down the cost of health care. Despite numerous and ongoing efforts to stem the tide, these costs continue to be the fastest growing and steepest of all municipal expenses. This, combined with our already battered economy, has meant a continued elimination of local services through layoffs for police and firefighters, teachers, librarians and municipal employees. At this point, I feel strongly that all parties must continue to offer concessions so that we can preserve remaining vital services and jobs. Although not a total fix, these changes represent a key piece in curbing skyrocketing unfunded health care liabilities and putting our cities and towns back on the road to fiscal well being.

## FROM 15: Local Home Prices Slow in April

multi-family properties from 1,478, 626, and 227 respectively. The local home sales inventory remains well below the peaks set in 2006 and 2007.

The length of time it takes to sell the average property also increased in comparison with last April. Average days on market for single family homes sold in April rose to 128 days, compared with an average of 88 days for those sold last

April, and the average days on market for condominiums sold rose to 124 days compared with 120 days last year. The average days on market for multi-family properties rose sharply, to an average of 109 days in April, an increase of 49.3 percent from last April’s average of 73 days.

The Northeast Association of Realtors represents more than 1,100 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.

For more information, contact NEAR CEO Anne Rendle (978-577-6138 x11 or Rendle@NortheastRealtors.com). For comment, contact NEAR President Tom Courtney (978-692-9292 or TCourtney@RemaxPrestige.com).

April 2011 vs. April 2010	# Sold April 2010	# Sold April 2011	Yr over Year Change	Median Price April 2010	Median Price April 2011	Yr over Year Change	Avg. DoM April 2010	Avg. DoM April 2011	Yr over Year Change
Single Family	235	184	-21.7%	300,000	\$269,950	-10.0%	88	128	45.5%
Condo	112	87	-22.3%	188,950	180,000	-4.7%	120	124	3.3%
Multi Family	48	38	-20.8%	191,250	182,500	-4.6%	73	109	49.3%

April 2011 vs. March 2011	# Sold March 2011	# Sold April 2011	Mo over Month Change	Median Price March 2011	Median Price April 2011	Mo over Month Change	Avg. DoM March 2011	Avg. DoM April 2011	Mo over Month Change
Single Family	176	184	4.5%	\$286,750	\$269,950	-5.9%	134	128	3.7%
Condo	84	87	3.6%	178,750	180,000	0.7%	145	124	-4.7%
Multi Family	37	38	2.7%	180,000	182,500	1.4%	82	109	32.9%

Year-to-date Jan – April	# Sold YTD 2010	# Sold YTD 2011	Yr over year Change	Median Price YTD 2010	Median Price YTD 2011	Yr over year Change	Avg. DoM YTD 2010	Avg. DoM YTD 2011	Yr over year Change
Single Family	724	609	-15.9%	\$300,000	\$281,000	-6.3%	113	131	15.9
Condo	337	277	-17.8%	171,000	172,000	0.6%	126	134	6.3%
Multi Family	188	149	-20.7%	172,717	176,000	1.9%	85	96	12.9%

NEAR Territory	Andover, Billerica, Boxford, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Lawrence, Littleton, Lowell, Methuen, North Andover, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro, Westford.
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# Shawn Hansen’s Sports Corner: 2011 NBA Hall of Fame Class

Opening for the first time in 1959, there have been 303 basketball players who have been inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield.

Paul Lambert, Vice President of Guest Experience and Programming said, “There is a whole enshrinement process which takes place every year. You can nominate someone for the Basketball Hall of Fame if you chose to do so. There are forms to fill out, and data to be collected, and admitted to the Hall of Fame. All of those nominations collected during the year, and are submitted to a series of experts in each specific constituency group.”

When the nominations were finalized, they were announced at the NBA All Star game to the honors committee. During the 2011 Final Four, ten names were chosen to be inducted into the Hall of Fame making it a grand total of 313.

The 2011 Hall of Fame Class includes Chris Mullin, Dennis Rodman, Artis Gilmore, Tara VanDerveer, Teresa Edwards, Arvydas Sabonis, Herb Magee, Tom “Satch” Sanders, Tex Winter, and Reece “Goose” Tatum.

Playing for the Golden State Warriors for 13-years, and the Indiana Pacers for 3-years, Mullin had a sensational career in basketball.

Starting off at St. Johns University (1981-85), he was named to the 1981 McDonald’s All American team, won the 1984-85 NCAA John R. Wooden Award, appeared in 5 All Star Games, and was an All-American in high school. Mullin was named Big East Player of the Year three times in his collegiate career, and won two Olympic gold medals, one with the 1992 Dream Team.

Divvying up his time with five teams in 14-years, Rodman won two championships playing for the Detroit Pistons in 7-seasons, and three with the Chicago Bulls. He was known for his immaculate rebounding and defensive skills as he was named the NBA’s Defensive Player of the Year twice, and was selected to two All

Star Games, and seven All-Defensive First Teams.

Aside winning five championships, Rodman played for the San Antonio Spurs, Los Angeles Lakers, and the Dallas Mavericks.

Winning 8-championships out of the 13-years he spent with the Boston Celtics, Sanders was known for his legendary defensive skills. After spending his entire career in Boston, Sanders coached basketball for Harvard University, and the Celtics. He is now the Vice-President and Director of Player Programs in New York City where he designs programs to help both veteran and rookie players take advantage of their unique status as professional athletes.

Members of the 2011 Class will be presented their Hall of Fame jackets, and will be interviewed by national and local press on the center court of the Basketball Hall of Fame at the press conference. Tickets to attend this illustrious event are \$35 per person as everything is scheduled to start at 2 p.m.

The eve of August 11 there will be a family reunion dinner held in Springfield as the event will host exclusive opportunities to dine in an intimate environment as the Hall of Fame welcomes the 2011 Class.

The next day there will be an Enshrinement Golf Classic for basketball fans who have the VIP Experience Package. They can watch the Hall of Famers take part in a morning of championship golf. That afternoon there will be an auction of NBA memorabilia as there will be



PHOTO: JENNIFER JUDKINS

the Enshrinement Gala VIP Pre-Reception as well as the Enshrinement Ceremony.

During the Enshrinement Ceremony, there will be over 50 returning Hall of Famers, and the Class of 2011 will make their prestigious Hall of Fame speeches.

The weekend festivities will wrap up on August 13 with the Induction Celebration VIP Pre-Reception at Mohegan Sun Resort and Casino in Uncasville, CT. This event will grant guests the opportunity to mingle with Hall of Famers. The night will conclude with a dinner at the Uncas Ball Room with the ring ceremony.

Ticket prices for the 2011 Hall-of-Fame Weekend Festivities are priced in accordance to adults, children, and seniors. For more information about the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, go to [www.hoophall.com](http://www.hoophall.com).

## Fundraising Duo Rides Again: Come Take a Ride for Life!

Spring is here, and with it comes the familiar rumble of freshly tuned motorcycles. And according to two local ladies, there is no better way to raise money for charity than a loud, thunderous ride. Louisa (Lucky) Belcamino, and Anne Marie Concemi, both Merrimack Valley natives and Harley Davidson enthusiasts, will lead the pack on June 25th when the first annual Lucky’s Ride for Leukemia takes off from the North Andover Knights of Columbus.

Belcamino and Concemi are no strangers to fundraising. Both are members of the East Coast Biker Chicks, an organization founded by Belcamino, its president, in 2003. The Boston-based club consists of 140 women, and now has chapters in Maine, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania. This past January, Belcamino flew to Las Vegas to incorporate her newest venture, the West Coast Biker Chicks which will

have members from Southern California, Nevada, and Arizona.

East Coast Biker Chicks main focus is fundraising, and Belcamino is the tireless pulse that drives its members to action. States Lucky, “I love to ride, and there is nothing more satisfying than doing something I love, with my favorite people, while helping those in need.”

