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ANSIN BACK ON TRACK



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VALLEY PATRIOTS OF THE MONTH

Killing Osama bin Laden, Lessons Learned

OLIVER NORTH

CREATORS COLUMNIST-AMERICAN HERO

WASHINGTON, D.C. — It took nine years, seven months and 21 days to pinpoint the man who plotted, paid for and perpetrated the terror attacks of 9-11-01. When a U.S. Navy SEAL team finally found Osama bin Laden in the third-floor bedroom of a comfortable house in a suburb of Islamabad, Pakistan, they killed him.

Last Sunday's complex and highly

successful operation validates Ronald Reagan's maxim for terrorists after U.S. Navy SEALs captured the murderous hijackers of the Achille Lauro in October 1985: "You can run, but you can't hide." Afterward, one of the participants penned a corollary: "Don't bother to run — you will only die tired."

Those axioms were validated again last Sunday by a 24-man Navy SEAL task force and aircrews from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment —

NORTH: PAGE 44

Hero Navy Seals, their identities concealed to protect them and their families here at home, stormed a Pakistani compound and took out Usama bin Laden, the master-mind of the 911 attacks on America.



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EDITORIAL

UN Human Rights Commission Demands a Full Accounting of US Raid in Pakistan

So let's give it to them. We think it should go something like this:

We really appreciate your interest in our recent raid into Pakistan to deliver a bit of justice to Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of an attack on our country that killed nearly 3000 innocent humans of all races, religions and ethnicities.

Here is what happened. After figuring out where the SOB was hiding, we gathered together 40 of the smartest, strongest, and best trained warriors in the world and started to train them for this mission. While these are usually the nicest, family-oriented guys you could possibly imagine, they just happen to have this mean streak that makes them want to kill known terrorists.

After completing their training we sent them to Afghanistan and loaded them on four really cool, high-tech stealth helicopters. We made sure each of them had night vision goggles, helmet cameras, reactive armor vests, automatic rifles and lots of ammo and explosives. You wouldn't want to bump into them in a dark alley if you were a terrorist, which we know some of you are!

So off they went into the night while Osama was kicking back with his many wives thinking that the Pakistani Intelligence Service had his back!

Things went just as we had hoped! We bumped into a couple couriers and Osama's son as we forced our way into the compound. A couple in the head shots ended their plans for the evening!

Up the stairs our heroes went. Osama, hearing the commotion, stuck his head out of a third story bedroom door. A few quick rounds from an AK-47 was all it took to have him duck back inside and jump behind the nearest woman.

Unfortunately, because of Osama's cowardice, our guys had to wound the not-so-innocent woman so they could get a clear shot at the terrorist shmuck. It wasn't long before we put an end to this evil bastard. It is unfortunate that we didn't have time to water board him, but you can't have everything.

While some of our guys dragged the filthy varmint to a helicopter, others grabbed every computer memory device, cell phone, file, credit card, camera, and picture they could find so that our CIA can identify other terrorists to kill and foil any pending terrorist attacks.

Hey, maybe we will find you or some of your friends mentioned in these documents. Wouldn't that send a chill up your spine?

Well, that about sums it up. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

Have a nice day, but don't sleep too soundly ... we might be paying you a visit.

News tips

Phone in news tips to (978) 557-5413, or you may email tips to us at 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.

Letters to the editor, columns and op/eds

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

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

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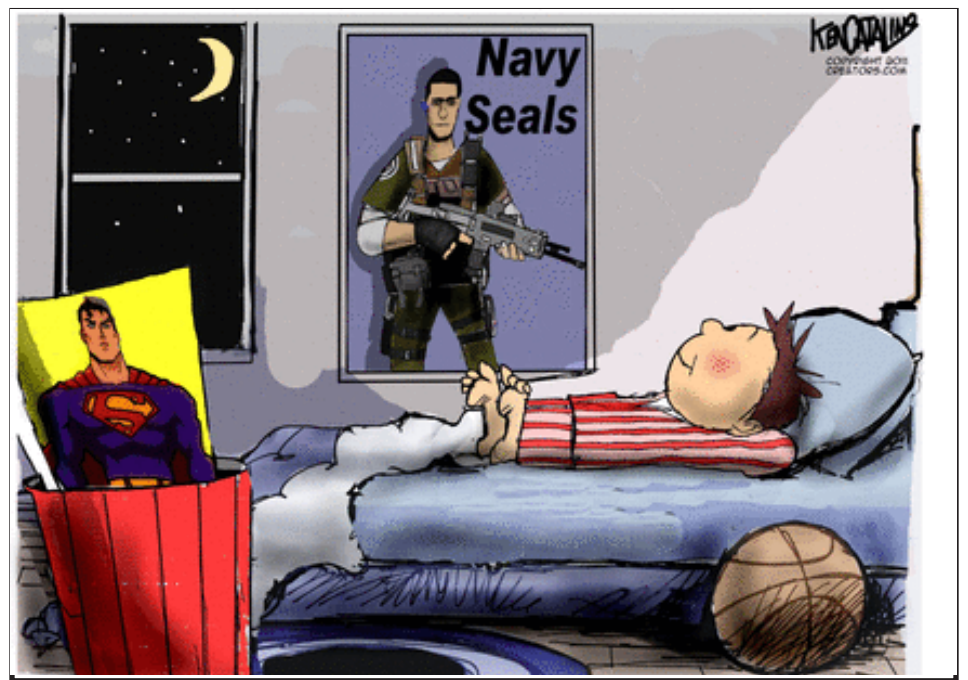
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To The Editor,

Lawrence Mayor Willy Lantigua, when he was elected, tried to double dip his pay, but ultimately resigned his seat as a state representative under pressure.

Mayor Lantigua has forced Lawrence Fire Chief Murphy out of his job and cut the firefighting force back to unsafe levels.

Surrounding cities and towns now have to respond under mutual aid, leaving their own towns with below minimal fire protecting levels.

Mayor Lantigua has micro managed the police department, demoted the deputy chief and promoted a sergeant, over Lieutenants, and captains because he was his campaign manager to that position.

We the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are on

the hook for \$35,000,000.00 the state & governor gave him with no insight. He has giving out raises to his cronies, fired very capable city staffers and hired the incompetent to fill in those positions. Now the Essex County District Attorney and US District Attorney are investigating illegal actions by him. A recent story details a beating in a bar, owned by a Lantigua confidant, on a person disliked by "The Chief", aka Lantigua.

Its time for the City of Lawrence to be put under receivership, under the direction of an appointee not connected to the city. Its time for Willy to RESIGN.

Upon the completion of the investigation, and if charges are warranted, Police Chief Romero please show Willy there is only ONE CHIEF IN TOWN, and cuff him.

Stephen W. Strykowski, North Billerica

See our Coupon Offers: Page 1

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Where’s the punch line, mister president?

Jeff Katz

RADIO TALK SHOW HOST ON RUSH RADIO 1200AM

Yesterday was a big television day for me. I came home after slaving over a hot microphone for four straight hours, made some lunch and joined my lovely bride on the couch.

We had TV to watch and nothing was going to stop us. First up, Showtime on Demand for Nurse Jackie. Great show with Edie Falco and a wonderful supporting cast. Sort of a dark comedy. Then it was laugh out loud with Modern Family. Ed O’Neill who played Al Bundy so many years ago is still a tremendous comedic actor and the cast of characters surrounding him is one of the strongest on tv today. I started to eye the clock and I realized I still had about an hour before I needed to walk down to school and pick up my sons. I had no more excuses at this point, so I turned to FOX News and watched the appearance of the Chosen One at Ground Zero. No, there’s nothing funny about that scene.

Just a few days earlier, we had received the news that after ten years on the run,

Osama bin Laden had been put down like the rabid dog he was. President Obama delivered a late night address to the nation wherein he announced the killing of bin Laden and more than anything else took credit, on a personal level, for the action. What a shock it must have been to the heroic members of Seal Team Six to hear the pretender in chief use the words “I”, “me” and “my” more than any others while talking about bin Laden’s killing. Some of the SEALs probably started looking around to see how they could have possibly missed Obama in his BDUs with the bowie knife clenched in his teeth. Really, from the sounds of the Obama speech you would have believed that he was at the controls of one of the choppers that entered



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

Pakistan under cover of night.

Nobody can deny that some of the credit for taking down bin Laden lies with the current occupant of the Oval Office. But honesty demands that the narrative also point out that it was President George W. Bush and his team who paved the way for the mission. It was the relentless pursuit of actionable intelligence by the CIA at their various locales around the world, and the activities of military agents at Gitmo, which resulted in the scraps of info which was ultimately used to track down and kill public enemy number one. Obama and his leftwing minions have

consistently claimed that every ill in the country has been “inherited from the previous administration”. Well, so too was the actionable intelligence “inherited from the previous administration.”

I was happy to learn that bin Laden was pronounced dead but I was saddened to see Obama lecture the nation yet again about his claimed moral superiority. He refused to show photos of the dead bin Laden because he somehow knows best for us. He claimed that showing a photo of OBL would be akin to taking a victory lap or spiking the football. Of course, Obama’s performance at Ground Zero was exactly that. No, he did not take a victory lap for America rather he turned what should have been a solemn and somber event into just another campaign stop on his hopeless and small change 2012 tour. Like everything else with this guy, it was all about him. He spiked the football and took a victory lap all the while chanting his own name. How very sad it was. At least the fictional characters

KATZ: PAGE 10

Which Neuropathy Symptoms Do You Suffer From?

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Gasoline and Onions, the Attack on Capitalism

John Stossel
VALLEY PATRIOT SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

Here we go again. That quote was Sen. Bernie Sanders doing what some always do when the price of oil spikes: complain about speculators. Now, President Obama says he'll investigate them: "We are going to make sure that no one is taking advantage of the American people for their own short-term gain." I assume that his new Financial Fraud Enforcement Working Group, like its predecessors, will uncover nothing untoward.

In America, we don't have a free market — we have a government-saturated economy in which oil companies and other corporations have a cozy relationship with politicians and bureaucrats. That's wrong, but even that can't explain the recent run-up in prices. Oil companies today are no more greedy or clever than they have been all along.

We have to look for a better explanation — and it isn't hard to find. Demand for oil rises with the growth

The speculators are ripping us off!

"The skyrocketing price of gas and oil has nothing to do with the fundamentals of supply and demand, and has everything to do with Wall Street firms that are artificially jacking up the price of oil in the energy futures markets. ... (T)he same Wall Street speculators that caused the worst financial crisis since the 1930s through their greed, recklessness and illegal behavior are ripping off the American people again by gambling that the price of oil and gas will continue to go up."

- Socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders

of China, India and other developing countries. When poor people get a little richer, they buy cars, computers and refrigerators. They burn more fuel to make them and to run them. Rising demand, other things being equal, increases prices.

And other things have not been equal. Japan's nuclear plants are out of commission, and Libya, which accounts for about 2 percent of world oil production, is wracked by civil war.

This is small compared to previous disruptions in the region, but it still affects the price.

The evil oil-speculator theory also runs up against the fact that the Federal Reserve's inflationary policies (QE2) and other factors have continued the dollar's slide against foreign currencies — to a three-year low. As the dollar loses value, oil sellers demand more for their product.

"Commodities, along with most traded

goods globally, are priced in dollars," former Federal Reserve official Gerald P. O'Driscoll of the Cato Institute writes. "It is the old story of too much money chasing too few goods."

If Sanders and other economic illiterates get their way, we'll have new laws banning "speculation." That will raise prices further. Don't believe me? Think back to a previous time when a Senate committee said that "speculative activity causes severe and unwarranted fluctuations in the price. ..." That was in 1958, when people got upset about the price of onions. Fools in Congress addressed that problem by banning speculation on onion prices.

The result? A Financial Times analysis found that the ban made prices less stable. This year, the retail price of onions rose more than the price of gasoline — 36 versus 24 percent. Most years, the price of onions fluctuates more than other goods. No mystery there. Speculators help keep prices stable.

STOSSEL, page 28

An Open Letter To President Barack Obama:

"Please Rethink Your Ill-Conceived Policy On Israel"

Mark Dubinsky
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

With all due respect, I just can't understand how you concocted your current foreign policy positions with regard to Israel. Yes, we all know that the USA has a long tradition of offering Israel financial support and trying to broker peace between Israel and her Arab neighbors. Who can forget President Carter hosting the Camp David Accord in 1978 with Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat? Who can forget President Clinton brokering the Oslo Accords in

1993 with Prime Minister Rabin and PLO Chairman Arafat?

Yes, those American-driven peace initiatives were bold and brilliant in their day, but this is 33 and 18 years later, respectively. The overt hostility between Israel and her neighbors is now as tenuous as it ever was and the Palestinian homeland issue is as hotly debated today as it was in 1993.

Recently you announced that you would support a U.N. Security Council resolution that stipulates that the world body "does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlement activity." Talk about a 180-degree change in an American position! It is altogether apparent that you are sympathizing with the Palestinians as you chide Israel publically. As opposed to being a theoretically neutral facilitator, as Presidents Carter and Clinton were in their days, you have sided with the

minority Palestinian population. This is a critical difference from your presidential predecessors. You have backtracked from our long-standing USA / Israeli alliance. Yes, your decidedly Anti-Israel / Pro-Palestinian position deeply concerns a great many Americans.

Mr. Obama, Israel has legitimate security concerns. Hostile Arab countries, some of which have boldly stated that they will stop at nothing short of driving Israel into the Sea, surround her. Strategically, Israel needs her current footprint to protect herself from her ever-threatening hostile neighbors.

Too, Israel earned all of her territory "fair and square." Kindly indulge me as I offer you a highly abridged History of Israel: The Balfour Declaration of 1917 got the idea of modern Israel rolling. England controlled Palestine and granted "...the establishment in Palestine of a

national home for the Jewish people..." Let me fast-forward to the 1948 Arab – Israeli War that culminated with the new, independent State of Israel. In the 1967 Six Day War and in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, (both of which were unprovoked, incidentally) neighboring Arab countries attacked Israel. As victor in those two wars, Israel won and kept the Sinai Territory and the Golan Heights. So it is abundantly clear that the current footprint of Israel was acquired legitimately.

Now, let's please examine your position with regard to the Palestinian People living in Israel. You are promoting the creation of a new Palestinian State within the current borders of Israel. You want to see a bifurcated Jerusalem and have that soon-to-be-divided Holy City serve as both of their respective capitals. Mr. President, that concept makes absolutely no sense to

OPEN LETTER, page 29

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In addition to the MSPCA, this year’s participants include: Bulger’s Animal Hospital, Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care, Good Dog Aquatic Fitness, GroomTown Pet Boutique & Spa, Pet Shop, Ciao! Bow Wow, Bag-A-Bones. Participants will be providing pet massages, nail trimmings, training tips, nutritional & educational information, as well as pet products, merchandise, artwork and much more! Some activities will be free and others will require a donation.

Participants Include:
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*The event will take place rain or shine. Please note that dogs must be on a 6ft or shorter leash at all times and owners are responsible for dog waste (bags will be available). There will be a suggested \$2.00 donation for parking.

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Annual Sheep Shearing Festival



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

The North Andover Festival Committee presents the 39th annual Sheep Shearing Festival on Sunday, May 22nd from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM on the Old North Andover Common. Activities include sheep shearing and herding demonstrations, pony rides, craft fair, food vendors and much more! There will be a free shuttle from the Franklin and Middle schools. For more information, call Joan at 978-685-5320.

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NORTH ANDOVER



978-689-7374

Ralph Nader Comes to Andover, Laments Lack of Interest in ...HIM!