In 2010, Belcamino nominated Concemi for TLC’s hit show “What not to Wear”. After a week in New York and a complete makeover, the two decided to put Concemi’s new celebrity status to good use. “Lucky immediately put on her fundraising hat and suggested we premier the episode and raise money for charity. I had a client whose 6 year old daughter, Hannah Lowe, had been recently diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. So we rounded up 475 people, threw a huge party with a viewing of the show, and raised over \$21,000 to help defray some of her expenses. Hannah is doing great, and we are so happy that we could make her recovery a little easier.”

Both Belcamino and Concemi know there are plenty of charity rides to choose from, all with great intentions. Their ride, they think, will be unique, as it is one of the only rides sponsored and organized by a women’s bike club.

Belcamino is a

Compliance Manager at Lawrence’s Valentine and Kabartas, and Concemi is co-owner of First Integrity Mortgage in Lawrence and Salem, NH. “It’s rare to see large groups of women bikers. Boy oh boy, do heads turn when we girls are all out riding together. It’s a great sight, even if you aren’t a motorcycle enthusiast,” states Belcamino.



Concemi agrees, “Most women bikers, like myself, don business suits and carry brief cases for a living. My clients are so intrigued that I ride a big old Harley. There is definitely an allure to it.”

And the allure extends to other local celebrities as well. Kiss 108’s Matt Siegal is completely in awe of the East Coast Biker Chicks and loves having them on his hit radio show, “Matty in the Morning”. In fact, Belcamino presented him with a plaque during an air interview that read, “THE ONLY MALE MEMBER OF THE EAST COAST BIKER CHICKS” which he proudly hangs in his office at the radio station. Concemi and Belcamino are repeat guests of the show, and will be on the air June 17th, adding to the hilarity, as well as promoting Lucky’s Ride.

Lucky’s Ride for Leukemia takes place on June 25th, rain or shine, at the Knights of Columbus, 505 Sutton Street, North Andover. Registration begins at 10am, the ride leaves at noon. There will be a biker flea market, live music by the Dan Lawson Band, and great raffles, including a custom Harley with only 100 tickets to be sold. Cost is \$20 per rider with a passenger fee of \$10.

And you don’t need a motorcycle to attend. Lucky and Anne Marie promise this to be a full day of great fun with plenty of wonderful sights and beautiful bikes.


For information on the Ride please visit [www.luckysride.org](http://www.luckysride.org) or contact Lucky at [ecbc13@gmail.com](mailto:ecbc13@gmail.com) and Anne Marie Concemi at [aconcemi@firstinteg.com](mailto:aconcemi@firstinteg.com)





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# Protect Mass Children Raffles an Original 1966 Mustang Fastback GT

Everett- Protect Mass Children raffles an original 1966 Ford Mustang GT Fastback to fund programs aimed to protect children from sexual predators. The winning ticket will be pulled at Boston Harley-Davidson on September 17th, 2011 at the end of their 1st Annual Motorcycle Ride Against Child Abuse. "Voice for the Victims Motorcycle Run".

"This is very exciting for our group." said Joseph DiPietro, President of Protect Mass Children (PMC). "Currently Massachusetts ranks #1 for confirmed cases of abuse and neglect, a car raffle is a fun way to raise funds to address a serious problem". Dipietro continued "Education is a vital part of protecting children from predators; a successful raffle will result in saving thousands of children from victimization".

Paul Fluckiger, President of Silverstone Motorcars stated, "We are proud to provide this amazing automobile for such a great cause" This is an amazing car, ford built less than 7900 Mustang GT Fastbacks, the options and color combination make this car extremely rare". Fluckiger continued "It's a small price to pay, only \$100.00 for a chance to win a mint condition, numbers matching Ford Mustang GT Fastback appraised value at \$48,200, she is an amazing American classic; all proceeds go toward programs to protect children from sexual predators, it is a

win/win situation for everyone".

"It won't be easy" said DiPietro.

"We have to sell 5500 tickets in three months. The car is amazing, but many people are still struggling in this tough economy. We hope the public will get excited about our cause and are willing to participate in this once and a lifetime opportunity". I am confident with hard work and dedication we will sell all 5500 tickets and be able to make a significant difference for the children of Massachusetts.

2500 tickets must be sold by September 16th according to the official rules found on Protect Mass Children's Website. Participants have a 1 in 5500 chance of winning if every ticket sells. All proceeds from the raffle go towards protecting children through education and awareness programs. Participants do not have to be present to win the raffle.

2500 tickets must be sold by September 16th according to the official rules found on Protect Mass Children's Website. Protect Mass Children is a non-profit organization committed to protecting the children of Massachusetts from sexual predators through education, legislation an prevention. PMC currently has four bills filed in Massachusetts calling for strong mandatory sentences for repeat sex offenders.

For more information go to [www.protectmasschildren.org](http://www.protectmasschildren.org)



This original Mustang Fastback GT was donated by Joe Dipietro to Protect Mass. Children. Buy a Raffle Ticket and win this car!!

## Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner: What is SHH

Reading a Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner article these past few months, one might have took into consideration that Hansen (The journalist) has written a few articles about himself. Can journalists write, or interview themselves for a newspaper? No! Can Howard Stern break the barriers of satellite radio, and do whatever he wants? Yes!! In that case, can I be the Howard Stern of the newspaper world, and do whatever I want? Absolutely!!! Will people like it? Yes, no, maybe? As long as I am happy with my work, I don't need the approval of what other people think about the journalistic talents I have.

Anyways, with that said, I am going to notify the public that I have to make this article short, and sweet because I have a 300 word count on this publication in The Valley Patriot newspaper, which is the best newspaper in not only, "The Valley," but the world!!!

For a rule of thumb, another bridge

I burnt not abiding by the Associate Press booklet is that I am not supposed to be dropping random expressions such as exclamation points at the end of a sentence.

Also, writing a headline for an article, whether or not it is titled, "Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner: What is SHH," a journalist is supposed to mention something about the headline in at least the second paragraph.

With that said, and approximately 37 more words left in this article, and a Web site, SHH stands for Shawn Hansen History. Forget History class, or Pop Culture, sign up for a Shawn Hansen History class. Taking a Shawn Hansen History class could reveal whatever happened in Shawn Hansen's life.

For more information about Shawn Hansen, go to [www.shawnhansen.weebly.com](http://www.shawnhansen.weebly.com)

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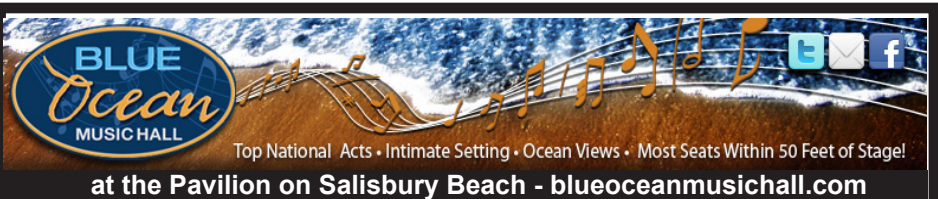
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## BLUE OCEAN MUSIC HALL LIVE ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

### June 2011

Saturday, June 4, 8pm – COMEDY HYPNOTIST TIM TRIPLET (\$20/\$25)  
Friday, June 17, 8pm – COMEDIAN LENNY CLARKE (\$30/\$35)  
Wednesday, June 1, 8pm – "THE WAILERS UPRISING TOUR" (\$28/\$30)

### July 2011

Saturday, July 9, 8pm – HOWIE DAY (\$20)  
Sunday, July 10, 8pm – DONOVAN FRANKENREITER (TBA)  
Fri, July 15, 8pm – BUFFETT BEACH BLAST with CHANGES IN LATITUDES (\$25)

### August 2011

Fri, Aug. 5, 8pm – SHABOO ALL-STARS WITH MATT "GUITAR" MURPHY (20/\$25)  
Fri, Aug. 12, 8pm – THE POUSETTE-DART BAND (\$25/\$30)

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



BLAIR HOUSE LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST: FROM PAGE 29

lower cut option and we are also, going to be working with our congressmen, Congressmen Tsongas and others who have been very supportive. So, that is a very important issue for us, just as Frank pointed out.

I'd like to close with just two quick stories. Our lives can be so complicated; sometimes stories are the only way to get a message through. The first story concerns a friend of mine who ran a nursing home out in the Western part of the state, for years, I didn't hear from him, in the Berkshires. I didn't hear from him, I was getting concerned and all of a sudden, I get a call from him and I said "Where have you been?" He said "Well, I sold the nursing home and I bought an Ice Cream Parlor".

Ice cream parlor? This is interesting that you would transition from a Nursing home to and Ice cream parlor. He said "you know, some of the things that we accepted when we ran nursing homes, when you get out of the real world, people don't accept them anymore".

He said "First of all, I have a big chalk board and I put the prices of the products on it. I put vanilla ice cream cone, \$2.50, and he said "You would be amazed! People come in and they pay me \$2.50! (people laughing).

They don't say, I don't care what it costs you to make it, I'll give you \$2.00, I'll give you \$1.00 today and I will give you \$1.00 20 years from now. He says "they pay me \$2.50" and he said secondly, "they pay me cash"! He said that they pay him right then and they don't pay part of it now and a little bit of it later. He said "the third thing is that they walk out with a smile on their face". He said "sometimes, I didn't get those three things when I ran the nursing home".

The last story that I want to tell you really deals with Darcy and the other home and community base care services.



We value them tremendously. I am a strong proponent of adult day health. Before I came to Mass Senior Care, I ran a Senior Center in Arlington and I think our greatest accomplishment was starting Cooperative Elderly Services, which is a large Adult Day Health provider. They are vital and we are glad that our legislature has seen that as well.

My dad lived in a little town in northwestern Connecticut. He was a hard worker, he was a newspaper editor, court clerk, you know he was the typical guy who could not wash his laundry, could not make meals, and he couldn't do any of that stuff. My mother did all of that. My sister and I moved up to the Greater Boston area and they lived in Litchfield, which is a beautiful little town, but you know, you don't want to grow old in Litchfield, because there are not a lot of services there.

My mom died and my dad was widowed for 15 years. To his credit, he really learned how to take care of himself. But, we were all up here, he was down there by himself, in his house, we cobbled together all of the services that we could, for my father. But you know, inevitably, at 7:00 in the morning, I would get the call "This is the homemaker and I went into your dad's house and I found him in the tub, I think he fell in the bathtub on his way to the bathroom on his way in the middle of the night, what should I do?"

I would take a deep breath and I would say "Call 911 that might be a good first step!" So, my dad, we called him, he had this track that he went: he would go from home, hospital, nursing home, home, hospital, nursing home. Sometimes home, nursing home, home." Back and forth, back and forth, he had six admissions to a nursing home in Connecticut, it was a very good home, they took great care of him. They would get him better, they would strengthen him, they would stabilize his meds and, of course, the swamp Yankee that he was, as soon as he felt stronger, guess what? He says "I'm out of here, I am going back home again" We would go back home. We would

cobble together all of the services that we could.

I calculated, in the last 15 years of his life, what percentage of time he spent at home, at the hospital and at the nursing home. He was home 95% of the time. So, the lesson here, I think is twofold.

#1, the nursing home was his Oasis, it was not the place he went to die, it was a place he went to get better so he could come back home. So, the nursing home allowed him to stay home longer.

I think the second point is that we are all in this together. We have to continue the care and good nursing home care requires good homecare, good homecare requires good nursing home care.

My dad would not have been well served if one worked and the other didn't. Sometimes these messages, particularly when we are all fighting our budgets and all of that kind of stuff, gets lost and we think of the world as being a fixed pie and our slice is only going to get bigger if yours gets smaller.

I just wanted to say that how valued Adult Day Health is, how valued our brethren in other care systems are and, lastly again, how valued Frank is.

*Transcribed by Dawn Brantmuller*



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SENIORS: FROM PAGE 33

is to apply for a retest but three failures on this test results in their license being suspended . It would then require a formal clinical evaluation by a driving rehabilitation specialist to obtain another retest .I further asked if he felt the test was a deterrent to unsafe senior drivers and he said “ Yes , I think it is a preventative measure ” . He also felt senior drivers that should not be driving would fall through the cracks if it was removed .In addition , Mr. Joseph believes that the number of “ Red Card ” issues , where a doctor , health official , law enforcement officer etc. reports an unsafe senior driver will increase dramatically . This is how the state presently deals with aging drivers but its basis , age 75 , is flawed .Some seniors can drive safely well into their 80’s and 90’s .Some drivers at 40 are a danger to themselves and others . Testing must be simply ability based , not age determined .

I next asked him how involved the DMV was with proactive , preventative programs to help senior drivers such as AAA’s More Mature Driver Program .He said there isn’t much involvement at present but that the DMV would be willing to , by sending speakers to these organizations. In addition the DMV would be more than willing to explain and clarify the procedures involved during this retest . At this time , Mr. Joseph did point out

the DMV’s sensitivity to senior drivers with its new customer oriented policy of individualizing retake tests when needed for seniors . Saying ,” I know I am going to be in that same boat someday ”, Mr. Joseph and the DMV have a very sensitive and compassionate staff that works with seniors and their families during this time .

When asked directly by me if the DMV offers any helpful advice to seniors prior to this age 75 retest , he had some general advice as to pursuing a safe driver refresher course before hand if they had any concerns . But when further asked if he would consider putting out this information and other suggestions to seniors publicly, say on their website , he agreed it would be a good idea . If this age 75 retest does continue and is not repealed by the State of NH , the DMV may want to consider requiring seniors to do what non-citizens and persons under 18 must do before their driver’s test , and that is to take a driver’s education course , complete with road training to help level the playing field for seniors .

COMING : WHAT WILL THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR SENIOR DRIVERS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE ?

Take Your Dog to Work Day

Pet Sitters International is celebrating their 13th year of “Take Your Dog to Work Day”. On Friday June 24, 2011 businesses, animal shelters and pet-care professionals from around the world will work together to better the lives of shelter dogs everywhere. Thousands of businesses will open their doors to employees’ furry, four-legged friends on this day in celebration of the great companions dogs make and to promote pet adoption.

What a better way to promote adoption and of course “show off” you baby to all your colleagues. They hear the stories, see the pictures, endless entries on your facebook page, and engage in your tweets so why not show everyone the real thing. Bring your Dog to Work!

Not to mention, this is a amazing way to promote adoption. People who are

interested in adding a dog to their family will have the opportunity to meet your dog. Our shelters are packed with homeless animals and maybe a day like this will help encourage future dog owners to consider saving a life and adopt.

Statistics show human’s blood pressure and stress levels go down when they are comforted by their family pets. We all know how stressful work can be so why not create a fun filled Friday and organize this day at your company. Think of all the activities you can do, play dates at lunch time, ball on the company front lawn, doggie ice cream treat snack break, there are just tons of things you can do, be creative and have fun with it!

For additional information please visit this website: [www.takeyourdog.com](http://www.takeyourdog.com)



June is National Cat Adoption Month



Tracey Zysk  
VALLEY PATRIOT KITTY KAT COLUMNIST

Kitty season ! Litters are being born daily but unfortunately not all of these felines have homes. Feral cats, lost and abandon cats, and now newborns are filling our shelters. Looking for your next pet? How about adopting a cat?

With June being National Cat Adoption Month several shelters are running discounts to promote this event. Some will have discounted rates on adoption fees, others may offer free or low cost spay and neuter programs and others may be offering free microchipping.

If you have ever been to the MSPCA in Methuen at Nevins Farms you will be warmly welcomed by an entire room of

cats awaiting a new forever home. Make a family event of it! Take a stroll through their facility and you may find your newest family member.