Written by: Jennifer Cooper
“Leave no child inside!” exclaimed the four time presidential candidate, activist, and author, Ralph Nader speaking at Andover High School on Thursday May 5th. His lecture set off on a course of encouraging children to become independent thinkers in a narrowing world, full of labels, short attention spans, and “twittering.”

My father-in-law, Don Cooper, a retired school teacher from Cleveland, has followed Ralph Nader since the mid 60’s. As a mother of two young children in public school I decided to take in Nader’s lecture sponsored by the Andover Education Association, a union which represents over 800 Andover school employees. While I did not agree with all of his statements, I am appreciative to have had the opportunity to listen and relate his philosophy to my own life experiences. Of course, I had to get a signed copy of his new book as a Father’s Day gift for my father-in-law! Mr. Nader, as a lecturer and not a candidate, had deep rooted messages in his address geared towards high school students, and to the

adults who he said let them down on Thursday.

“Don’t lower your expectations of yourself based on a score!” implored Nader. His message to students declared assessment tests that determine what you know are okay, but tests to rank you compared to fellow students represent an unfair class system. Standardized tests, he explained, do not account for a person’s creativity or their ability to succeed in life. Students should concentrate on solving problems as did Sir Isaac Newton, have a passionate curiosity as did Albert Einstein, or utilize their imagination as did Robert Blake.

With resounding disappointment, Nader broke from his lecture to point out to a meagerly filled auditorium (that was asked to all move to the front for a more ‘intimate setting’), “I was told that Andover students were more than a cut above other high schools.” The organization who booked his talk told him that there would be more than 1000 students at his lecture. Attendees were mostly high school students and Nader fans who drove in from surrounding

communities.

Upon completing a handful of group talks during the school day, Nader asked the students if they would be in attendance at his presentation after school. Many said no as they needed to catch rides or go to athletic practice. He felt as though the young adults would have wanted to attend and benefit from his lecture; it was the adults who failed them the opportunity to open their minds that afternoon.

Ralph Nader is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Law School, THE pioneer of consumer advocacy and of the core belief that young people change the world because they have the freedom to apply knowledge without consequence. He has started or inspired over 30 foundations since 1969 including: Center for Auto Safety, Clean Water Action Project, Center for Women’s Policy Studies, American Antitrust Institute, and the Congressional Accountability Project, among others.

Andover students have many opportunities afforded to them that students in surrounding communities, such as neighboring Lawrence (which might as

well be a world away), could only dream to experience. A scholar who has devoted his life’s work to consumer advocacy, a noted author, a four time presidential candidate, and a commencement address speaker at prestigious universities was not enough to fill an auditorium at Andover High School. Nader’s message may be better suited for young adults in communities like Lawrence; a city where underestimated students would give anything for an opportunity from a more fortunate citizen or high tech company in the Merrimack Valley. Many of these first generation students deserve the opportunity to learn how to use individual talents to rise up against the odds.

Standardized test scores tell Lawrence students that they are the lowest, the worst, in the state. Students in Lawrence need to understand they are so much more than the numbers are rating them. The teachers are not at fault as they work tirelessly each day to meet No Child Left Behind goals. Unfortunately, impoverished immigrant cities cannot afford the level of enlightenment that the students who are ‘a cut above’ did not realize to its fullest potential.




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North Andover Middle School Performs “Footloose”



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

Activities From the North Andover Senior Center

May is Older Americans Month
History of Older Americans Month
When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthdays. About a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest in older Americans and their concerns was growing, however. In April of 1963, President John F. Kennedy’s meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens served as a prelude to designating May as “Senior Citizens Month.”

Thanks to President Jimmy Carter’s 1980 designation, what was once called Senior Citizens Month, is now called “Older Americans Month,” and has become a tradition.

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country, in particular those who defended our country. Every President since JFK has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs and other such activities.

Senior Center Recognition Day: Coffee Hour, Wednesday, May 11 at 9 am.

Volunteer Recognition Dinner: Thursday, May 12, 3-6 pm by invitation only.

SUPPER CLUB: Thursday, May 19 at The Great American Tavern. Bus: \$1. Order off the menu. Depart Senior Center at 4:30 pm.

MVNP LUNCH: Tuesday, May 24 at 11:45, \$2.00. Build your own Italian sub.

FREE PASS: One-time free fitness pass. Stop by the front desk and pick up your free fitness pass for one exercise session of your choice.

Trained SHINE Volunteers offer

free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to anyone on Medicare. Call the North Andover senior center and ask for a SHINE appointment. 978 688-9560.

*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.

LECTURE SERIES: Every Monday at 10. May 2, TBA, May 9, State Issues with Senator Steven Baddour.

BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS: Thursday mornings by individual 45 minute appointments. \$7. 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.

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 but a digital camera and learn how to use it. Limit to 4-5 students. Call to reserve your seat.

* ZUMBA GOLD: Zumba Gold sessions on Wednesday’s, 2:30-3:15, 6-week class for \$24.00 or \$6.per class for drop-ins. New Session starts May 4th. Dance to the uplifting Latin beat music.

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. Saturday mornings 9:30 – 10:30 with Mary Russo. All ages are welcome to these classes.

YOGA: Yoga Class Monday mornings at 9 with Cheryl Cronin. Please call to register.

* 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 am and 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.

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,

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The Recall Process in Lawrence

Jamison Tomasek
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

A recall effort is underway in the City of Lawrence. The process of a recall is contained in the City Charter (hereafter Charter). Section 9.7 entitled “Recall of Elected Officials.” As this section is written in government lingo, it does require a careful reading as well as some legal interpretation as detailed below. Also added to this are some comments about potential issues. If I’ve got any of this wrong, please let me know.

An affidavit (which is just a fancy term for “legal document”) must be filed with the City Clerk (hereafter Clerk) with 100 signatures requesting the recall, along with the reasons for the recall. The Clerk, after verifying the signatures, will then give the organizers preprinted petitions that state at the top the reasons for the recall and the signers’ names. Note: How are all these words and the names of all the affidavit signers going to fit on the petition? This is not clear in the Charter. The organizers have thirty days from when the petitions are issued to return them. No mention about the Clerk getting

them the petition forms in a timely manner.

The organizers need to get 15% of the number of people registered for the 2009 election, or 5,232. Political types will tell you to get 50% more signatures than you need in order to provide for challenges. Depending on the process, many signatures might be thrown out. The right number is probably around 8,000 signatures, and with approximately 30 names per paper petition the Clerk needs to hand over more than 300 petitions. Once the organizers are out on the streets with their petitions they have 30 days to return them and then the registrar of voters will need to certify them.

Assuming the signature goal is met



(not an easy task), the petition moves to the city council, and the council is instructed to proceed “forthwith” (how long is that? A translation into Spanish is “inmediatamente” which sounds a lot better). The council then asks the mayor to resign, and he has five days to do so. Assuming he does not (anybody think he would?), the council orders an election 35 to 60 days out. Here is the interesting part. The ballot would start out with the question “For the recall of the mayor”, the second question would be “Against the recall of the mayor”, and after that would appear the word “candidates” and a list of candidates to replace the Mayor. Should the first question get a majority of the votes, the candidate votes would be counted, and if

the Mayor is chosen to stay, those votes are not counted. To get on that ballot would follow the normal process, and the candidate with the most votes wins, and there is no runoff. The winner would finish the term (to 2013).

Pitfalls waiting for those wishing to recall the Mayor include: delays by the Clerk’s office in producing petitions, delays in the certification of signatures, excessive rejection of signatures, foot dragging by the city council, election fraud during the polling and meddling by the Secretary of State.

If there is going to be a new mayor at the end of the process, someone is going to have to put his or her hat in the ring. Some of the mayor’s allies on the council who are widely perceived as wanting to be mayor someday are either going to have to switch sides before they know the outcome, or remain on the sidelines while another moves into the mayor’s office because someone willing to stick their neck out, whether known or not, could become the next mayor.



Superintendent Evaluation is Meaningless

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

When words in our English Language are used without any adherence to their meaning or definition, the result is meaningless! Please allow me to explain. To put things in perspective, here’s a little timeline without re-hashing all the details. Former Lawrence School Superintendent Dr. Laboy went on sick leave around May, 2009 and that is when the Lawrence School Committee appointed Assistant Superintendent Dr. Bergeron as ACTING Superintendent. The next significant event took place in April 2010 when the Lawrence School Committee fired Superintendent Dr. Laboy. Then just two months later in June of 2010, Lawrence School Committee Member Mr. Mark Gray failed in his motion to fire Acting Superintendent Dr. Bergeron due to a lack of a second. During this same meeting in June of 2010 the Lawrence School Committee appointed Dr. Bergeron as INTERIM Superintendent. Continuing on, it was February 2011 when a couple of School Committee members sought for the INTERIM Superintendent to have a Superintendent’s evaluation which the results of that evaluation were made public in April of 2011.

So here before you is the timeline of Dr. Bergeron’s ascension from

Assistant Superintendent to ACTING Superintendent, then to INTERIM Superintendent.

Does anybody read at any time where INTERM Superintendent Dr. Bergeron became Superintendent Dr. Bergeron? This now produces a question, how can the Lawrence School Committee perform a legitimate Superintendent’s Evaluation on Dr. Bergeron’s performance as Superintendent if she really has never been given the job title of The Superintendent of Schools?

This brings me back to the beginning of this column where I mentioned the concern for the meaning of the words we use in our English language. Here are some relevant definitions to some of the words that I have placed in bold print.

ACTING (adjective), performing a job for a short time. Holding a temporary rank or position.

INTERIM (adjective), used or accepted for a limited time, not permanent.

Without any confusion, it is clear that Lawrence’s INTERIM Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Bergeron has never been given the title of Superintendent of Schools, which brings me to conclude that the so-called Superintendent’s Evaluation that the Lawrence School Committee has just completed on her performance as Superintendent, Meaningless!

Almost two years ago, Mr. Mark Gray campaign for School Committee for District E. in Lawrence as a no-nonsense man of integrity and repeatedly said that elected officials must be held accountable for their words and actions. He also said that he was a man of his word and that he welcomed being held accountable. Well Mr. Gray, why is it that you have been calling for the firing of Interim Superintendent Dr. Bergeron for failing in her responsibilities at a job that you and your colleagues have never given to her? How can you or any other member of the School Committee honestly and fairly evaluate Dr. Bergeron when she has never been given the full responsibility as Superintendent of Schools with a multiple year contract which would afford to her the time to implement real changes top to bottom throughout the entire School District? How can Dr. Bergeron be expected to perform duties knowing full well, that at any time she could be replaced because she is just their on a INTERIM, (limited, short term, temporary, not permanent) bases? I don’t believe that anyone on the face of this planet could turn things around for the Lawrence Public Schools in just two months or even one year, especially on an INTERM basis! It would seem to me that a no-nonsense man of integrity like yourself would already know this.

In conclusion, all your time and effort along with your colleagues on the School Committee concerning this issue of evaluating Dr. Bergeron is Meaningless! It is dishonest and unfair to her and to the parents and to the administration and teachers and most importantly, the children of Lawrence who attend Lawrence’s Public Schools. My humbled opinion on this issue is that the Lawrence School Committee should give Dr. Bergeron the Full Title of Superintendent of Schools of Lawrence. Extend to her at least at the minimum, a three year contract and while keeping a watchful eye and still putting forth your recommendations, but for the most part, leaving her alone to make the changes needed to fix what needs to be fixed! Then after those three or more years, then at that time if you feel that significant positive changes have not been made, then make your case as to why you believe she should not have her contract renewed. Then at that time after the evidence has been honestly and fairly evaluated, make your motion as you see fit! That is of course, if you are still there to make it.

God Bless, Peter Larocque



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

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Monarch on The Merrimack Back on Track

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

Bob Ansin, (CEO of sustainable development company MassInnovation, and developer of the Wood Mill in Lawrence) has had his multi-million dollar renovation project on hold since October of 2007. That’s when several erroneous Eagle-Tribune stories alleged that Ansin was running out of funds and that asbestos was found inside the Monarch on the Merrimack building.

The Monarch project, called ‘a city within a city’ is located on Merrimack St. in Lawrence in the old Wood Mill building, once considered the longest building in the world.

But now, sources connected to the stalled Monarch project say Ansin has again secured funding and is back on track to turn the mill into a “city within a city” containing housing and small businesses. “Instead of selling lots as condos the project will now include rental units which are scheduled to be ready by mid July”, our project source said. “Bob has had a bumpy road since the Tribune story sunk his funding but he never gave up on Lawrence and he never gave up on the project.

On Sunday, September 16, 2007 the Eagle-Tribune ran a cover which claimed that “workers in Tyvek suits and respirators were on site Thursday clearing the contaminated material out of the building.”

That claim, said Ansin, was

“categorically untrue.” According to Ansin back in 2007, a San Francisco-based bank backed out on their commitment on a \$40 million construction loan just days after the erroneous Tribune story came out claiming that asbestos was being taken out of the building.

“The bank cited the Eagle-Tribune story as a reason for pulling their commitment,” Ansin said in 2007.

“The Tribune writers should have looked at the plan filed with the DEP when they wrote their story; the subcontractors were working outside the building, according to the plan. They were certainly not ‘clearing contaminated material out of the building’ as the Trib had written,” said Ansin.

“We’ve had to spend a lot of time correcting the inaccurate perceptions that the Trib story created. [Their] story raised concerns about environmental issues that caused the bank to pull its financing commitment. Those concerns were unjustified. But now we, the crews, and our buyers are paying the price for the inaccurate claims in those Tribune articles.”

Ansin hired local contractors from Lawrence, Andover, Methuen and surrounding communities to do the work on Monarch. Local people he says bore the brunt of the project shutdown. “I felt so bad,” he recalled. “All of these local workers have been out of work since the shutdown.”

“What makes it more surprising is that



Rendering by Tangram, courtesy of MassInnovation

the Tribune had accurately reported on that story back in July, [of 2007]”

“They had the facts. We had found a small pocket of asbestos in the ground outside, which was probably debris from when the Wood Mill’s twin building was demolished in the 1950s. We halted excavation work and filed an action plan with the Department of Environmental Protection.”

Construction on the first phase of the Monarch Lofts project on Merrimack St. in Lawrence was approaching 40%

completion after Ansin had invested \$25 million of his own money into the project. The project was selling strongly despite the broader market conditions: 53 of the 201 lofts in the first phase were already under agreement before the building was even completed.

After spending more than \$4 million out of pocket for the building, and sinking millions more into construction and rehab, Ansin’s \$200 million project was well under way in October of 2007 with

MONARCH, page 10

Hundreds Rally to Save Saint Mary’s School

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

Hundreds of students, parents and supporters of Saint Mary’s School of the Assumption in Lawrence, rallied and held a vigil Saturday to oppose the decision of the Boston Archdiocese of the Catholic Church to close the school at the end of the school year.

Student’s and parishioners held signs that read “save our school” and “We Love Saint Mary’s”, chanted, sang religious songs and waved at passing motorists on Haverhill Street.

Parishioners complained that the Archdiocese had plenty of money and even increased funding (nearly double) for the catholic school in South Lawrence,

Lawrence Catholic Academy. Saint Mary’s parishioner Pedro Diaz addressed the crowd which had made its way inside the school gymnasium. Diaz, a Lawrence resident, said that he

believed the decision was that of the Boston Archdiocese but could not take effect without the support of Cardinal O’Malley.