But please let’s not forget the senior aged cats. As adorable as kittens are, there are way too many older cats that have been displaced. Usually when you see senior aged cat in a shelter it is indicative to a lifestyle change in the owner’s home. Whether it be the death of a family member, divorce, move or a financial change in the household, these animals tend to end up homeless.

So what are you doing this Sunday? How about going to your local shelter and adopting a cat.

Enjoy your new feline friend!

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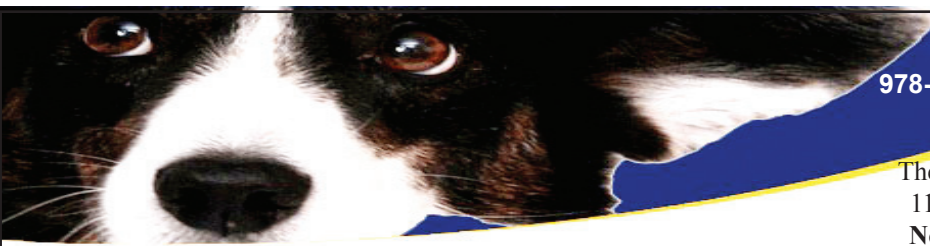
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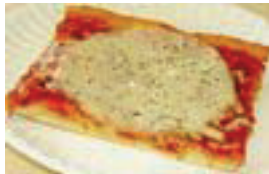
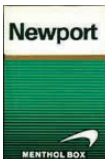
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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Things to do when you get a new Puppy

Kate Whitney  
VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY COLUMNIST

Last month in my column, I wrote about my experience being a foster to rescued puppies. My hope was that my wonderful experience would encourage others to lend a hand and help this effort. Many of you did respond, and for that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

A few weeks ago, I took my puppy Dash, to the vets to get her final set of puppy shots. As I sat in the waiting room, I realized how important it is for people to remember to keep their pets up to date on routine shots and preventative treatments like heartworm pills and flea/tick products. This may seem like a no-brainer, but I think some people may need a little reminder. After the excitement settles of having your new pet, you are left with a lot of responsibilities, some of which can be pretty expensive. Please don't think that because your cat will be kept indoors and will not be exposed to outdoor conditions or other animals, you don't need to take him to the vet. And don't think that just because your new puppy will be your only pet and will not come in contact with other dogs, you don't need to take her to the vet. Every pet needs to be seen by a vet on a regular basis. And please, please, don't fall into the trap of thinking that because your dog will not be in contact with other dogs it doesn't need to get spayed/neutered. Please be a responsible pet owner and get your cats and dogs fixed.

Being a pet owner means that you will have many years of excitement and happiness. Don't forget that in order to raise a happy pet, you as the owner need to provide love and discipline along with remembering to do things that will keep your pet healthy. Among other things, here are a few things that I thought were especially important to remember.

In order to provide the best life for your pet, you need to make sure that they will remain healthy and safe. Ask your vet

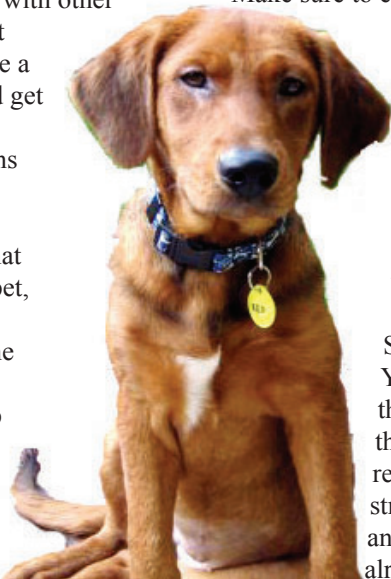
about getting your pet on a preventative health care plan including heart worm pills (Heartguard is a good brand) flea and tick control (like Frontline), and all the necessary vaccines that are applicable to your pet depending on their age.

Try to keep your pet's records in an organized type of book or folder. The easier you can reference their records and history, the easier it is to keep track of what they need. Bring this information with you every time you visit your vet so you can take notes and write down any information your vet might share with you.

When you first get a new pet, before you bring him anywhere, make sure to have a pet ID tag made. This is going to be the one thing that will bring you and your pet together again if by chance he happens to get lost. Another idea that is quite popular these days is to have your pet microchipped. A pet is microchipped by inserting a tiny chip under the skin. Each individual pet has their own number assigned to them. If ever lost, the vet or animal control officer who finds them can use a special scanner that can read the microchip. When the microchip is scanned, the ID number appears on the screen, the number is entered into the database, the pet's ID info appears, then the pet's owner is contacted.

Make sure to establish a close relationship with your vet. They are the ones who are up-to-date on new treatments and information regarding your pet. Be sure to discuss these very important things with your vet:

Spay/Nueter: PLEASE SPAY AND NUETER YOUR PETS! This is the number one thing that is going to help reduce the number of stray and unwanted dogs and cats and cut down the already too high number of puppies and kittens who are euthanized every day. Responsible pet owners get their pets spayed or



neutered. This procedure should be done prior to adulthood, so make sure to discuss with your vet when the time is right.

Vaccinations: There are different vaccinations that are recommended depending on your pet's age. Your vet will tell you what your pet needs, but be sure to keep an organized record of what vaccination your pet received, when your pet received it, and when your pet is due again for another vaccination.

Grooming: You should spend a few minutes each day grooming your pet. Check your pet's eyes and use a soft damp cloth to wipe away any discharge that might be in the eye area. Next check their ears. Wipe out any build up with a damp cloth and be sure to make a note of anything that looks unusual. Make sure you don't forget to trim your pet's nails. You can buy a nail clipper at the pet store, or you can bring your pet to your vet or a groomer and have them do it.

Monitor any changes you might notice with your pet, write down notes, and then contact your vet.

Diet: A healthy, balanced diet is absolutely necessary for your pet to reach it's ideal weight, and to have correct brain and bone formation. Talk to your vet about what type of food is right for your pet. Some vets recommend a mix of wet and dry food, while others recommend just dry.

When you finally bring home your new pet, make sure it has access to water 24 hours a day. Try to find a heavy metal or ceramic bowl that will not be knocked over easily or chewed. Get a collar that fits. Please be aware of the size and don't put something on your pet's neck that is too tight. You should be able to slide two fingers easily between the collar and your pet's body. And remember to upgrade the size of the collar as your puppy or kitten grows! Make sure you have a nice

PUPPY LOVE: PAGE 41

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ADOPT and help us make room for more animals who need our help! We currently have 61 cats available for adoption, 7 Rabbits, 2 Guinea Pigs, 10 Ferrets, 1 hamster, 4 Dogs and 4 rats! Let's find these lovely animals forever homes! This is Trouble, a sweet playful lovebug!



The Lowell Humane Society is a private 501(c)3 non-profit organization and does not receive any local, state or federal funding. Our shelter runs solely on the generosity of our supporters. To learn more about our 150+ available pets, to find out about our upcoming events and to learn about bringing your classroom, scout troop or other group to visit; contact Community Outreach Coordinator, Chris Arnott at [chris@lowellhumanesociety.org](mailto:chris@lowellhumanesociety.org), call us at (978) 452-7781 or visit our website at [lowellhumanesociety.org](http://lowellhumanesociety.org)



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# The American Flag

John Lenotte  
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

By the time you read this, Memorial Day will have come and gone. Flag Day, June 14 is fast approaching. Think back a few days to Memorial Day. Did you watch a parade? Attend a ceremony? Hang a flag or bunting at your home or place of business? Did you think about what the flag stands for as you drove around, seeing flags and patriotic decorations?

I would like to mention that I had the privilege of being a guest speaker at Memorial Day ceremonies in Auburn Mass. On May 26th. Along with 10 members of the Auburn American Legion, we went to 2 elementary schools and a middle school. Those same Legion members were going to attend 2 more programs the next day. All 3 schools put on a great program. I had to wonder how many other cities and towns were doing similar programs at ALL their schools. I would like to think that everyone was doing this.

Some trivia about the flag that is worth mentioning/repeating. On June 14, 1777, in order to establish an official flag for the new nation, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act: "Resolved, That the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation."

Between 1777 and 1960, Congress passed several acts that changed the shape, design and arrangement of the flag and allowed for additional stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of each new state. The Act of April 4, 1818 - provided for 13 stripes and one star for each state, to be added to the flag on the 4th of July following the admission of each new state, signed by President Monroe.

Today the flag consists of thirteen horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with 6 white. The stripes represent the original 13 colonies; the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well: Red symbolizes Hardiness and Valor, White symbolizes Purity and Innocence and Blue represents Vigilance, Perseverance and Justice.

Some people wonder why our US Flag is so special, and why people make such a big deal about the care and use of it. Although there are many reasons that our flag is special, perhaps the most important reason is that it is ours. That may sound silly, but before 1777 (when the first official US flag was created through a resolution of the Continental Congress) common people could not own (much less fly) a flag. Flags were only owned by dictators and monarchs that used them to show property ownership. Even today in some countries, there are different flags for the rulers and the people. There are still some countries where citizens do not have the right to own or fly the national flag.

And let us not forget that the flag was the inspiration for Francis Scott Key to pen the Star Spangled Banner. This was created during the War of 1812. The British were laying siege

to Fort McHenry in Baltimore, MD. They had already invaded and captured Washington, DC having set fire to the Capitol and the White House. The flames could be seen some 40 miles away. Mr. Key was on board a British sloop, trying to negotiate the return of American prisoners of war. The date was September 13, 1814. The bombardment lasted for 25 hours, the British firing 1500 bombshells. The flag above Fort McHenry had been made by a local mother and daughter, Mary and Caroline Pickersgill. The flag they made measured 30 feet by 42 feet. This was HUGE. The flags that most of us fly at home are 3 by 5 feet or maybe 4 by 6 feet. How could this not have been an incredible sight and an obvious inspiration? It now hangs in the Smithsonian in Washington, DC.

6 US flags are currently stationed on the moon. They were put there by Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17. Other countries that have/had flags on the moon include the Soviet Union, EU and India.

□ There are a number of facts relating to use of the US Flag. As you read through these, think about the times you have seen the Flag misused. The flag should never be displayed with the union (the starred blue canton) down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property. When a flag is so tattered that it can no longer serve as a symbol of the United States, it should be destroyed in a dignified manner, preferably by burning. The American Legion and other organizations regularly conduct dignified flag-burning ceremonies, often on Flag Day, June 14.

□ The flag should never touch anything beneath it. No other flag should be placed above it. The flag of the United States is always the first flag raised and the last to be lowered. It should be illuminated if displayed at night. The flag is to be flown at half-staff in mourning for the death of designated, principal government leaders.

And here is one rule that is often misused: The U.S. flag is otherwise flown at half-staff (or half-mast, on ships) when directed by the President of the United States or a state governor. Not by direction of any other public official.

And again this year, Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, R-Mo., reintroduced legislation for the 112th Congress proposing a constitutional amendment which would restore to Congress the power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag. House Joint Resolution 13 simply reads, "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." Some of our Congressional delegation is in support of this, some are not. I encourage you to contact your Representative and our 2 U.S. Senators to voice your opinion.

Remember our troops and their families who defend us, stationed in over 400 facilities across the globe. In the last 12 months over 550 have given their lives. We cannot forget their sacrifice.



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

# PUPPY LOVE: FROM PAGE 39

bed for them to sleep in every night. It's important to make your new dog feel comfortable and safe. You may choose to purchase a crate or a comfortable bed, or both! I purchased a large crate and put a comfortable liner in it, and this is where my puppy sleeps for naptime or through the night. I also have a nice fluffy bed in the kitchen and living area that my puppy sometimes chooses to lay down on. I like to give her options, but I make sure that there is always a place for her to feel safe, protected and comfortable.

So, all in all, remembering to do these things will make for a happy and healthy

pet. Please remember that owning a pet is a joyous time, but can also get expensive with food, vet bills, and accessories. As I finished up at the vets with Dash, I was reminded of this financial responsibility that comes along with having a pet...I got my bill. As I signed on the dotted line, I sighed a happy sigh. I was happy not only because I now was in-the-know with what's going on with my puppy, but I was content on knowing that she was healthy.

You can email Kate at Kwswingrite@aol.com

# BATTLEFIELD: FROM PAGE 27

go back under the rock from which you slithered. Mitt Romney, who was once endorsed by the pro-gray Log Cabin Club during his run to become the governor of Massachusetts and stated that he was more pro-gay than Ted Kennedy, turned tail and is now campaigning for a ban on same-sex marriage.

One Republican, Fred Karger who is an openly gay political strategist and Republican presidential candidate stated that he'll, "absolutely advocate for preserving the right to same-sex marriage." He asks for his fellow candidates to focus on more strenuous

issues like the economy and national security. He sounds like the only voice of reason among the Republicans.

And so our fight continues. It reminds me of the saying, "You may have won the battle, but you haven't won the war." What a hell of a war it is.



Dani Langevin is a teacher and has a Bachelors in Fine Art and Masters in Education. She has written four young adult novels, one of which is self-published. You can email Dani at DaniBLangevin@aol.com

# PRIEST: FROM PAGE 27

the light of such teaching, this Dicastery, in accord with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, believes it necessary to state clearly that the Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture.'"

www.vatican.va/roman\_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc\_con\_ccatheduc\_doc\_20051104\_istruzione\_en.html

In line with this notion of loving the sinner while hating the sin, for the sake of souls, the 1992 Vatican statement on the 'Non-discrimination of Homosexual Persons' states:

"As in every moral disorder, homosexual activity prevents one's own fulfillment and happiness by acting contrary to the creative wisdom of

God. The church, in rejecting erroneous opinions regarding homosexuality, does not limit but rather defends personal freedom and dignity realistically and authentically understood."

In other words, challenging as it may be for some, this statement underscores the truth of our being that one can never be authentically happy or free while violating human nature and natural law.

Will a reaffirmation of Church law regarding priestly ordination and homosexuality help purify the priesthood, an office that stands in for Christ as Groom to His bride the Church? Reason would attest that the answer is yes.



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



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## The American Legion

**John P. Lenotte**  
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Candidate for Department  
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TOM DUGGAN’S NOTEBOOK: FROM 23

01845

WHEN: June 29th, 2011: Whim

Featuring: Chef Jason Bond of Bondir Restaurant

Charity: Faith Kitchen, [www.faithkitchen.org](http://www.faithkitchen.org)

July 6th, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Erwin Ramos, Olé Mexican Grill Charity: Food for Free, [www.foodforfree.org](http://www.foodforfree.org)

July 13th, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Tony Bettencourt, 62 Restaurant & Wine Bar, Charity: St. Joseph’s Harvest of Hope Food Pantry, Salem, MA

July 20th, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Richmond Edes, Beacon Hill Hotel & Bistro, Charity: Community Servings, [www.servings.org](http://www.servings.org)

July 27th, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Andy Husbands, Tremont 647

Charity: Share Our Strength, [www.strength.org](http://www.strength.org)

August 3rd, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Rebecca Newell, The Beehive

Charity: The Boston Food Bank, [www.gbfb.org](http://www.gbfb.org)

August 10th, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Tom Bivins, New England Culinary Institute, Charity: New England Culinary Institute Scholarship Fund, a 501C3

August 17th, 2011: Whim Featuring: Chef Evan Mallet, Black Trumpet Bistro, Charity: Future Chefs, [www.futurechefs.net/](http://www.futurechefs.net/)

August 24th, 2011 Whim Featuring: Chef Paul Turano, Tryst Restaurant, Charity: Jimmy Fund Clinic, [www.jimmyfund.org](http://www.jimmyfund.org)

INFO: \$60 per person (gratuity and beverages not included). Visit: [Smolakfarms.com](http://Smolakfarms.com) to learn more and purchase tickets. Included in the ticket price is a 3-course dinner and hayride farm tour. Dress is casual. Beverages not included. Paired wines, beer and non-alcoholic beverages available for purchase. Only one menu will be presented with no substitutions. Ticket is non-refundable.