“What we can accomplish is, we want to send a message to the Cardinal,” he told The Valley Patriot. “ you can’t spend \$35,000 on this school? But you can spend twice

that much on the other school in South Lawrence? They’re getting so much more. So, there is the money. ”

A press release was issued by Jay



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

ST MARY’S, page 10

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News from Notre Dame High School

Two young women, Yartiza Vargas and Liz Cintron, from Notre Dame High School in Lawrence have recently been accepted into Brown University, the Ivy League college in Providence, Rhode Island.

This is one of many firsts that Notre Dame High School has experienced this year. These two girls have also been accepted into Georgetown University and Johns Hopkins University in Maryland, as well as Tufts College and Boston College in Massachusetts. Senior Ambar Sabino opened a door for her younger classmates with her acceptance into the Business Program at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. In addition, Karolina Vargas is the first student from Notre Dame to be accepted into a University’s Architectural Program.

Notre Dame High School, located on Haverhill Street in the building that once housed St. Mary High School, has continued its record of achieving 100% college acceptance for all of its seniors. At Notre Dame High School, a coed college preparatory school, the focus this spring is now on sending underclassmen, mainly the Juniors and Sophomores, to summer programs that will prepare them for the college experience. This year the school will send two students to Georgetown University to study for three weeks and three students to Fairfield University in Connecticut for one week. Other students were recently accepted into the Johns Hopkins University and Loyola College in Chicago summer programs.

Notre Dame High School has implemented many new extra-curricular programs this year with a Robotics Club

that was newly formed in the spring, along with a Computer Programming Club that was started by a few of the young men in the senior class and meets weekly after school.

The Environmental Club has raised trout throughout the year that will eventually be released into the region’s local rivers. The Wilderness Club, a program dedicated to taking the students on hiking and camping trips, has grown tremendously with over 100 students participating in its events. In athletics, The Girl’s Basketball Team, known as the Hurricanes, competed in its first ever MIAA tournament.

Notre Dame offers varsity competitive boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, cheerleading, baseball, and softball.

Founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Notre Dame High School is a model of the Sisters’ mission and vision. In addition to an academic, college prep focus, all students are involved in Corporate Work Study which helps them develop career readiness skills while defraying the cost of their education. Notre Dame High School is a member of the Cristo Rey Network, a national network of 23 high schools following the model of college and career readiness education

Graduates who have opened doors for Notre Dame High School have done so through their hard work and dedication to their studies. The school has provided the avenue for them to achieve their dreams and hopes to continue to do so for the many students from the Merrimack Valley who will one day attend Notre Dame.

ST. MARY’S SCHOOL: FROM 9

Jackson and Antonio Vega, (members of the school’s board) entitled “Saint Mary of the Assumption School Closing! The Truth be Told!”

“Lawrence Massachusetts residents are outraged about the fact that the only Elementary Catholic School, St. Mary of the Assumption, in the North side of the city has announced that it will be closing its doors June, 2011.

The news has come just 2 months before the end of the school year. This will impact 270 families who are registered at St. Mary of the Assumption school and plan to continue for the 2011-2012 school year.

The Community of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish is demanding answers from the Boston Archdiocese in particular, Cardinal Sean O’Malley.

“We want to know why if the Catholic School 2010 Plan took into account the ethnic, economical and social differences called for the initiative of two catholic schools in Lawrence, one in South Lawrence and the other in the North, and

we are now blind sided with the news of the closing of the school in the North?

That would leave the Lawrence Catholic Academy in the south to which the majority of the students from the north can not financially afford nor do they have the physical space to accommodate them.

No decision would have been made without the approval or influence of Cardinal O’Malley. The Lawrence community, while a very poor community, will not continue to be ignored and allow decisions to be made on our behalf without the opportunity to have a seat at the table, so that we can provide input and help plan our future.

We deserve to hear the truth regarding why we are not entitled to have a Catholic school in out area where our children will get a faith based education. We will not add this incident to the list of times that we have been marginalized and disregarded as citizens and human beings with rights.”

MONARCH ON THE MERRIMACK: FROM 9

more than a dozen people putting a down deposit on luxury penthouse lofts and a California bank committing more than \$40 million more to help Ansin begin phase two of the project.

According to Ansin, phase two would have included finishing the luxury penthouse lofts and renovating the rest of the mill to sustain local businesses, office space, a movie theater, a bowling alley, night clubs and retail stores. But that was before the Tribune story. Now project sources say that Ansin has had to revise

his plans to keep it going, partly with the help of Sal Lupoli.

Ansin also announced that, although he and Sal Lupoli of Sal’s Riverwalk (Sal’s Pizza) are not partners (as previously reported in another newspaper), in July 2008 Lupoli purchased one third of the Monarch building (400,000 square-feet) paying more than \$5.8 million for business development within the mill.

“It’s like buying a condo within a housing complex, you are not buying the building itself, but the space inside the building,” Ansin explained.

Reyes Demands Lantgua Pay Back School Funds

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PRESIDENT-EDITOR

Lawrence School Committeeman Sammy Reyes (District D) has written a scathing letter to the city council demanding that education funds (which were used for city services) be repaid to the school children of Lawrence. In his letter, Reyes threatens to turn in the Lantigua administration for misappropriation of state education funding (called Chapter 70).


At issue is \$165,234.87 that was illegally paid out of education funding to a law firm

like they did with Maria Cruz, then I will have no choice other then to file a complaint with the appropriate agencies.”

Maria Cruz was a school department employee whom Lantigua moved from the school department to his office while continuing to pay her out of Chapter 70 Education dollars in violation of state laws.

Reyes was the whistle blower in the Wilfredo Laboy indictment which also leads to the indictment of his brother Isreal Reyes.

Committeeman Sammy Reyes says that he is tired of Lantigua using money “that



“The reason for this letter is to put everyone on notice that if the Mayor attempts to either put this item back on the agenda or if he convinces Dr. Bergeron to use grant funds to pay for these invoices like they did with Maria Cruz, then I will have no choice other then to file a complaint with the appropriate agencies.”

Sammy Reyes, Lawrence School Committee

that did work on Lawrence High School.

“On December 20, 2010 the School Committee was asked to approve paying 18 invoices to Hinckley, Allen, and SN for a total of 165,234.87.” Reyes wrote.

“I want to make it clear that these invoices are the responsibility of the City of Lawrence and not LPS (Lawrence Public Schools).” Both the Mayor and Dr. Bergeron stated during the discussion that the Mayor, (on behalf of the City) was asking for a loan and that the City was going to pay LPS back. This motion did not pass as it was a 3-3 vote due to Mr. Bonet not being present. As you may or may not be aware of Chapter 70 funds can not be used to pay City expenses.”

“I voted against this motion because during my first term as a SC member I saw how the previous administration, along with the previous Superintendent, abused Chapter 70 funds and grants. As schools across the Commonwealth struggle with budget shortfalls, I will do all I can to ensure that interim Superintendent, Dr. Bergeron responsibly handles our limited funds.”

“The reason for this letter is to put everyone on notice that if the Mayor attempts to either put this item back on the agenda or if he convinces Dr. Bergeron to use grant funds to pay for these invoices

is supposed to go to the students of the Lawrence Public Schools to balance the city budget or pay for city services. This is a violation of Chapter 70 and I’m here on this committee to make sure that doesn’t happen.”

Reyes says his complaint to the state will outline the lack of “internal controls”

“Be assured that my complaint will place a heavy emphasis on accountability and transparency,” his letter stated.

Reyes is currently investigating several other issues with education funds being used by the Lantigua administration for non educational uses. He says that while Lantigua has been using workers from the Internet and Technology department of the Lawrence Public Schools to work in city hall, and has not paid back the schools for those services, he believes that Lantigua may finally pay up before the end of the fiscal year (June 30).

I believe those bills are going to be paid and an effort is being made to pay back the students of Lawrence for those expenditures. But I am still concerned that these legal bills, which are supposed to be paid for by the city are going to charged to us once again and my job as a representative of the taxpayers is to make sure that doesn’t happen.

JEFF KATZ: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

on Nurse Jackie and Modern Family provide some much needed comic relief and relaxation. Sadly, this latest season of The West Wing continues to show that the junior varsity players really are in charge.

Oh, one final thought. The Dalai Bama went to great pains to point out that bin Laden was provided with appropriate Muslim funeral rites. So sorry to hear

that. I had hoped that bin Laden would have been wrapped in bacon strips, covered in shoes and pulled by a dog sled, but our guys were working on a very tight schedule. And those seventy two virgins bin Laden was expecting? Turns out that he was actually met by twenty four Virginians...the true heroes of Seal Team Six!

and has brought positive national attention to a town that many people had overlooked. The project has been featured in CNN/Money as one of the top green developments in the nation, in Forbes as a Home of the Week, in BusinessWeek as Hot Property, and has been profiled on National Public Radio and the Wall Street Journal. Commonwealth magazine has described the project as “catalytic for the City of Lawrence” and as a “lynchpin in the city’s revival.”

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“One thing for sure, this project is moving forward. I have made a commitment to the City of Lawrence, and I am keeping that commitment.

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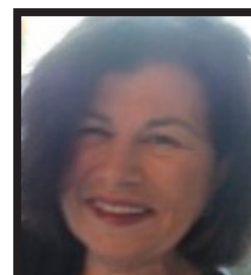
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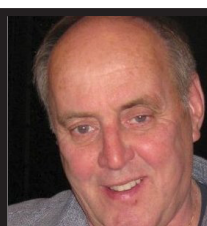
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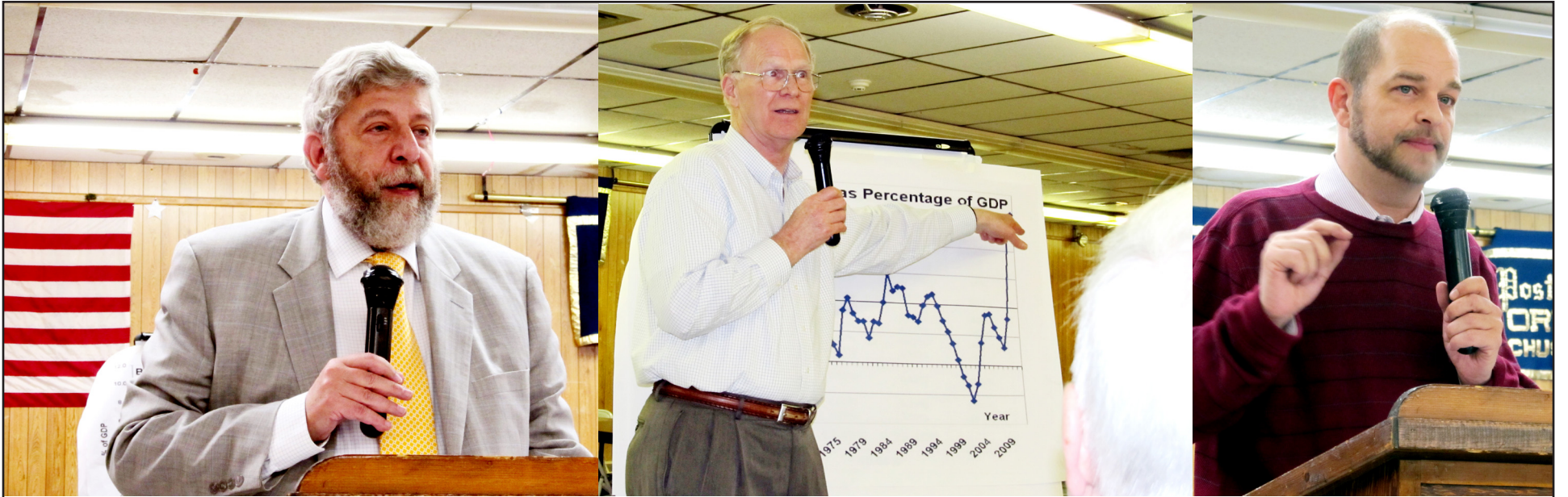
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Lowell IDC Chapter of the GOP hosts talk on media bias



PHOTOS 1 & 2 TOM DUGGAN, PHOTO 3 CHRISTINE MORABITO

The Isaac Davis Chapter of the Lowell Republican Committee held an ice cream social last month with invited speakers pictured above: Boston Herald columnist/author Don Feder talks about Islam and the media, Valley Patriot Editor/Owner, Dr. Chuck Ormsby discusses government borrowing and the federal debt; and Valley Patriot President/Owner Tom Duggan discusses how bias in the media leads to government corruption.

From Mass. Republican Assembly IDC Chapter: Osama bin Laden Killed

The members of the Isaac Davis Chapter, Americans and concerned European and Middle East viewers everywhere are overjoyed at the news that Osama bin Laden had been killed in Pakistan.

Our praise and thanks go out to the members of the Joint Special Operations command and in particular the members of Navy Seal Team Six who flawlessly executed the operation to kill bin Laden and extract his body.

We note that this is not an Obama political victory. Despite his votes as a Senator, his campaign promises, and his continual vilification of President Bush, Mister Obama actually continued the counter-terrorism policy of George W. Bush.

We are thus grateful that Mister Obama continued President Bush's pursuit of bin Laden, the policy to get him "dead or alive", no matter how long it took. We are well aware that this is not the end of our War

on Terrorism, - because there are thousands of would-be terrorists still out there.

We note the irony that bin Laden's death took place on May Day, the high holy day of Socialist Communism, and coincides too with the 66th anniversary of the day Adolph Hitler was pronounced dead.

We pray that bin Laden's death will bring some closure to the family and friends of those 3000 killed on 9/11, those killed on the USS Cole and at

the Khobar Towers, and all the other innocent souls who were killed at the direction of bin Laden. May all who paid the ultimate price in the pursuit of justice forever rest in peace, and may bin Laden forever wander the far reaches of eternal damnation.

Thomas Gilroy
Chelmsford, MA
Media Director, Massachusetts
Republican Assembly
Isaac Davis Chapter

Why is Lowell City Council listening to a P.A.C?

Gerry Nutter

VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

On April 26th for the 2nd time since February the Lowell City Council received a "White Paper" dealing with suggestions of how the Council should spend taxpayer dollars from a Political Action Committee based here in Lowell named Move Lowell Forward.

In the 2009 election this "non-partisan citizens group of Lowell residents" sent out questionnaires to those running for the Lowell City Council and if they agreed with the candidate, endorsed them and paid for newspaper and radio ads supporting these candidates. Six of the present Lowell City Councilors were "endorsed" by this group.

In 2009 this PAC went after the Greater Lowell Technical School asking them to be "more transparent" in their posting of agenda's and contracts and getting their meetings broadcasted. They targeted

one member who lost the election Mike Hayden.

Ironically they choose NOT to deal with the Lowell School Dept. or the Lowell School Committee (maybe because their friend was on it) but Move Lowell Forward felt they had to go after a school in Tyngsboro with 4 Lowell representatives rather than the Lowell School Committee and their 7 members (6 plus the Lowell Mayor). Today the Greater Lowell Technical High School website offers more information on contracts, agenda's, meeting minutes and packages than the Lowell School Dept but still MLF ignores the Lowell School System.

My question is why does the Lowell City Council put any weight in a small (they refuse to publish their member list) group of people who by definition are a "committee formed by a special-interest group to raise money for their favorite political candidates"? They ask for

transparency in government yet refuse to be transparent choosing to not list their members or officers on their website.

Is it the fact that the Co-Chair is a BLOGGER who is known to attack people with language that would make a sailor or truck driver blush and they are afraid of getting blasted? Or does the majority that was supported by this small group through newspaper and radio endorsements feel obligated to allow this group to present their ideas in a sort of "quid pro quo" arrangement?