LAWRENCE - Jr. Maulers - We are having a Retro Night Dance Fundraiser to Benefit the Jr. Maulers on June 17th from 7:30pm to midnight (adults only). \$10 donation! Please join us for a fun night out with the rest of the Jr. Maulers family and

Friends.

Our next monthly meeting is Monday, June 6th at 7pm at the Relief’s Inn, 1 Market St, Lawrence. Good way to find out how the board runs, bring up any new ideas, address issues and questions you may have.

Our next registration date is Sat. June 11th from 10am to 1pm at the Lawrence Boys & Girls Club

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you

Ines Faucher - President of Mill City [www.jrmaulers.com](http://www.jrmaulers.com), Phone: (978) 747 - 6209. Spanish (978) 689-0696

The Greater Law Voc is hosting this year NFL HPSC clinic and is available to any current 7th and 8th grade Jr. Mauler. The NFL High School Player Development clinic we will be hosting on June 13th to the 17th. All participants must have a copy of a current physical (done within the year).

This clinic is 100% free for all participants and will include a 7 on 7 flag football competition.

LAWRENCE - The Lawrence Public Library, along with 34 other libraries from the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC), has launched a new catalog over Memorial Day weekend. The new catalog is part of a move to the Evergreen open source library system. While giving more control to MVLC libraries over the features offered in their catalog, this move is also expected to help limit future increases in the fees the library pays for MVLC membership by reducing annual software licensing and upgrade costs

Any holds previously placed on materials should carry over to the new system. Users will find that their personally-created lists in the bookbags will be available in the “My Accounts” area of the new catalog.

Library users will enjoy some new features with the Evergreen system, such as the ability to share their bookbags with others, more flexibility in creating user passwords, and the ability to update their street and e-mail addresses. Patrons will also have more flexibility and control over their catalog searches with the new system, including setting account

preferences to search the Lawrence Public library only or MVLC as a whole.

Coming attractions over the next few months include an improved catalog design, a feature allowing users to track their reading history, the ability to pay fines online, and a version of the catalog usable on mobile devices.

The Merrimack Valley Library Consortium will be the first large library system in Massachusetts to use Evergreen. The move to Evergreen is part of a larger project that will see MVLC, along with two other Massachusetts’ library consortia, NOBLE and C/W MARS, using Evergreen by early 2012. These three library networks encompass approximately half of the public libraries in the Commonwealth along with a number of academic libraries. The project includes locally-sponsored development funded with a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and by participating libraries.

MVLC staff has already been active in developing enhancements to Evergreen. The staff has made changes to the software that has made it into the core Evergreen package. These changes include customizations to the patron registration form providing more flexibility to libraries operating in a consortium like MVLC; automatic staff client updates; an overhaul in the configuration of rules that control how long items circulate and how fines should be applied; and improvements to staff client menus and toolbars.

MVLC plans to continue contributing to the development of Evergreen in a way that will allow the software to best meet the needs of library users in Massachusetts. For more information about the Lawrence Public Library, please contact Maureen Nimmo, Director at 978-620-3621 or [mnimmo@cityoflawrence.com](mailto:mnimmo@cityoflawrence.com)

HAVERHILL - Council on Aging Book Townie Discussion:

Beth Galloway from the Haverhill Public Library will lead a discussion group at the Citizen Center in September on the book Townie. This best-selling

memoir by local author Andre Dubus details his experiences growing up in Haverhill. Readers will recognize many of the characters and places in this book and are sure to have a lively discussion. We hope you will pick up a copy of the book or get it at a local library and join the fun in September. Exact time and place of the discussion will be announced later. Please contact Kathy Bresnahan or Rita LaBella at 978-374-2390 or [kbresnahan@cityofhaverhill.com](mailto:kbresnahan@cityofhaverhill.com) if you plan to participate.”

TREBLE CHORUS - Are you a kid who always wanted to sing in an opera? The Treble Chorus of New England invites you to audition for our Fall Opera production, “How to Make an Opera”. We are looking for interested singers, ages 11-18 to audition for our Fall opera production. You must be available August 8-19th for Opera camp/ rehearsal and mini-performance. Audition dates are Mondays, June 20th and 27th at the West Parish Church, 129 Reservation Road in Andover, MA from 5-8. Please contact Anna Choi at [tcnemanager@treblechorus.com](mailto:tcnemanager@treblechorus.com) or 978.794.4600 to make an appointment. See description of the Opera below.

“How to Make an Opera” brings us behind the curtains of an opera company with warring prima donnas and the exasperated opera director Mr. Baton. In an attempt to regain control over his singers and to increase public interest, Mr. Baton holds an audition for a new star in the upcoming production. Amid the hopes and dreams of would-be opera stars and jealous chorus members, the reigning divas try to convince the director how unnecessary the audition is. Mr. Baton surprises them all by saying he has already found his new star...his secretary! Tension is high at the first rehearsal of the new production, but it seems like the new star is not as naive or innocent as she seems to be. Rivalry between the singers start again and it isn’t long before Mr. Baton finds himself back in the same situation that he first started with. Business Office, Treble Chorus of New England 978.794.4600. [www.treblechorusne.org](http://www.treblechorusne.org)

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NORTH ANDOVER SENIORS: FROM 7

weeks on Tuesdays from 1 – 2 pm. This is a six week program of strength training geared to your individual ability. Builds strength, balance and increases bone density. Six weeks for \$24. or drop- ins \$6. Instructor Patty Ferrullo.

LECTURE SERIES: Monday at 10. June 13, Mark Trombly, from Trombly Bros. on Car maintenance. June 20 will be Harrison Whitney speaking on Civil Process from the Sheriff’s Department. June 27 the last lecture of the year will be Thomas Ricardi, Birds of Prey. Sign up required for the last lecture.

SUPPER CLUB: Thursday, July 21 at Stripers Grille in Salisbury. Bus: \$5.

Order off the menu. Depart Senior Center at 4:00 pm.

TRAINED 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). Call for information on the Summer Schedule.

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.

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.

COMPUTER WORKSHOP: Four week session on Thursdays, 1 – 2:30 pm starting May 19. Limit to 4 people. \$25. per person. Learn basic skills and look at sites that are fun and helpful for day to day use.

ZUMBA, ZUMBA , ZUMBA with Tallie: Monday and Wednesdays 3:30 – 4:30 and Thursdays,4:30 – 5:30. Punch cards are \$40 for 10 classes. YOGA: Yoga Class Monday mornings at 9 with

Cheryl Cronin. Please call to register, drops- in’s welcomed.

\*New schedule for TAI CHI: Tuesday mornings, Intermediate class 9:00-10:00, Beginner Class 10:10 – 11:10. Please call to register or sign up on Tuesday morning.

Wii Sport Bowling: Stop by the Senior Center on any Thursday morning between 9 and 10 to try your luck at Bowling with the Wii System. It’s fun, good exercise.

WALKING GROUP: Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 9. Meet at the Youth Center and walk for an hour at your own pace. As the weather warms up we will be walking the Old Town Common.

MAHJONG: Come in and play Mahjong, Mondays 12:30 – 2:30 and will run every Monday as long as there is interest.

Foxwoods: Next scheduled trip, Tuesday, June 21, \$25 includes lunch buffet, transportation and Keno. Bus leaves from St. Michael’s parking lot at 6:30 am.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

STRESS RELIEF: Fridays by appointment only. 20 minute sessions with Miriam Smith, Pranic Healer. \$5.00 donation to the Senior Center.

GRIEF SUPPORT: The 2nd Tuesday of every month from 12:30 – 2 pm.