In February a City Councilor who was endorsed by this group brought forth their paper and has a motion for the Council to consider. Last week after getting lambasted by me on my BLOG in February (gerrynutterslowell.com - can't miss the chance for a gratuitous plug) they presented the "white paper" themselves under the public petition portion of the City Council Agenda that is allowed by our charter.

Many members of this Political Action Committee have also pushed the council to establish a "Charter Review" panel. They want to change the way Lowell elects councilors and school committee members. This is after a voting change drive failed in the 2009 election as a ballot question.

It seems this Political Action Committee which did NOT present one "White Paper" in the off election year of 2010 feels that since 2011 is an election year it is time to again use their PAC to support their candidates and submit their beliefs to the council members they already have paid for with radio and television ads, who will continue to at least publicly accept their papers and carry their message forward for them.



Read Gerry Nutter's Blog at gerrynutterslowell.com or email him at GNutter@docuserve.com

Lowell Hires Jean Franco as New School Supt.

Gerry Nutter

VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

On Wednesday night April 27th the Lowell School Committee on a 6-1 (later changed to 7-0) voted to hire Jean Franco the current Deputy Superintendent for curriculum and instruction for the Lowell Public Schools as the "New" Superintendent effective July 1st

Jean Franco holds a Master's Degree from Lesley College, and a Bachelor's Degree in elementary education and Spanish from the University of Lowell. She came to the Lowell School district in 1980 as a bilingual facilitator. She was named Assistant Superintendent for

Student Support Services in 2002. Prior to Lowell she work in the Chelsea Public School system including two-years as the K-8 supervisor of transitional bilingual education.

She beat out 3 other finalists including two current Superintendents. Dr. Pia Durkin the Attleboro School Supt., Sandwich Public Schools Superintendent Mary Ellen Johnson who is in the mist of a lawsuit against the



town and educational consultant Ferdinand Fuentes. A fifth finalist, educational consultant Charles Wilson withdrew after a poor public interview.

Jean Franco is a "safe" hire by the Lowell School Committee. She has been in the Lowell School System for a number of years, has a good working relationship with the teachers, administrators and school committee and

is well known and liked in the community. The School Committee needed a solid hire who people like to take some heat off them for the way they handled the negotiations of the current Supt. Chris Scott.

Dr. Scott who expressed interest in October of 2010 in remaining in Lowell and entered into "negotiations" to continue received no formal offer from the school committee and announced in January of 2011 that she withdrew and would move on when her contract expired at the end of June. She is now a finalist to become the leader of the 44,000-student enrolled Cleveland School District.

Attorney Ellen Shimer-Brenes, Esq



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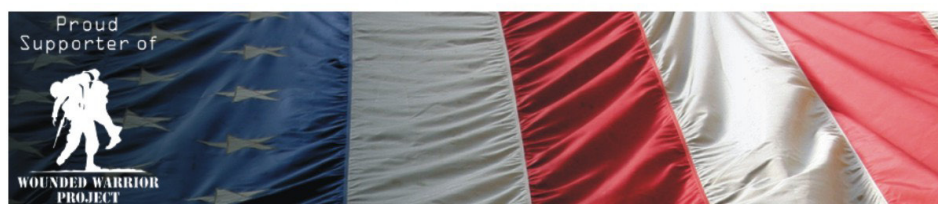
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Incumbents Reign - High School Renovation Passes

D.J. Deeb
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

Dracut voters came out in record numbers for the May 2, 2011 Town Election to return incumbents to office and vote in favor of a Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion for renovating Dracut High School. Nearly 31% of the registered voters in Dracut, a total of 5,958 people, voted. This was one of the highest turnouts in recent history.

Incumbents John Zimini and Bob Cox were re-elected to the Board of Selectmen. As predicted here, John Zimini topped the ticket once again. Zimini and Cox easily defeated challengers Tony Archinski, a retired Dracut Police official, and Ted Kosiavelon, a self-employed contractor. Zimini gathered 2,943 votes while Cox received 2,661. Archinski and Kosiavelon each received 2,470 and 1,842 respectively. There were 1,975 blank ballots, which means there were many bullet votes and non-votes. Although I like all four candidates personally, I only felt strong in my endorsement of John Zimini last month. I believe that Dracut voters made good decisions here in the Selectmen race.

On the School Committee side, incumbent Matt Sheehan narrowly defeated former School Committee member May Paquette by 158 votes (2,844 to 2,686 votes). I believe that Dracut voters made an unwise decision here because Sheehan has been part of the “Gang of Three” I have written so much about in the past. Although he ran a campaign of lies accusing his opponents of nepotism and political shenanigans, it is Sheehan that has been engaging in political cronyism for the past three years.

In the Moderator race, Leo Gaudette won out over political newcomer Chris Jenkins to replace Gary McCarthy, who

vacated the seat. This was not a good move in my view because Gaudette is currently serving as Fire Chief for the Town of Dracut. I believe that it is a conflict of interest for a Town Employee to hold Town Office. This issue came up several times during the campaign and Gaudette stated that he plans to retire next year as Dracut’s Fire Chief.

In the non-contested races, Bill Morin was re-elected Dracut Water Commissioner, Kathy Graham was re-elected Clerk of the Dracut Water Supply District, and Victor Olson was re-elected to the Greater Lowell Regional Vocational-Technical School Committee. Finally, Linda Trouville and Cheryl Storm were elected Trustees of the Dracut Library.

Dracut voters approved the \$60 Million Dracut High School Renovation Project that appeared as Ballot Question 1 (There were no other ballot questions). 3,894 residents voted for the project while 1,748 voted against it. The Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion for the project will take effect in 2015 and homeowner tax bills will rise for 25 years after that to pay for the Renovation. \$36.5 million of the renovations will be provided by the state while Dracut taxpayers are expected to fund the remaining \$29.5 million of the cost. This was a smart decision by Dracut voters since the high school is in dire shape and the cost to make essential repairs would have been far greater in the years to come than the Renovation itself will cost.

As I wrote last month, if something is not done Dracut High School will likely lose its accreditation next year. The roof is leaking, the HVAC system is not working properly, the catwalk is not safe, and the outside canopy is in rough shape. There is also in adequate classroom, cafeteria, and gymnasium space for



students. The proposed renovations call for a new auditorium, gym and locker rooms, additional classrooms, library expansion, and new classroom technology integration with wireless Internet access.

Dracut residents have spoken. Good luck to all the elected officials in their coming terms.

On a personal note, I resigned my position as a member of the Town of Dracut Committee on Government Rules and Regulations on April 26th effective May 16, 2011. The reason for my resignation is that I have purchased a home in Methuen and plan to change my primary residence on or around that date. I have greatly enjoyed being a part of this Committee over the past two years and I thank Former Town Moderator Gary McCarthy for appointing me in 2009 and affording me the opportunity to

serve the Town of Dracut these last two years. I will continue to be monitoring events in Dracut since I will continue to own property and pay taxes in Dracut. I look forward to joining my many friends as a resident of the great community of Methuen later this month.

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

Local Home Sales Slow in March Compared to Last year

Harsh Late Winter and Last Year’s Home Buyer Tax Credits Cited

(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 March compared with March of 2010. The biggest drop was seen in single family home sales, which at 176 closed sales were 16.6 percent lower than last March’s 211 sales pace. The number of condominium sales were down by 6.7 percent to 84 sales, and multi-family property sales declined by 22.9 percent to a total of 37 sold. Meanwhile, median prices for single family homes sold in

the area dropped 11.7 percent versus last March, to \$286,750, while median prices for condominiums were up by 9.9 percent to \$178,750, and median prices for multi-family properties rose by 14.1 percent, to \$180,000. NEAR’s report is based on data from MLS Property Information Network based in Shrewsbury.

NEAR President Tom Courtney stated that the recent slowdown in closed sales when compared with last year’s figures can be attributed to the extraordinarily stormy weather experienced locally during January and February when homebuyer activity would have resulted in closed sales during March, as well as the

immense popularity of last year’s federal home buyer tax credits, which he said “definitely pumped up sales last year.” He also noted that home buyer activity in the region has increased dramatically over the past month or so, and that closed sales figures are also expected to rise over the next few months. He also noted that some renters are looking to home ownership as a hedge against inflation. Apartment rents have been rising significantly due to lower vacancy rates and are expected to rise even faster over the next few years, so as buyers gain more financial security, the advantages of home ownership with a fixed-rate loan become more obvious.

The length of time it takes to sell the average property also increased in comparison with last March. Average days on market for single family homes sold in March rose to 139 days, compared with an average of 124 days for those sold last March, and the average days on market for condominiums sold rose to 145 days compared with 124 days last year. The average days on market for multi-family properties declined to 82 days in March, a drop of 3.5 percent from last March’s average of 85 days.

Meanwhile, the inventory of single

LOCAL HOME PRICES, page 32



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WHAHV Details Not-for-Profit Plans

Public Media of New England Inc. Names Three to Board

Public Media of New England Inc., a not-for-profit corporation, came into being this month and will operate WHAV as a non-commercial community radio station. Three local residents were also named to the new board of directors.

Anita M. Purcell, William D. Cox Jr. and Tim Coco, all of Haverhill, are serving as the initial officers and directors of Public Media of New England Inc. WHAV's on-air, Internet and cable television operations have operated as a unit of COCO+CO. Inc. since 2004.

"Serving the public interest, convenience and necessity was the aim of restoring WHAV seven years ago this year. It has remained a community service project with all revenues committed solely to this purpose," said Coco, who continues to serve as a volunteer general manager. "WHAHV continues to operate 24 hours a day and will be adding more educational and talk programs," he said.

Purcell recently retired as vice president of lending at Haverhill Bank. Previously she worked as operations manager at Grasso Appraisal Services Inc., Burlington, for 13 years. She has also worked in various capacities at several area banks and mortgage companies and as a real estate broker for seven years. She earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Merrimack College. She has also completed professional development courses at Bentley College and Boston University.

Cox, a local lawyer, was appointed Haverhill's city solicitor in 2004 and had served as assistant city solicitor since 1993. Previously, he was an Essex County assistant district attorney, city of Haverhill personnel director/affirmative action officer and director of employment and training programs at Community Action Inc. Cox received his Juris Doctor degree from New England School of

Law, Boston, and bachelor's degree from Bradford College. He also serves as board president of Career Resources Corporation, member of the Northern Essex Community College Legal Studies Advisory Board and member of the Haverhill, American and Massachusetts Bar Associations.

Coco founded COCO+CO. Inc., an advertising agency, in 1991 and began his communications career at WHAV in 1978. He also previously served as city hall reporter for the Haverhill Gazette, regional reporter for the Daily News of Newburyport, editor at Business Publications Inc., Manchester, N.H. and community relations manager for Ogden Projects Inc., Fairfield, N.J. Coco received his bachelor's degree from Lesley University School of Management and associate's degree from Northern Essex Community College. He was named one of Northern Essex Community College's 40 distinguished alumni on the 40th anniversary of the college in 2002. Coco also serves as vice president of the Trustees of John Greenleaf Whittier Homestead, member of the Northern Essex Community College Occupational Advisory Board and board member of the Merrimack Valley Economic Development Council, North Andover.

The WHAV call letters have been associated with local broadcasting since 1947. For seven years, the WHAV call has served the Merrimack Valley's pioneer Internet radio station at WHAV.net and a number of public access cable television stations in Andover, Haverhill and Methuen, and Plaistow and Sandown, N.H. The station is also heard over AM 1640 in northern Haverhill and Plaistow, N.H.

To listen, or for more information, visit www.WHAV.net.

Whittier Club Summer Meeting Features 'Priscilla and the Hollyhocks'

HAVERHILL - "Priscilla and the Hollyhocks," with Marie Rawlings and the Calvary Baptist Youth Choir, will be performed during the summer meeting of the Haverhill Whittier Club at 2 p.m., June 12th at Whittier Birthplace, 305 Whittier Road.

Marie Rawlings, fiddler and storyteller, narrates the musical adaptation of Anne Broyles' "Priscilla and the Hollyhocks." She will be joined by the Calvary Baptist Youth Choir. The presentation is free to the public, but donations will be accepted. Those wishing to attend should bring lawn chairs. Visitors may also attend early and bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on the

grounds.

The story is based on true events in the life of a young slave girl who was sold away from her mother. Her only gift from her mother is the talent of making dolls from hollyhock flowers. She is purchased by a Cherokee family and forced to accompany them on the "Trail of Tears." Through a chance encounter with a man she met years before, she is purchased by Basil Silkwood and set free.

Through song, story and drama, the audience will hear this little known tale of young Priscilla. As Priscilla finds her freedom, spectators will hear her tale of sorrow and longing.



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GEORGETOWN TODAY!

Georgetown: A Town Divided, Yet Again

Lawrence “Lonnie” Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT GEORGETOWN COLUMNIST

Hi. Did I mention that Georgetown School Superintendent Carol Jacobs will garner \$174,300 of taxpayer money this year? And that we have a lovely \$1.2 million dollar override that, by the time you read this, is supposed to be inflicted upon the taxpayer?

Someday, perhaps 20 years from now when a certain clique of soccer moms and dads — who always get what they want — find themselves staring at retirement, perhaps, just perhaps, a few of them might look back at today’s vote, and realize what pain they inflicted upon the less fortunate in our town. Did I mention that Georgetown School Superintendent Carol Jacobs will garner \$174,300 of taxpayer money this year? And you call those of us who oppose you heartless? Does giving \$174,300 to a supt. of approximately 1,500 students with more administrators than you can imagine (including a curriculum coordinator in excess of \$106,000) seem cheap?

Hmmm, the vote is just three days away. Just three days past this newspaper’s deadline, when the beautiful

people from the beautiful houses with the beautiful neighbors, most of whom have never volunteered for anything, nor voted before, will come out in droves, and inflict increased taxes on their less fortunate neighbors, all “for the children.” Did I mention that Georgetown School Superintendent Carol Jacobs will garner \$174,300 of taxpayer money this year? Again, does this sound cheap? But they say it is, so it must be so.

How are you doing? How do you feel about having your taxes increased to the point where you are forced to pay \$100 per WEEK in taxes (\$5,200.00 per year), just to keep up with the beautiful people, and make sure the school superintendent gets paid more than any others around? Did I mention that Georgetown School Superintendent Carol Jacobs will garner \$174,300 of taxpayer money this year? Hmm, and we’re called heartless and cheap?

Is there a chance the override will fail? They’re organized, they’ve been sending out mailings, putting up signs, phone calling constantly (bugging the hell out of folks) getting their voter lists going... yup, they could do it. But does it matter?

Either way, you might want to note that if it fails and you’re asked to donate school supplies or toilet paper to the schools, with another \$6,000 increase, Georgetown School Superintendent Carol Jacobs will garner \$174,300 of taxpayer money this year. Sure could buy a lot of toilet paper for \$6,000. And we’re called idiots, and we’re called heartless, and we’re told to buzz off, and that we’re cheap. Does \$174,300 seem cheap? Does it?

And the whopper mis-direct award of the year (politically correct way for calling someone a politician, in the darkest sense of the word), goes to School Committee Chair Anne Donahue, who, in a most disappointing performance at Town Meeting, when asked if the upcoming budget included increases in salaries for the administrators, replied, yes, but the Supt. took a zero last year. Thanks Ms. Donahue for the history lesson, but you failed to mention that same Supt. will get a nice \$6,000 increase this year, and she will garner \$174,300 of taxpayer money.

Does it matter? Nope. No one cares. In 2007, when the last override failed, the school committee, then led by George Moker, stuck up their middle fingers to the

taxpayers and went ahead with increased spending anyway: they inked a new contract with the teachers, and even found ways to give coaches that were making upwards of \$5,000 a season, another \$500 raise! Money for everyone. Who cares? They’ll get it. It’s for the children.