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LAWRENCE - The Lawrence Chess Club will meet on its new night, Wednesday, 15th June 2011 from 6-8pm at The Lawrence Public Library, corner of Haverhill & Lawrence Streets. This is always a FREE event. Please bring a friend and a chess set. ALL ages and abilities welcome. Play, learn and help teach.

We can teach anyone to play in about 20 minutes, but it requires a lifetime to master. English is not required. The meeting is held the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

LAWRENCE - The Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence has announced that its 32nd Annual Golf Tournament – In With Kids – will be held on Monday, June 20, 2011 at Indian Ridge Country Club in Andover, Massachusetts.

“We’re excited to bring our guests another fun day of golf, giveaways and good food,” said Sarah Hogue, golf event coordinator. “We’re pleased to introduce new traditions and bring back old festivities.” New to the line-up of events, Derek Sanderson, Boston Bruins legend, is attending and the much anticipated helicopter golf ball drop raffle is back.

Enter to win \$2500 cash by purchasing a numbered golf ball which will be dropped from a helicopter. The first ball in the hole wins. If no hole in one, closest to the pin wins. Participate by logging onto the website at [www.lawrencecbgc.com](http://www.lawrencecbgc.com) and look for the Helicopter Golf Ball Drop information (presence not necessary to win)!

The community can show its support just by participating in the golf tournament! The Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence encourages supporters to provide sponsorships, advertise in the program, or donate auction items. Funds raised at this event directly impact the lives of the Clubs kids. Some of the programs that are supported by your participation and sponsorship include:

- \* Nightly meals for 350 kids, Daily homework help, Academic basketball and other sports activities, Water safety programs, Drug and gang prevention programs.

If you would like to register for the event or provide sponsorships please contact Sarah Hogue at 978 683 2747 or visit the website at [www.lawrencecbgc.com](http://www.lawrencecbgc.com). Thank you for helping us help kids!

HAVERHILL - Art Classes - Sharon Silverman is a professional artist who will be running an Art Camp for Teens 12-18 years old this summer at Angles & Art, 80 Wingate Street in Haverhill. The Camp starts the week of June 27th and runs for 6 weeks. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. The cost is \$100 per week (which includes supplies) and runs Monday thru Friday 9 am - 2 pm. It is important for me to let older kids know that there is a place where they can have fun and study Art this summer. I hope that

you will help me to get this information out. For more info contact [silvermanarts@comcast.net](mailto:silvermanarts@comcast.net) or call (978) 314-4445.

WILMINGTON - Little Sprouts, an early education organization with over 28 years’ experience, is proud to announce the opening of their thirteenth school in Wilmington, MA. The Wilmington School will open their doors on June 6, 2011. The school will be educating 72 students of all age groups, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. This new school is located at 310 Lowell Street, conveniently located on Route 129 and right off of Interstate 93.

“Little Sprouts is delighted for the expansion and the opportunity to continue to grow their legacy within the Commonwealth,” noted Susan Leger Ferraro, President and Founder of Little Sprouts. “We are excited to have the opportunity to offer our award winning early education to the Wilmington community.”

Little Sprouts has provided award-winning early education and child care for over 28 years in the Greater Merrimack Valley and Boston. The organization has earned national recognition for its curriculum and results, most notably as a three-time recipient of the U.S. Department of Education’s “Preschool Center of Educational Excellence” award. Little Sprouts preschoolers score in the top 4% in national independent early literacy assessments as compared to other schools. This school is in a beautifully remodeled brick building that has two floors; the second floor will be home to the new Little Sprouts Preschool Academy. The inside has been completely refurbished with all new materials and furniture in every classroom. The school features spacious classrooms filled with natural light and two private playgrounds.

Little Sprouts will be celebrating the opening of this brand new school with an official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony later this summer. Little Sprouts staff and administration will be joined by families in the community. Imagine That, interactive play space, and NY Life representatives will be present to offer families various activities to participate in. To find out how you can enroll your child at any of the 13 Little Sprouts schools please visit [www.littlesprouts.com](http://www.littlesprouts.com)

DANVERS, June 10 – Lauren Dibase of Marblehead, will speak at the North Shore Business Forum on June 10 on how to effectively network. The North Shore Business Forum meets at 7:30am at the Danversport Yacht Club, Rt. 62 East, Danvers, MA. The \$10 admission fee includes a continental breakfast and pre-registration is not required. For more info - [www.nsbforum.org](http://www.nsbforum.org)

DANVERS, June 17 – Phyllis Madanian, of the Peabody Athletic Club, will speak at the North Shore Business

Forum on how to get and stay fit after age 40. The North Shore Business Forum meets at 7:30am at the Danversport Yacht Club, Rt. 62 East, Danvers, MA. The \$10 admission fee includes a continental breakfast and pre-registration is not required. For more info - [www.nsbforum.org](http://www.nsbforum.org)

DANVERS, June 24 – Janet Bright, of Brightworks, will speak at the North Shore Business Forum on working with the creative economy – CEANS. The North Shore Business Forum meets at 7:30am at the Danversport Yacht Club, Rt. 62 East, Danvers, MA. The \$10 admission fee includes a continental breakfast and pre-registration is not required. For more info - [www.nsbforum.org](http://www.nsbforum.org)

METHUEN VILLAGE - Folk Guitar Performance 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 guitarist and vocalist Paul Wayne on Tuesday, June 14 at 2:00 p.m. Paul will perform popular folk songs. 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).

LAWRENEC GLCAC - The GLCAC, Inc., Women, Infants and Children’s (WIC) Program will be hosting a Community Service Fair in the park across from Andover Town Hall on Saturday, June 25th. Many programs from the GLCAC, Inc. and the community will be represented at the fair. The main purpose of the fair is to bring awareness to eligible participants who reside in the Andover and North Andover communities. Many of these families may not be aware of the array of services that are available to their families. Staff will have information tables available for each program, raffles, giveaways and snacks will be available to all those who attend.

WIC will once again this year be a part of the local Farmer’s Market throughout the summer. Due to budget constraints the state has changed distribution days WIC will have three distribution days, one for each of its sites where participants will receive \$20 dollars worth of checks for each active WIC participant. During the “Give-away” days WIC will provide participants with food samples, recipes, raffles and prizes. The distribution is for WIC participants who are active and currently receiving services. WIC will have a Community Coordinator providing outreach services on a weekly basis as always at the Farmer’s Market. WIC is also working with Groundwork Lawrence to have a Nutritionist available once a month for the Saturday Farmer’s Market. In addition to regular Farmer’s Market checks the Local Program was chosen as a pilot site to let participants use their monthly fruit and vegetable vouchers as a means to increase the amounts of fruits and vegetables they can purchase. This will bring the useable dollar amounts from \$20 per participant to either \$26 or \$30 per participant. That is a huge benefit to families and WIC is happy its site was picked to be one of the pilots.

LAWRENCE - The GLCAC, Inc., Annual Lead Fair 2011 is taking place on Tuesday, July 19, 2011 from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. at the Lawrence

Heritage State Park. This will be the 14th consecutive year in which the Merrimack Valley Lead Poisoning Prevention Program holds the Lead Fair. The Lead Program staff expects between 350 – 500 people (mostly children) to attend.

The GLCAC, Inc., Child Care Center held its annual Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Night on May 24, 2011. Over 90 families and friends joined Center, Public School and Charter School representatives to share Kindergarten information and expectations with families whose child will be moving up to Kindergarten in September. Children were presented with Preschool Diplomas, special Kindergarten t-shirts, Raising A Reader special Blue Bags and new School Backpacks filled with supplies to start their Kindergarten year off right. Parents were able to talk with Educators from the Center’s Kindergarten Program, the Lawrence Public School’s Program, and a Charter School Program and received booklets with valuable transitioning information.

Ten GCAC, Inc., Child Care staff members are participating in the R3P-Educator Provider Support Grant through the Department of Early Education and Care. The grant has provided participants with needed funding to work toward achieving higher educational credentials. Staff is enrolled in Master’s, Bachelor’s or Associates level courses through participating local colleges.