I love the schools. We have incredible teachers. And every time we have a retirement, we reportedly receive more resumes than anyone can imagine as folks leap to teach in this community.

But, I must ask, when is the school committee, when are the beautiful people, going to wake up and see the economy? When are they going to see their less fortunate neighbors? Oh, wait, I forgot. Their message is: we’re here, move out if you can’t afford us! And so, I have to order some bumper stickers: “My superintendent makes more \$ than yours! Georgetown: Small But Expensive.”



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

The New Moon Coffee House

**At the Universalist Unitarian Church,
16 Ashland St. (rtes 110 and 125).
Haverhill MA. 01830.**

Folk icon John Gorka performs at the New Moon Coffeehouse in Haverhill on Saturday May 21st at 8:00 pm. Tickets cost \$20 general admission; \$10 for kids 18 and under. Meg Hutchinson opens the evening. Tickets for the show are available at the door starting at 6:30. Reserve advance tickets at www.newmooncoffeehouse.org.

Rolling Stone called Gorka “the preeminent male singer/songwriter of the new folk movement.” The praise is deserved. Gorka has it all: the voice, the melodies, the lyrics, the personality and the wit. He writes rich multi-faceted songs full of depth, beauty and emotion and he delivers them with his stunningly soulful, baritone voice that wraps the audience in awe.

Gorka has released more than a dozen albums so far, from the 1980's to present day. His work has been covered by many mainstream performers including Mary Chapin Carpenter, Mary Black and Maura O'Connell

Opener Meg Hutchinson is an award-

winning songwriter who artfully documents the human condition. With a poet’s ease, she makes the personal universal, allowing people’s stories to come alive through her unique vocals and haunting melodies. Like Gorka—only a few years later—she also won the Kerville New Folk award. The New Moon Coffeehouse is proud to finish it's 23rd season with these two great artists.

The Coffeehouse is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to supporting and enjoying the creative talents of acoustic performers. It strives to bring you the best performers in a relaxing, friendly, smoke and alcohol free environment, where you can enjoy a great show, good coffee, and awesome desserts.

The coffeehouse is located in the Universalist Unitarian Church at 16 Ashland St. Haverhill MA 01830. The acoustics in the warm wooded room are superb. The easiest way to get to the coffeehouse is to take 495 to exit 51A (Route 125 South). Stay on Route 125 South for about 1.5 miles. At intersection of Routes 125 & 110, look left for a red brick church. Ashland Street is on left past the church and just before the large CVS.



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Letter to the Editor
Silence no more

During my two year tenure as the Haverhill Firefighters Union President I have refrained from making any inflammatory statement towards elected officials. However, after reading a recent article regarding a newly hired firefighter I felt compelled to rebut many of the comments and innuendos made by Mayor Fiorentini. The Mayor is quoted in the May 6, 2011 article saying “he believes the tip is part of an effort by the City Firefighters to derail his plan to put Denaro in charge of hiring firefighters.” That quote in itself is ridiculous; the Police department has always played an intricate role in the hiring process by running background checks not just for Firefighters, but for anyone wishing to gain employment with the City. The inflammatory comments made by Mayor Fiorentini towards the Fire department doesn’t stop here, an article on July 18, 2010 about the City’s Master Box problem the Mayor goes on to say “ the seriousness of the situation is being exaggerated by firefighters who are trying to stir up trouble.” The fact of the matter is that the City has known about the problem since 2007 and there is a well documented history known as referrals to support the truth. It was never about stirring up trouble, but public safety, it has always been about doing our jobs and ensuring the master boxes were functioning properly. It is unfortunate that the Mayor is trying to once again deflect the blame onto others about the hiring process, at the end of the day, as the Mayor likes to point out when it serves him, he is Sole Appointing Authority for all City employees and that includes the current embattled Fire Chief Richard Borden who was appointed by the Mayor on April 28, 2008. In an April 29, 2008 press release regarding the appointment of Richard Borden to permanent Fire Chief the Mayor goes on to say “He has been the acting chief of two and a half years and during that period he has done the job, and done it well.” My belief is that there will never be a positive relationship forged between the Haverhill Firefighters and the Mayor, the bridge hasn’t been burnt, it has been blown up. In closing, we will continue to provide the citizens the services they deserve, while trying to reestablish ourselves as one of the best Fire Departments in the Commonwealth. We will also be posting the full 157 page audit done by Matrix on our website www.haverhillfirefighters.com, not the condensed 13 page version released to the Eagle Tribune by Mayor Fiorentini.

Gregory Roberts
President Haverhill Firefighters

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Methuen/Salem Rotary Celebration of Achievement



PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

Photos: Top Row: Methuen-Salem Rotary’s Teachers of the year Kathleen Johnson from the Methuen Public Schools, and Curtis Killion from the Salem School District. Alyssa Kelley a Junior from Presentation of Mary Academy, Rosanna Hok from Central Catholic High School. Tricia Michaud and Trudy Lawlor of Michaud Insurance in Methuen. Bottom Row: Arthur Nicholson, Keynote Speaker laughs with his daughter, Anna Cino from Salem High School, Shanene Pierce from Presentation of Mary Academy, Anthony Cappabianca from Presentation of Mary Academy, and Kristian Teichert from Methuen High School.

For years the Methuen-Salem Rotary Club has promoted “service above self”. And for years members of the local civic organization have held their Celebration of Excellence awards during one of their regularly scheduled afternoon meetings. But last month, The Methuen-Salem Rotary decided to hold their first annual award ceremonies as a separate banquet. Held at the Boxwood Grill inside Methuen’s Merrimack Valley Golf Course, the Rotary honored two local teachers for their hard work and dedication in the classroom. Honored as “Teacher of the Year” were (Each winner received \$250): Kathleen Johnson from the Methuen Public Schools, Curtis Killion from the Salem School District. The Rotary also gave a total of \$6,000 in college scholarships (\$1,500 each) to local students: Anna Cino from Salem High School, Shanene Pierce from Presentation of Mary Academy, Paul Downing from Methuen High School, Rosanna Hok from Central Catholic High School and Anthony Cappabianca from Presentation of Mary Academy. The Rotary also honored two high school juniors as “Students of the Year” (each receiving \$50): Alyssa Kelley from Presentation of Mary Academy, and Kristian Teichert from Methuen High School. Corporate Sponsors of the event were: Michaud Insurance, People’s United Bank, Pest End Exterminators, Enterprise Bank, James Saravino-John Hancock Financial, Delucca Fence Company, The Savings Bank, Atty Charles Perrault & Associates, and Perrault Chiropractic.

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RONNIE’S RANTS

Random Thoughts

Ronnie Ford
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Phil Lavierre has been hammered around lately and if all that is said is true, he should be. But, I have to say that Phil was a hard working administrator who initiated the drive for the Community Action Council. I have known Phil for almost fifty years and served on the board of directors for a year with him. At that time, he was always looking for opportunities to expand and distribute programs to help the needy. Phil was a teacher. He started off as the head of the Neighborhood Youth Corps. He worked constantly to improve the agency. Phil was always looking to help the needs of the unfortunate people in Lawrence and surrounding towns. I don’t know what happened. I just want to say there were a lot of good things that he accomplished. I guess that is the way we humans are built, to do something good and something not so good. Phil is a decent guy and, that I know of, never hurt anyone except himself. Don’t be too hard on him we are all next.

The Lawrence Son’s of Italy is having their annual road race to benefit the Veterans’ Outreach Center; as well as the Merrimack Valley Hospice. Hospice is an organization that assists people who are dying or have an illness that requires immediate and constant personal care. The races are at 10:30, 10:45, and 11:00 A. M. on Saturday, May 28, 2011, at 155 Marsten Street. in Lawrence, for Youth’s Health and road race. This year, the Son’s of Italy is honoring Eddie Rickenbacker. For more information, call John Mele at 617-548-9877

In last month’s Valley Patriot, I wrote about the Methuen High School officials calling the Dominican Republic to parents of students visiting there. This was necessary to get permission from parents for students to attend various functions and activities. I took the information from the Eagle Tribune, and zeroed in on the sentence ”Since July 10 there have been 110 phone calls made from Methuen Schools to the Dominican Republic at a cost of \$84.00.” I mistakenly assumed

it was \$84.00 a call which would cost \$9,240.00. Thanks to the good eyes of Mr. Glenn Fratto, via Ken Henricks, a school board member, he advised me the calls are an average of 74 cents! This is a far cry from \$9,240.00. So a very large Mea Culpa, Mea Culpa, Mea Maxima Culpa to Mr. Fratto and the Methuen School Officials! Also, a tip of the hat to go with it!

Spring is here! And after a very nasty winter, we can once again open our windows. NOT!! The first night we could open windows, the people with the fire pits stroked up their fires! All through the houses we could smell smoke. How inconsiderate of people not to think of their neighbors or, the people who cannot tolerate smoke. That smoke is low, it is not high like chimneys, and blows into homes not over them. Please consider your neighbors before starting up fire pits! And, call your Fire Department to see if you may start fires.

Monday June 6, 2011 at 6:00 P. M..at Jackson’s Restaurant on the 110 Boulevard in Methuen, there will be BIG DOINGS! The 8th annual Neighborhood Reunion, comprising of the people who attended the Tarbox, St. Rita’s, the Assumption, and the Hood and Holy Trinity schools will gather and have a great time. We are looking for people who hung around the Downey Flake Donut Shop and Lawlor’s Drug Store, or Nora Howard’s to come and join us. We have a fantastic time and it is fun to meet friends of old that we have not seen for 20 or 30 or more years. Jackson’s serves a luscious buffet, and it is only \$8.00 a person. There is a cash bar. So come on down, bring a spouse or a friend. Come have belly laughs galore!

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



The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

“The Ballroom of Romance”

Jack Doyle, County Sligo
VALLEY PATRIOT IRISH COLUMNIST

“There had been a hall in Gleann in the early part of last century located on the road between the cross-roads at Glean school and Doongeelagh cross roads, and this was used as general meeting place for different groups and also by the community. An article quoted here, describes an evening’s entertainment in this hall in the year 1908. The groups that used the hall included the Conway’s Cross branches of the United Irish League, Ancient Orders of Hibernian, and the later by Sinn Fein and the IRA. It was burnt down by the Black and Tans, the ‘Auxiliaries’, during a large scale of raids in November 1920. It was in this hall that the IRA court found the English soldier John Watts guilty of spying and had him executed in August 1920. Later in the 1920’s a man called Lowry from Limerick built another hall, made of wood, on the same site and used it for dances. However, Father Crehan was against the dances and had it closed with Lowry getting little support from locals to keep it open. He persevered and built a small stone hall in the 1930’s but this met with little success. He left his wife behind him in their cottage and went to America, never to be seen again. His family followed him there some time later. The site of the hall has since been cleared and there is no trace of it left.

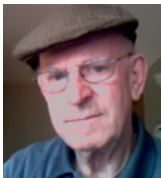
The other hall of course was Jackie’s Hall - The Ballroom of Romance. Jackie Conlon built this himself at Conway’s Cross in the mid 1930’s. It is remembered that he made a pulley from an old bicycle wheel to haul the mortar up during its construction. This was an important center for many people during its existence. Dances were held on Sunday and Thursday evenings with big crowds

coming to see the bands of the day and dance to foxtrots and waltzes. Many of Sligo’s bands played there, including the Derrylin Starlights and Sonny Conlon’s band.

The Conlon’s Lough Bo Band played in practically all the local halls in the area during the forties and fifties until some of the members went their own way. The Lough Bo Moonlight Dance Band was then formed and consisted of Sonny Conlon, P Conlon, John Conlon, Alfie Joe Dineen and Brendan Dineen whose combined musical skills delighted dancers with their melodic strains on saxophone, clarinet, accordion, fiddle and drums. They played every Sunday night in all the local halls from Ballyfarnon to Dromahair. Their fee for the night was one pound per member of the band and they all had to walk or cycle to the venue. The great Josie McDermott from Foyogues joined this band in the late 1950’s and they played together until 1976 when younger members of the group joined other bands. *In the Shadow of Carron Hill, pgs. 117-118

Jackie’s hall closed around 1973 after the opening of the Patrician Hall in Gleann.”

Jackie’ Hall stood idol until around 2004 when it was demolished in order to update the house that was next to it. Oddly enough, my great grandparent’s cottage, across the road from the old hall, is still standing. The Lavins immigrated from this little cottage at the end of the 1800’s. The house is now known as the cobbler Conlon’s house.



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

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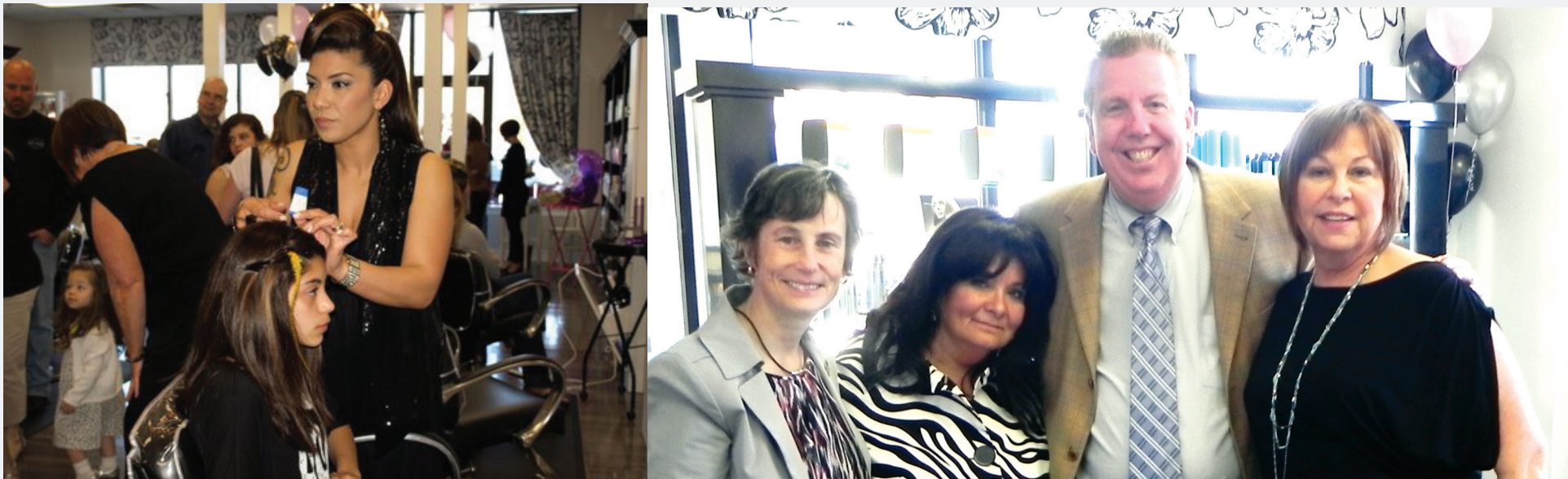
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Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi and Methuen State Representative Linda Dan Campbell were on hand last month for the grand opening of the Black Daisy Salon and Spa on Merrimack St. in Methuen right next to Heavenly Donuts on Rt. 110.

From the Desk of Mayor Bill Manzi III

Bill Manzi III
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Here are some random notes about things happening in Methuen.

Congratulations to Chairman Brian Dempsey, Speaker Robert Deleo, and the Massachusetts House of Representatives for passing comprehensive municipal health care reform as part of the FY 2012 budget. Locally municipalities owe thanks to Rep. Linda Campbell, Rep. David Torrisi, and Rep. Jim Lyons for voting in favor of this package.