The GLCAC, Inc., Child Care Center completed their licensing renewal with the Department of Early Education and Care on April 5, 2011. The NAEYC Accredited Center received No Non-compliances for all programs and Administration was found to meet or exceed all EEC standards. The Center, which has been providing quality early learning services for over 40 years through Toddler, Preschool, Kindergarten and School-age programs cares for 253 children ages 15 months to 11 years old. The dedicated and experienced Child Care Center’s staff’s commitment to children and families is to be commended.

On March 1, 2011 the GLCAC, Inc., Child Care Center was awarded the “Improving Physical Environments for Infant and Toddler Programs Equipment Grant”. The funds were provided by the Department of Early Education and Care with the Children’s Investment Fund overseeing the applications, grant awarding and material implementation. The amount of \$9,992.67 provided a wide variety of equipment and materials that have enhanced the Center’s Toddler Program’s space.

The GLCAC, Inc., Child Care Center’s Kindergarten Class of 2011 Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for June 22, 2011 (rain date June 23, 2011). Twenty-three (23) children will be receiving Kindergarten diplomas, sharing special songs and accomplishments with their families, friends and Center Staff.



Tom Duggan is president of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, a Police Survivor and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WHAV.NET, Thursdays from 6pm-9pm. You can email your comments to [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com).

# IRISH FROM PAGE 20

then turned to the grandfather and told him I would remember him in my prayers.

The next day as the mourners gathered for the walk to the Mass and graveyard, everyone was somber and respectful. The church couldn’t hold the amount of people that were there so a great number stood outside and listened to the priest through the loud speakers that were set up outside. The graveyard was about two miles from

the church. Over a hundred people walked hand in hand saying the rosary to the burial ground. As the casket was lowed I only could ask one question....Why?



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](mailto:Jack5772@comcast.net)



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# CASSIDY: FROM PAGE 1

into the Army. He recalled that when his mother went to pick up his diploma, later that spring, she remarked at how many empty seats there were for those who also had already gone into the service.

May 15, 1944, Jim reported to Fort Devens for induction. The Army then shipped him off to Fort McLellon, Alabama for 17 weeks of infantry training in the tropical heat of summer. Jim was sent to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri for additional training and after a short leave at home, was ordered to camp Miles Standish in Taunton. He arrived in a blinding snow storm. This was his final stop before shipping out to Europe. At this point, Jim was assigned to the 70th infantry division, famously known as “The Trailblazers”. Through all of this, Jim was paid \$30.00 per month.

November 1944, Jim Cassidy boarded the Troop Ship out of Boston and headed to France. The trip over there was uneventful, but Jim remembers his arrival on December 10th very well. There was mud everywhere and it was cold. He pitched his tent in the ever present mud and awaited orders to the front. 10 days later, he and the other troops were loaded and started to head towards France. 500 miles later, they arrived at their destination. It was Christmas Eve, the next day, Christmas, Jim remembered it well. He went to open his rations for dinner and they were full of ice. Jim had been assigned to Company H274th regiment of the 70th division 7th Army. Company H carried heavy weapons to support the infantry primarily machine guns and mortars. Jim was part of the Machine Gun Squad, an 8 man unit operating the 30 caliber machine gun. The unit consisted of the number 1 gunner who can carry the heavy support and tripod. The number 2 gunner carried the machine gun itself and 6 ammo carriers who each hauled two boxes of the 250 round cartridge belts. Jim began as an ammo carrier, but quickly moved up to gunner as other squad members became casualties. Promotion during the war was likely to be based on survival as well as battlefield skills. The 274th fought during Hitler’s gas attack in the battle of the bulge. The gymnast division moved forward from France into Germany, they endured constant shelling

and sniping fire. They lived in fox holes during one of the coldest winters Europe had seen in many decades. Jim carried extra socks and inner soles in his parker to keep his feet dry. Dry feet and warm feet and no frost bite.

Perhaps Jim’s closest brush with death came when a screaming Mimi, which was the GI hitman for German 88 artillery sheller rocket. One landed no more than 10 feet from Jim’s position. Fortunately it was a dud. It did nothing more than spread lots of dirt and debris. But, Jim said it sure did scare the hell out of him.

As the 274th fought its way into Germany, his unit was called back every so often and allowed a 1 minute hot shower, given clean underwear and served some hot meals. One time, Jim was even given a 3 day pass to Paris. It was his first time seeing electricity since leaving in December. Despite the primitive conditions, the troops were kept to date on the news by the armed forces radio and the Stars and Stripes. Jim remembered vividly that sad day in mid April when their commander and chief, President Roosevelt, died.

As the war wound down in the spring of 1945 and Germany’s surrender was near, Jim remembered the 274th taking many prisoners. A substantial number were no more than 12 or 13 years old as the German army exhausted its supply of regular troops. After the Germans had surrendered to the allies in early May, Jim and the 274th immediately began plans to go to the Pacific for one more battle. This was for the invasion of Japan and they distinctly knew the casualties would be very high. His unit was still training in Europe when the Atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Jim remembered the jubilation and relief for the troops when Japan surrendered. Instead of one more battle to fight, they would be going home.

In early January, 1946, Jim boarded the Liberty Ship SS John Holland for New York. He had been in Europe for 13 months, he was eager to get back into the states. He told me that he will always remember the sight of that beautiful lady, the Statue of Liberty, as his ship made its way into New York Harbor.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Commander Jim Cassidy after receiving his Bronze Star in 2004 holding a proclamation from the US Senate thanking him for his service in WWII and his activism in the community.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Commander Jim Cassidy’s family at the Memorial Day Services listen to Tedd Tripp read his tribute to Jim last month.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

WWII Veterans Salute at the Memorial Day Services in N.A. last month.



On May 1, 1946, Jim was discharged from the Army. After the war, Jim used the GI Bill to attend UMass and Fort Devens campus. He studied Agriculture and went on to a distinguished career with the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture. For 37 years, he was the State’s director of enforcing regulations on fruits and vegetables.

On July 4, 1947, Jim met his future wife, Lorraine, at Hampton Beach. They

were married in 1950 and in 1954, moved to North Andover where they lived until 2005. Jim was well known around town for promoting the American spirit. Along the way, he helped countless Veterans and seniors and anyone else who needed a helping hand. Jim, this Memorial Day, we thank you for who you were, we thank you for your service to our country.

Transcribed by Dawn Brantmuller

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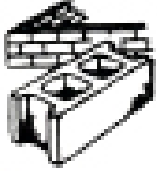
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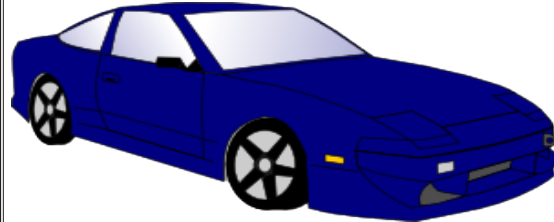
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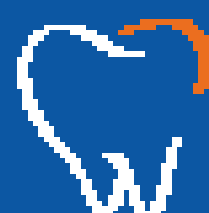
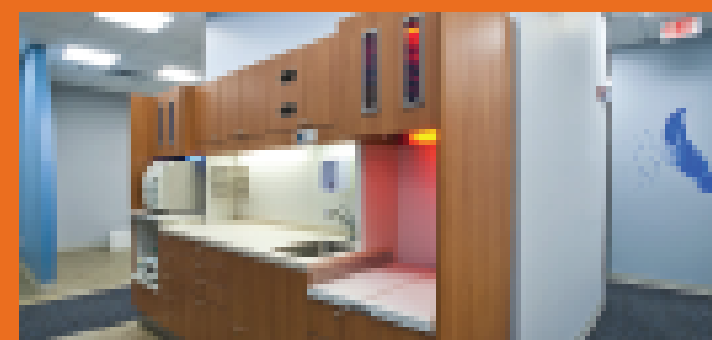




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