We are working hard on the FY12 Municipal Budget. State aid has been cut by 7%, which amounts to about \$350,000 for Methuen. As part of this budget package we will submit a comprehensive Capital Improvement Program for the

City. We will be ready with a draft in the next few weeks.

May presented us with a full spectrum of Little League Opening Days, with the West, East, and Girls Softball throwing out the opening day balls. Methuen, despite budgetary strain, continues to maintain an outstanding program of recreation for our kids. The fields looked great thanks to Ray Difiore and the Department of Public Works, who worked very hard to make that happen. Thanks to Bill Pare for all his hard work in putting together a wonderful opening day.

The Dollars for Scholars telethon raised over \$30,000 for Methuen High School students as it returned to the airwaves after a short hiatus. It was a great two day event with lots of volunteer help and a great program that entertained as well as raised money. Thanks to all who participated.

Methuen is welcoming two new businesses to our community. I attended the grand opening of the Black Daisy Salon and Spa at 126 Merrimack Street as well as a Haverhill Chamber event that was held at the Merrimack Golf Course, where Sam Ambra and Simply Elegant Catering showed off the beautiful function facility that will now be the Methuen Home of Simply Elegant. If you are looking to book a function you need to take a look at this facility. It is truly breathtaking.

Methuen's cleanup day was held in May, and it was a great day with a huge turnout of volunteers who stepped up to clean up our City.

Thanks to Jill Stackelin and a big thank you to Ray Difiore and the entire DPW, who really worked hard to make the day a success. It was great to see the entire TIP crew, with Jayan and Lindsay, over at the Healing Garden, which is looking great. Thanks to all the cleanup captains and volunteers.

A reminder to all that the Methuen Relay for Life is going to be held on Saturday, June 4th at 2:00 p.m. at the Methuen High School Track. It is a huge event that raises money and awareness for the fight against cancer. Watch the promotional video put out by the students running the event this year at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13VnHGC2saU>

Check out my blog at www.billmanzi.com

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

CORRECTION - Last month I wrote in my notebook that Selectman Don Stewart in North Andover had received money from the North Andover Firefighters Union for his Selectman campaign this spring. After we published, however we were contacted by the North Andover Firefighters Union protesting that they had, in fact not donated to Stewarts campaign. I regret the error!

SALEM, NH: Spring Yard Sale at FCC -The First Congregational Church will be holding its annual yard sale on Saturday, May 21st from 8:00 am to 1 pm. Stop by 15 Lawrence Road for some great deals on household items, toys, books and much more. This event is sponsored by the Men's and Woman's Fellowship groups at the church and all proceeds will support the church and its programs. The youth group will also be helping out with this fundraiser by sponsoring a snack bar with plenty of homemade goodies. The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is located at 15 Lawrence Road, Salem, NH. For additional information call 603-893-3421 or visit www.FCC-Salem.org.

LAWRENCE - Former candidate for school committee and self professed ultra-liberal Jim Blatchford has announced that he is running for school committee in the South Lawrence East Section of Lawrence against Greg Morris. Blatchford is a political consultant and has worked on several state and out of state political campaigns, has the ability to raise money and is not quite as controversial as the incumbent Morris is. Look for an upset in District F if Greg Morris decides to run for re-election!

SPEAKING OF MORRIS – Our information is that School Committee member Greg Morris is filing a lawsuit against the city of Lawrence for discrimination. (HUH?) Morris was with Wilfredo Laboy before he was against him, and more recently was with Willie Lantigua (who hired him as a supervisor in the city's DPW) before he was against him! Morris was a DPW worker who was laid off last year but was brought back over more qualified workers with more years of experience to be a supervisor and was making overtime to boot. Still, knowing Lantigua the way we do, and Morris being "white" I think he should just call it what it is, racism against white



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people not his specific ethnicity. We will see where this one goes but I can almost guarantee you that it's going nowhere.

NORTH ANDOVER - The North Andover Senior Center is starting a new class for Strength Training. This class is starting on Tuesday, June 7, 1 -2 pm for six weeks. Sign up for 6 weeks at \$24. Or drop in for \$6. per class. Shape & sculpt those hard to reach places. Build strength, balance and increase bone density fighting off osteoporosis. Space is limited so sign up at the senior center early. For more info, please call 978-688-9560.

They are also offering a Digital Photography Class on Tuesdays, 9 – 10 am starting on June 7. This class is a 4-week course for \$25.00. This course is for the student who wants to buy a digital camera and learn how to use it. Learn basic controls, manage picture files, save and categorize, print photos at home or thru services and attach photos to emails. Space is limited so sign up at the senior center early. For more info, please call 978-688-9560.

LAWRENCE - Walk for Hunger On Sunday, May 15, 2011, The Psychological Center will be holding its 1st Annual Walk for the Homeless. The funds raised will go towards the rehabilitation of Daybreak Shelter. Aside from raising funds, we also want to raise awareness of homelessness and homelessness prevention. Given the heavy use that the shelter gets on a daily basis; Daybreak is in dire need of many structural updates. In order to raise funds we will be holding our 1st Annual Homeless Walkathon.



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TREBLE CHORUS - There are TWO upcoming opportunities to see the Treble Chorus of New England! First, on Sunday, May 1st, 2011 at 3 pm, the Training and Concert Choirs will be performing their Annual Spring concert "In the Merrie Month" at the West Parish Church, 129 Reservation Road in Andover, MA. This concert is FREE with general admission seating.

Second, On May 14th, 2011 at 7:30 pm, The Treble Chorus of New England will be presenting "A Night at the Opera" at the Rogers Center at Merrimack College in North Andover, MA. This concert will be performed by all three choirs of the TCNE; the Training Choir, ages 7-9, the Concert Choir, ages 9-13 and Schola, ages 13-18. The music will include composers such as Gilbert and Sullivan, Puccini, and Mozart.

Tickets are \$16/adults, \$10/students and seniors, general admission. For more information on both concerts, please contact Anna S. Choir at tcnemanager@treblechorus.com or call 978.794.4600. Tickets will be available at the door or can be purchased on our website at www.treblechorus.org.



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HELP AVAILABLE - Have you or someone you know been affected by a drunk or drugged driving crash? Going through the police or court process? Feeling anxious or fearful? Can't relax or concentrate? Having trouble sleeping? If so, free help is available to you. F.O.C.U.S.: Finding Options for Change, Understanding & Safety, is a program that provides free mental health counseling and case management services to people affected by a drunk or drugged driving crash in the Greater Lowell area.

Their free and confidential services include mental health counseling and case management services that include helping you through the criminal justice system, applying for financial assistance and accessing needed services. If you haven't been feeling like yourself since the crash occurred, we can help you once again feel more in control of your life. Their case managers can meet with you at their office, at school, at home or wherever you may feel the most comfortable. Due to the confidential nature of the session, our counseling services take place at our office or occasionally in your home.

If you would like to schedule an appointment or an informational session, please call F.O.C.U.S. at (978) 458-6282 or email us at ddtf@mhallowell.org.

ART CLASSES - One of the area's most talented artists is teaching an advanced art class at the Citizens Center, 10 Welcome St., Haverhill! Judith Larmay would like to help artists bring their images from "good" to "exceptional." Judith will be teaching on Tuesdays from 1:30 to 3:30, and classes are \$10 per week. She is a seasoned painter and teacher with 35 years of experience, and she studied at Massachusetts College of Art and Bradford College. Judith's work is marketed in galleries locally and worldwide, and some of her pieces are currently on display at Angles and Art at 80 Wingate Street. Check out Judith's website at www.larmayartsstudio.com. Students of all ages accepted!

COASTAL TRAILS COALITION is organizing trail user counts on the Amesbury, Newburyport, and Salisbury Rail Trails on Saturday, May 14, and Tuesday, May 17. This will be a great opportunity to document the

popularity of our trails and to introduce users to CTC. We are trying to count trail users from 7 am to 7 pm on both days and would like volunteers to contribute two hours. More time is fine. One hour is the minimum. Counters will record users on tally sheets in 15-minute increments and will need to bring a cell phone or a watch.




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CLIPPER CITY RAIL TRAIL “Taste of the Trail” BIRTHDAY PARTY Sunday, May 22, 2011 from 1 pm to 4 pm.

It has been almost a year since thousands of residents from Greater Newburyport and surrounding communities streamed to the newly opened Clipper City Rail Trail to celebrate the completion of the 1.1 mile stretch from the MBTA station to the Harborwalk. On Sunday, May 22 from 1 to 4 p.m., Newburyport will celebrate the trail’s first birthday, complete with tasty tidbits and birthday cake. To find out more about the event, or to participate in the birthday cake event, please contact Lisë Reid at 978-463-3545 or nportparkscommission@yahoo.com

LAWRENCE CEMETERY BEATIFICATION Day will on Saturday, May 21st 2011 starting at 9:00 AM from the St. Mary’s Mausoleum.

HAVERHILL COUNCIL ON AGING - Golf Clinic at Garrison Golf Center, 660 Hilledale Avenue, Haverhill, will begin on Wednesday, May 11, at 10:00 a.m. Whether you are a novice or an experienced golfer Ted Murphy looks forward to meeting you to teach you the fundamentals or help you to improve your game! No sign-up is required.

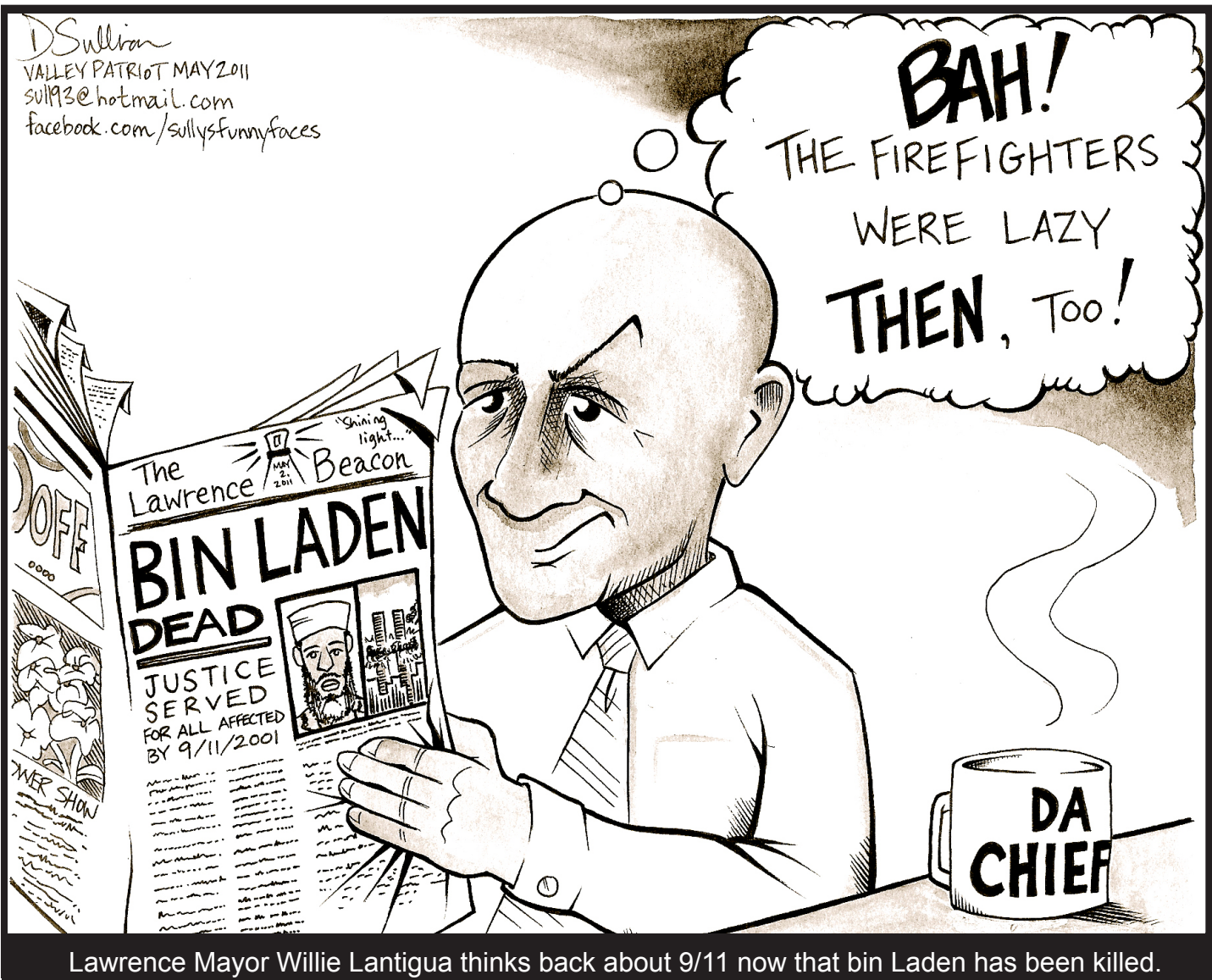
- Baby Boomers.....Are you ready for retirement? The Haverhill Council on Aging and Edward Jones will hold a presentation titled “Retirement has Changed: What’s Your Next Move” on Monday, May 9, 2011, at the Haverhill Public Library at 6:00 p.m. in the Johnson Auditorium. Mike Quinn of Edward Jones will answer important questions regarding pending retirement decisions: Should you work part-time? Should you Volunteer? Go back to school? Join us for a one-hour presentation and a chance to start thinking about the next phase of your life!! You will learn how to organize, set realistic goals and see if you are on track. Refreshments will be served. Contact Kathy or Rita to register for this seminar. There is no charge for this event.

- The Haverhill COA and the Massachusetts Bar Association will present a discussion on “Protecting Your Assets and Medicare Planning” on Monday, May 16, at the Citizens Center at 10:00 a.m. It is important to plan now to protect yourself and your family in the future. Join us for this valuable and informative discussion. Contact Kathy or Rita to register. There is no charge for this event.

*Haverhill COA is planning new day trips: Newport, Rhode Island, for the 30th Annual Chowder Festival on Saturday, June 4? The day begins with a visit to the Breakers Mansion, and then it is on to the greatest international chowder championship. The cost for this day trip is \$80:

- “The Bobby Darling Show” at Castleton in Windham, NH.on Wednesday, June 15, \$65, includes transportation;

- Cecilia Colucci and Angelo Picardi “Duets” at Venezia Waterfront Restaurant in Boston, \$66. Contact Kathy or Rita to sign up early!!



Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua thinks back about 9/11 now that bin Laden has been killed.

Councilors Put Mayor On Notice - No More Public Safety Layoffs

The Honorable William Lantigua
Mayor, City of Lawrence
City Hall
200 Common Street
Lawrence, MA 01840

Dear Mayor Lantigua,

We are writing to emphasize that public safety is a core function of our government, and that the FY2012 budget must reflect this priority. Any further layoffs or demotion in the police and fire departments would adversely affect our citizens, and place them in greater peril. Therefore, we are unwilling to vote in favor of the City of Lawrence FY2012 budget should it include any layoffs or demotions in the police or fire departments.

Police Department -
The Lawrence Police Department has lost 50 positions since FY2010, 40 of those reductions took place in FY 2011. There have also been 12 demotions, thereby reducing the police department’s ability to provide much needed supervision. Crime is not a “perception” problem, nor is it “exaggerated”. Crime has increased 49% this fiscal year. Here

are the most recent statistics comparing the first 8 months of FY2011 to the same eight months in FY2010:

- * Auto theft: up 119%, from 306 stolen cars to 671
- * Murder: up 80%, from 5 to 9
- * Aggravated Assault: up 77% from 186 to 330
- * Residential burglary: up 22%, from 337 house breaks to 410

These devastating police cuts have made Lawrence much less safe. Before July 2010, we targeted the underpinning of crime with great success. Now we are simply responding to crime. Residents will soon be impacted by higher insurance premiums, our middle class will seek less expensive and safer communities, and economic development and job creation will grind to a halt.

Fire Department - The Lawrence Fire Department had to shut down three fire stations, lay off 23 firefighters, and did not rehire firefighters to fill positions lost by attrition within a 36 month period. Fortunately, the Lawrence Fire Department was able to secure a federal grant to restore the firefighters to baseline levels. At it’s lowest levels, fire response times were dramatically impaired, and

we relied too heavily on mutual aid from surrounding communities to provide basic protection to our 76,000 citizens. We cannot afford to reduce our firefighter levels below the baseline level. And cuts to the fire department will also have a chilling effect on any future federal aid, since it would fundamentally run counter to the spirit of the recent \$6.6 SAFER grant.

Finally, according to Chapter 58 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Acts and Resolve of 2010, the city may be in jeopardy of being governed by a Control Board should the City face “a fiscal crisis that poses an imminent danger to the safety of the citizens of the city and their property.” We look forward to working with you on the FY2012 budget and ensuring that we do not face a worse public safety crisis. We also hope that you will agree that any further reductions in public safety will bear more than simply economic costs.

Sincerely,

Grisel Silva, City Councilor District B
Marc Laplante, City Councilor, District F

- DiBurro’s in Ward Hill, on Wednesday, May 25. Entertainment will be provided by the famous Shaw Brothers. This trip is a great value at \$48 per person for the luncheon and show.

- Haverhill Council on Aging has booked a trip to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to see the beautiful “Chihuly: Through the Looking Glass” exhibit. This phenomenal exhibit is comprised of

large-scale hand-blown glass sculptures, and it is amazing! Visit the museum’s website at www.mfa.org or call Kathy (ext. 11) or Rita (ext. 16) at the Council on Aging at 978-374-2390 to learn more about this exhibit. This trip will depart on Wednesday, July 13, at 10:00 a.m. Cost for admission, guided tour, and motor

coach transportation is \$45 per person.

- Haverhill Council on Aging is hosting an overnight to Tanglewood August 21-22, 2011. This trip includes reserved seats in the shed for a Boston Symphony matinee, an overnight at The Williams Inn, dinner, breakfast, a stop at The Clark

NOTEBOOK, page 42



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Massachusetts Lions Eye research President Ted Irvin (Second From Right) Is Shown Presenting a Certificate Of Appreciation To Members Of The Lowell Lions Club For Their Goal Of Donating One Hundred Thousand Dollars (10 Year Commitment) To The Mass Lions Eye Research Fund. Pictured Left To Right Are. Lowell Lions Club President Marcel V. Plouffe, Lions Club Director Bob Phaneuf, Mass Lions Eye Research President Ted Irvin, And Lowell Lions Club Director Dave Shaughnessy



Need a spray tan before heading out? See Taylor at Black Daisy Salon & Spa on Merrimack Street in Methuen next to Heavenly Donuts on Rt. 110 978-208-1351



The Massachusetts Tea Party held a Tax Day Tea Party Rally on the Common in Boston last month. Upper right hand photo is Michael Graham of 96.9 FM talk, Middle photo is Louisiana Governor Tim Pawlenty, Lower left hand corner is Jeff Katz from Talk 1200AM. Special Thanks to Matt Spong for providing photos, all photos are (c) Copyright Matt Spong 2011

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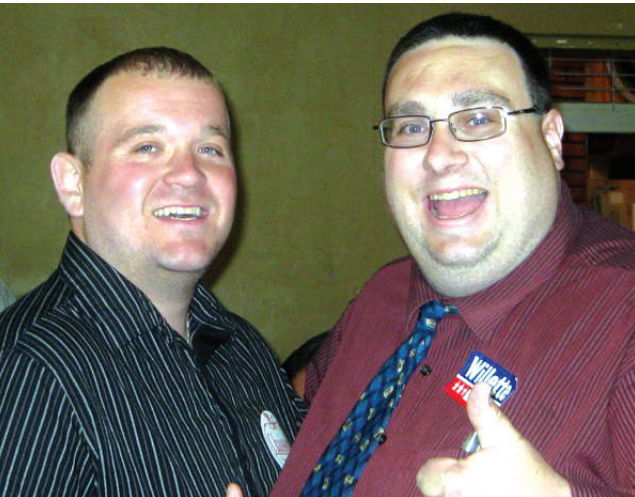
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Photographer's Work on Display in the Mayor's Office

Mayor William M. Manzi has named Joyce Godsey as April's Artist of the Month. Joyce has lived and worked in Methuen for 35 years. A professional antiquarian bookseller for thirty years, she has written a book on book repair and owns Sicpress.com a book repair supply house. Besides her passion for collecting and repairing vintage cameras and bicycles, Joyce gives much of her time to Animal Rescue Merrimack Valley and heads the Methuen Rail Trail Alliance. Her many local interests provide the subject matter for most of her photographs. Alternating between film and digital she provides most of images for the animal rescue group and the Methuen Rail Trail projects. The Methuen Artist of the Month Program was created by Mayor Manzi five years ago in order to give members of the Methuen Arts Community a forum to display their work and to encourage participation in Methuen's growing creative economy. Methuen artists interested in being considered for Artist of the Month should contact the Mayor's Office.



Methuen School Committeeman Ken Willette with Fellow School Committeeman Evan Chaisson at Willette's kickoff party for his mayoral campaign this fall. Willette has only one other opponent so far, Al DiNuccio.



The brother of Michael B. Christensen spoke at this year's annual GLCAC Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast, held at the Wyndham Hotel in Andover.

Michael Christense dedicated much of his free time to preventing the abuse of children, and a local agency adopted his name to thank him yesterday. The Family Support Center, 350 Essex St., renamed itself the Michael B. Christensen Family Support Center. The center matches volunteers with parents whose children are at risk of neglect and abuse. The volunteers teach parents how to resolve conflicts nonviolently, and they teach parenting skills.



Joe Costa lead singer of Ten and Out belts out a song at Big City in Lawrence.

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Protesting the Protesters; Unions and Anarchists Exposed

Christine Morabito
MERRIMACK VALLEY TEA PARTY

Massachusetts Tea Party groups celebrated Tax Day with events designed to celebrate their unsung hero--the taxpayer. Events began on April 15 with the third annual Tax Day Tea Party rally on the Boston Common where special guest Governor Tim Pawlenty drew about 500 people.

Just after the rally began it was disrupted by a motley crew of about 25, claiming to represent various public sector union groups. They muscled their way to the front of the crowd where they attempted to drown out Tea Party presenters with bullhorns and hate-filled chants. They also held professionally printed signs and an enormous banner which obstructed the view of the stage. Far be it from me to deny anyone their right to free speech, but why were they allowed to interfere with the rights of the Tea Party? After all, it was the Tea Party - not the unions - who went to the trouble of obtaining a permit for the event.

I was extremely disappointed in the behavior of the normally commendable Boston City Police, who claimed they were powerless to intervene. By doing nothing they sent a strong message. They merely created a human shield between Tea Partiers and the obnoxious protesters, making one wonder if they were protecting the patriots from the union thugs or the other way around. Unfortunately, by allowing the protesters to disrupt the rally, it became apparent that the latter was the case.

Reverend Paul Jehle took to the stage and attempted to lead the audience in prayer. He politely asked the union representatives to observe a moment of



Anti-American demonstrators at the Tea Party Rally in Boston

silence. They not only refused, but began chanting -- apropos of nothing -- "Racists, sexist, anti-gay, Tea Party bigots go away!"

Apparently, the unions did not count on the tenacity of the presenters, particularly the emcee, Michael Graham who exposed them for being "community organized" and admonished them until they eventually dispersed. Local radio hosts Todd Feinberg and Jeff Katz also valiantly defended the Tea Party's honor. The other speakers, though unaccustomed to this level of union intimidation, handled themselves with grace and confidence as they spoke about

legitimate Tea Party issues like the Fair Tax, balancing the budget and repealing both the Death Tax and Obamacare.

I have it on good authority that at least two of the "union protesters" were actually recruited from the Pine Street Inn homeless shelter to pose as union members. Judging by the state of their dress and lack of dental hygiene, I suspect that there were more than a few. How they were compensated is yet unknown, but I believe Nancy Pelosi has finally found her "astroturf."

Here's my question: Shouldn't the real

union members be furious that they were replaced by homeless people who will work for less? Where's the outrage? As Tea Party member, Patrick Humphries opined, "It's good to know that in this bad economy, even the unions are cutting costs."

Headlining the rally, Governor Tim Pawlenty, known for his successful budget slashing policies in Minnesota received a warm Boston welcome as he spent time meeting the crowd and signing autographs.

The Tax Day festivities continued on April 18 with the Greater Lowell Tea Party rally at Shedd Park Pavilion. In attendance was a small, but faithful crowd of about 100. Patches the Clown entertained the children while speakers educated folks on various taxpayer issues.

Later that day the Worcester County Tea Parties held a rally and pig roast at Lincoln Square with a crowd of about 400. This time a radical group of anarchists, waved their freak flags of protest. They were predominantly college-aged, dressed either in black or SEIU t-shirts -- with bandannas concealing their shockingly pierced faces. Frankly, I fail to see how dressing as leftist rioters helps their cause, but that's just me. These are the same gullible youth who idolize the Marxist Che Guevara while completely ignoring the fact that he was a blood-thirsty, sadistic hit-man for Fidel Castro. If they lived in Europe they would, no doubt, feel right at home with the godless deviants overturning cars, starting fires and vandalizing private property. Their fantasy of a violent revolution is both naïve and dangerous. Luckily, they remain on the fringe.

Unlike the Boston Police, Worcester's finest kept the radical revolutionaries across the street from the rally lest they

TEA PARTY, page 33

Integrity of the Vote: Tea Party WEST!

Christen Varley
TEA PARTY ORGANIZER/ACTIVIST

As the date of the 6th Worcester State Representative District Special Election draws nearer, public confidence wanes. On April 22, the Worcester Telegram & Gazette reported that Southbridge Town Clerk Madaline Daoust may have perjured herself in the Superior Court trial where Judge Richard T. Tucker ruled the November 2nd election a tie, requiring a do over. The Town Clerk's conduct obligates the Secretary of State to replace Ms. Daoust in supervising the May 10 special election.

In a State Representative election, requesting a recount of a result that produced a lead of only four votes is not questionable. The questions arise when the recount procedures in the different towns in the district are not only disturbing but also produce distinctly different results. While the vote totals in four of the five towns of the 6th Worcester district did not change, the Southbridge vote totals did.

As an observer at both the Charlton and Southbridge recounts, I have repeatedly remarked that the procedures followed in Charlton were far and away more confidence inducing than those in Southbridge. It came as no surprise to many observers, and I dare say, the Durant campaign, that incumbent Geraldo Alicea picked up votes in Southbridge. While the Durant campaign did what it could to defend their November 2nd win, when it comes to our legal system, the more lawyers you can hire, the better your outcome. Apparently it also helps if your

cousin, the Town Clerk, knows the finer points of "Court 101".

Empower Massachusetts chose to collaborate with Show ID to Vote to launch the "Integrity of the Vote" campaign to educate voters as to a way of eliminating doubt in close elections. Legislation in 27 States require voters to show a photo ID when they vote and it appears it is time for such legislation to be passed in Massachusetts.

We rented a billboard to encourage voters to show ID so as to avoid voters coming forward after the fact with claims of being denied a ballot. We posted volunteer observers at multiple polling locations for the April 12 Special Election Primary as a way of illustrating how the knowledge that every vote placed in the ballot box is legitimate is the surest remedy for guaranteeing the integrity of an election. If every vote is known to be sound, then the result is sound. At least that is something we can believe in.

Unfortunately, if the officials overseeing an election are the ones creating suspicions on the legitimacy of the outcome, there is little volunteer observers can do. When those same officials rely on ugly political rhetoric and accusations of racism and voter intimidation to deflect questions surrounding their conduct, the debate becomes personal rather than procedural. The call for the Department of Justice to step in and observe the May 10th Special Election seemed absurd when it first was suggested. Now it appears to be the best suggestion made yet.

The 6th Worcester State Representative election last November presents a case



study in the incestuous relationships that exist amongst Democrat legislators and state and municipal employees across the Commonwealth. These murky relationships damage the credibility of not only our state government but also the system by which we elect said government. Election law and the spirit with which it was conceived assure us that fifty percent plus one vote is a win. Is this now only true for the candidate with the most friends and the most resources?

The voters and taxpayers of the 6th Worcester district have the right to be assured the next election will have

integrity.

Public confidence in our elections is essential to a fully functioning and truly representative democratic republic. Ms. Daoust's alleged perjury casts doubt not only on her ability to serve as Town Clerk but most assuredly on her ability to oversee an election where her cousin is a candidate. We may never receive a satisfactory explanation as to why we are conducting (and funding) a do over election. However, we can feel confidence in the outcome of this next election if Town Clerk Madaline Daoust has been removed from a supervisory position.

Reveling in Death

Paul Murano
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The Bin Laden saga has illustrated to the world two ugly manifestations of the hate that lurks in the hearts of men. The first happened ten years ago on 9/11 when it resulted in over 3,000 innocent people being killed. The second came last week when countless people partied into the night with utter glee at the killing of human being.

You can’t compare the killing of innocent people with the vengeful gloating over a killer’s death, however you can compare the ugly vile that infects souls in both. This constant gloating and reveling over Bin Laden’s death is NOT simply an expression of contentment that justice was done, nor is it an expression of relief that this man can no longer do damage; the utter glee we have been exposed to on the streets, on talk radio, and throughout the media since Bin Laden was killed is clearly the expression of a deep hatred being fed and satisfied by this man’s death.

Like hurricane Katrina served as an excuse for many to release their inner darkness by assaulting and looting people and businesses, Bin Laden’s death was also used as an excuse for a cathartic release of the darkness many harbor within. Even if his death was just and a necessary evil, the unabashed reveling over it shows the amount of evil in our own hearts and illustrates how uncivilized we really are.

I first remember seeing this kind of vile attitude while living in Florida at the time Ted Bundy was being executed. I thought it extremely odd and distasteful that there were crowds of non-stop partying the day of this man’s execution. He had already been captured and safely locked up years.

Why is this kind of reveling in the death of a proven killer so wrong? We must begin by recognizing the intrinsic worth of all people as human beings, not human doings. By virtue of our

personhood everyone is an image of God. Although we desecrate ourselves by choosing evil we may become bad persons, but never non-persons. Desecrated images, but never non-images. There remains a minimal human dignity regardless of how morally diminished we become, and when we ridicule and desecrate an image of God we indirectly do it to God. A gleeful reveling over the death of our enemy is hardly a manifestation of a love, but rather a clear sign of spiritual sickness.

During a debate I had as co-host of the Paying Attention radio program on WHAV radio with a caller and the main talk host, they continuously brought up peripheral issues that had little to do with my point: We were at war, the world is safer without him, he didn’t deserve to live, we should be relieved he is gone, etc. These things may be true but didn’t address my point. When I was finally able to cut through the forced fog I gave each of them a question. To the caller who stated he was Catholic I asked him that since we are called to love our enemy while protecting ourselves from him if necessary, what does it mean to love our enemy when it is Bin Laden? He tried his hardest to divert from giving an answer but finally offered something non-nonsensical and contradictory. To the host I asked this: Although it may be highly improbable, if a mass murderer were to sincerely and deeply repent at the end of his life and is willing to make as many amends as humanly possible, but ends up dying the next day, would you hope that he ends up in heaven? After much hemming and hawing he finally said no. Why? To him the killer has irreversibly lost his humanity, can not be forgiven, has zero value, and should be treated as trash. Unfortunately this seems to be the attitude of most people. It explains the cartoon picture on his facebook page visited by many of the statue of liberty

REVELING, page 41

Ye Gay Ol’ Valley

Oh, My Good, Gay God!

D. B. Langevin
VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

Paint a boy’s toenails pink and the whole world as we know it is going to implode. Recently, J. Crew posted an ad showing their creative director Jenna Lyons and her 5-year-old son Beckett whose toenails she painted pink. You’d have thought she put him in a tutu, gave him botox injections and had him singing show tunes. I can’t believe the wrath of angry tweets and online comments that followed some of which were downright frightening and archaic at best.

There was a scathing and unfounded commentary made by psychiatrist Dr. Keith Ablow who went on a tirade about how encouraging children to act in ways outside their assigned gender will, “. . . throw our species into real psychological turmoil-not to mention crowding operating rooms with procedures to grotesquely amputate our body parts.” Wow! He pushed it even further by suggesting that, if we accept this, Caucasians will begin to tattoo their entire bodies with dark ink and claim African descent or African Americans will do just the opposite. Dr. Ablow does not back up his claims with any kind of research. He simply rants and raves about, “. . . homogenizing males and females,” and their, “. . . psychological sterilization.”

Oh, wait, it gets better. A writer on usconstitution.gather.com who goes by the name Patriotic S. said, “. . . what this jacked up media land doesn’t get are there are people/kids out there who are totally NOT gay at all, but because they are seeing this so much everywhere they turn. If he (Beckett) wasn’t gay before he sure will be now if painting his nails pink continues.” Really? Heterosexuality was everywhere in the media when I

was growing up. My mother had to fight with me daily to where a dress to school at least once or twice a week and I still turned out gay rather than heterosexual. I dressed my daughter in jeans and flannel shirts when she was a toddler and she can’t buy enough flip-flops, sundresses or handbags to save her life now.

The most frightening comments came from a group that calls themselves White Pride World Wide. I warn you these comments are offensive and born of extreme hate and ignorance. One of their followers wrote, “No wonder whites grow up too afraid to defend themselves against encroaching muds.” Another wrote, “Kick over the rock that houses the person who dreamed up the advert and I guarantee that you’ll find either a Jew, liberal self-hating White, or a queer.”

Thankfully, there were some voices of reason like. “Most research on gender identity and sexual orientation concludes that neither is a choice.” This came from the Williams Institute at UCLA that focuses on lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender issues. Dr. Jack Drescher who serves on the American Psychiatric Association’s committee that is addressing sexual and gender disorder states, “I can say with 100 percent certainty that a mother painting her children’s toenails pink does not cause transgenderism or homosexuality.”

How disappointing. I was going to start handing out pink nail polish to all incoming pre-schoolers.



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

When will Obama Crack in Public?

Mychal Massie
CREATORS SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

At a time when many Americans can barely afford Burger King and a movie, Obama boasts of spending a billion dollars on his re-election campaign. Questioned at a recent appearance about the spiraling fuel costs, Obama said, “Get used to it” – and with an insouciant grin and chortle, he told another person at the event, who complained about the effect high fuel prices were having on his family, to “get a more fuel-efficient car.”

The Obamas behave as if they were sharecroppers living in a trailer and hit the Powerball, but instead of getting new tires for their trailer and a new pickup truck, they moved to Washington. And instead of making possum pie, with goats and chickens in the front yard, they’re spending and living large at taxpayer expense – opulent vacations, gala balls, resplendent dinners and exclusive command performances at the White House, grand date nights, golf, basketball, more golf, exclusive resorts and still more golf.

Expensive, ill-fitting and ill-chosen wigs and fashions hardly befit the first lady of the United States. The Obamas have behaved in every way but presidential – which is why it’s so offensive when we hear Obama say, in order “to restore fiscal responsibility, we all need to share in the sacrifice – but we don’t have to sacrifice the America we believe in.”

The American people have been sacrificing; it is he and his family who are behaving as if they’ve never had two nickels to rub together – and now, having hit the mother lode, they’re going to spend away their feelings of inadequacy at the taxpayers’ expense.

Obama continues to exhibit behavior that, at best, can be described as mobocratic and, at worst, reveals a deeply damaged individual. In a February 2010 column, I asked, “Is Obama unraveling?” I wrote that it was beginning to appear the growing mistrust of him and contempt for his policies was beginning to have a destabilizing effect on him.

At that time, I wrote that not having things go one’s way can be a bitter pill, but reasonable people don’t behave as he was behaving. He had insulted Republicans at their luncheon, where he had been an invited guest. I had speculated that was, in part, what had led him to falsely accuse Supreme Court justices before Congress, the nation and the world, during the 2010 State of the Union address.

It appeared, at that time, as if he were “fraying around the emotional edges.” That behavior has not abated – it has become more pronounced. While addressing the nation, after being forced to explain the validity of his unilateral aggression with Libya, America witnessed a petulant individual scowling and scolding the public for daring to insist he explain his actions.

But during an afternoon speech to address the budget/debt, he took his scornful, unstable despotic behavior to depths that should give the nation cause for concern. Displaying a dark psychopathy more representative of an episode of “The Tudors” television series, he invited Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., to sit in the front row during his speech and then proceeded to berate both Ryan and Ryan’s budget-cutting plan. Even liberal Democrats were put off by the act. MSNBC’s Joe Scarborough questioned the sanity of Obama’s actions.

Today, criticism is coming from all sides. A senior Democrat lawmaker said, “I have been very disappointed in [Obama], to the point where I’m embarrassed that I endorsed him. It’s so bad that some of us are thinking, is there some way we can replace him? How do you get rid of this guy?” (“Democrats’ Disgust with Obama,” The Daily Beast, April 15, 2011)

Steve McCann wrote: Obama’s speech “was chock full of lies, deceit and crass fear-mongering. It must be said that [he] is the most dishonest, deceitful and mendacious person in a position of power I have ever witnessed” (“The Mendacity of Barack Obama,” AmericanThinker.com, April 15, 2011).

McCann continued: “[His] performance was the culmination of four years of outright lies and narcissism that have been largely ignored by the media, including some in the conservative press and

political class who are loath to call [him] what he is in the bluntest of terms: a liar and a fraud. That he relies on his skin color to intimidate, either outright or by insinuation [against] those who oppose his radical agenda only add to his audacity. It’s apparent that he’s gotten away with character flaws his entire life, aided and abetted by sycophants around him. . . .”

With these being among the kinder rebukes being directed at Obama, and with people becoming less intimidated by his willingness to use race as a bludgeon, with falling poll numbers in every meaningful category and an increasingly aggressive tea-party opposition – how much longer before he cracks completely?

The coming months of political life are not going to be pleasant for Obama. Possessed by a self-perceived palatine mindset, that in his mind places him above criticism, how long before he cracks in public? Can America risk a man with a documented track record of lying and misrepresenting truth as a basic way of life, who is becoming increasingly more contumelious?

Mychal Massie is chairman of the National Leadership Network of Black Conservatives-Project 21 – a conservative black think tank located in Washington, D.C. He was recognized as the 2008 Conservative Man of the Year by the Conservative Party of Suffolk County, N.Y. He is a nationally recognized political activist, pundit and columnist. He has appeared on Fox News Channel, CNN, MSNBC, C-SPAN, NBC, Comcast Cable and talk radio programming nationwide. A former self-employed business owner of more than 30 years, Massie can be followed at mychal-massie.com.

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STOSSEL: FROM PAGE 5

When they foresee a future oil shortage — that is, when prices are lower than anticipated in the future — speculators buy lots of it, store it and then sell it when the shortage hits. They know they can charge more when there's relatively little oil on the market. But their selling during the shortage brings prices down from what they would have been had speculators not acted.

Speculators are like the ants in Aesop's "Ants and the Grasshopper" fable: They save resources for lean times. Everyone benefits because everyone has a chance to buy from them in those lean times.

Speculators don't "artificially jack up the price of oil" — they take risks. Those who guess wrong lose a lot of money.

Historically, speculators have been convenient scapegoats, and they have suffered greatly for it. So have the rest of us.

While government should never create political opportunities for speculation, it should also stop interfering with its legitimate economic function.

We all are harmed when central planners take charge.

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

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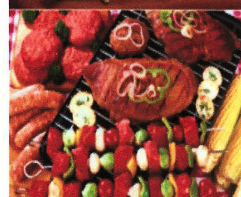
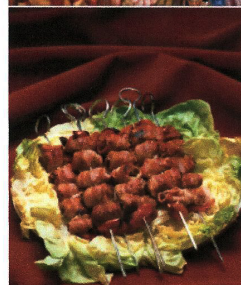
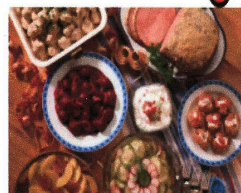


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THE DOCTOR IS 

Complex regional pain syndrome

Rami Rustum, M.D.
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Neuropathic Pain

Neuropathic pain is a complex, chronic pain state that usually is accompanied by tissue injury. With neuropathic pain, the nerve fibers themselves may be damaged, dysfunctional or injured. These damaged nerve fibers send incorrect signals to other pain centers. It is often described as sharp, stinging or burning, neuropathic pain is common in diseases such as diabetes that attack sensory nerves. Nerve pain is also present in conditions such as amputation or spinal cord injury, in which nerves are damaged or severed. Swelling associated with conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) and sciatica can also irritate nerves, causing neuropathic pain.

► Causes of neuropathic pain:

The exact cause of nerve pain is poorly understood. Experts believe that nerve pain occurs after one or more nerves are injured or damaged. As a nerve heals, it may change and send messages about pain, touch and temperature in a different way than before the injury.

Some common causes of neuropathic pain include: Alcoholism, Amputation, Back, leg and hip problems, Chemotherapy, Diabetes, Facial nerve problems, HIV infection or AIDS, Multiple sclerosis, Shingles, Spine surgery, lack of certain vitamins such as B6, B12.

► Symptoms of neuropathic pain:

Symptoms may include: Shooting and burning pain, tingling and numbness or pins and needles. Some patients say "I feel, my feet are always on fire"!

► Tests and diagnosis:

Peripheral neuropathy isn't a single disease, but rather a symptom with many potential causes. For that reason it can be difficult to diagnose. To help in the diagnosis, your doctor will likely take a full medical history and perform a



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!

physical and neurological exam that may include checking your tendon reflexes, your muscle strength and tone, your ability to feel certain sensations, and your posture and coordination.

Blood tests: Vitamin levels, Thyroid function, Blood sugar levels, Liver function, Kidney function

Electromyography: This test measures the electrical signals in peripheral nerves, and the transfer of that signal to muscles. As a part of this test, you'll be asked to have a nerve conduction study, which measures how quickly your nerves carry electrical signals. A nerve conduction study can be used to diagnose carpal tunnel syndrome and other peripheral nerve disorders.

Nerve biopsy: Nerve biopsy is a procedure in which a small portion of a nerve is removed and examined for abnormalities. But even a nerve biopsy may not always reveal what's damaging your nerves.

Imaging tests: Your doctor may also request a CT scan or MRI to look for herniated disks, tumors or other abnormalities.

► Treatments and drugs:

Treatment plays a major part in

dealing neuropathy as it could be a very challenging task to both: the patient and the physician. If the underlying cause is corrected, the neuropathy often improves on its own. Another goal of treatment is to relieve the painful symptoms. Many types of medications can be used to relieve the pain of peripheral neuropathy:

► Pain relievers. Mild symptoms may be relieved by over-the-counter pain medications. For more severe symptoms, your doctor may recommend prescription painkillers. Drugs containing opiates, such as codeine, can lead to dependence, constipation or sedation, so these drugs are generally prescribed only when other treatments fail.

► Anti-seizure medications. Drugs such as gabapentin (Neurontin), topiramate (Topamax), pregabalin (Lyrica), carbamazepine (Tegretol) and phenytoin (Dilantin) were originally developed to treat epilepsy. However, doctors often also prescribe them for nerve pain. Side effects may include drowsiness and dizziness.

► Lidocaine patch. This patch contains the topical anesthetic lidocaine. You apply it to the area where your pain is most severe, and you can use up to four patches a day to relieve pain. This

treatment has almost no side effects except, for some people, a rash at the site of the patch.

► Antidepressants. Tricyclic antidepressant medications, such as amitriptyline and nortriptyline (Pamelor), were originally developed to treat depression. However, they have been found to help relieve pain by interfering with chemical processes in your brain and spinal cord that cause you to feel pain. The serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor duloxetine (Cymbalta) also has proved effective for peripheral neuropathy caused by diabetes. Side effects may include nausea, drowsiness, dizziness, decreased appetite and constipation.

► Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). In this therapy, adhesive electrodes are placed on the skin and a gentle electric current is delivered through the electrodes at varying frequencies. TENS has to be done frequently, but some people report this therapy improves their symptoms.

Other alternative treatments include:

Acupuncture. Acupuncture involves the insertion of thin needles into various points on your body. Acupuncture may reduce symptoms in about three-quarters of people with peripheral neuropathy. However, you may need multiple acupuncture sessions before you notice improvement. Acupuncture is generally considered safe when performed by a certified practitioner using sterile needles.

► Capsaicin. A cream containing this naturally occurring substance found in hot peppers can cause modest improvements in peripheral neuropathy symptoms. Like spicy foods, it may take some time and gradual exposure to get used to because of the hot sensation that this cream creates. Pain relief usually doesn't occur until after you get used to the heat. Doctors may suggest you use this cream in combination with other treatments.

RUSTIM, page 33

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA: FROM PAGE 5

me and to many other Americans. Please allow me to clarify my position, by posing and then answering two questions:

Question 1: "How would the United States deal with an overtly hostile minority population that had divergent values from the majority population and that was trying to annex a separate country within the borders of the USA?"

Answer: We fought a war for similar causes in the 1860s. It was called The American Civil War. Our nation went to inconceivable lengths fighting the most horrific war imaginable to preserve our union and not allow the South to secede. Just as separation was not an option for the USA then, separation cannot be a viable option for The State of Israel, now.

Question 2: "How would you react if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel tried to tell you that the USA was

treating its Native American population unfairly and that we must give up perhaps 30% of our continental land mass so that these oppressed people might create a new nation of their own?"

Answer: Of course, that notion would be preposterous! Further, I think you would have a few choice words for "Bibi", which could not be printed in a newspaper or aired on CNN! I suspect your expletives would be both prickly and abundant.

I submit to you, Mr. Obama, that even if you wanted to give up a comparable portion of the US landmass to our Native American population, you would have no possible way to do it. You would have to abandon perhaps 10 of our Western States and half of Washington DC. I can just hear your address now:

"Sorry, citizens of Washington, Oregon,

California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico. Sorry Washington, DC populations south of the White House. All of you people have to abandon your houses, your jobs, everything you have ever known and worked for, because Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel says we were very mean and unfair to the Native Americans. We need to give them back some of their land so they can create a new country."

Yes, that speech would play well to the American people, don't you think? Oh, sorry, I suppose not. Presenting that speech to your citizens would be the fastest way I can imagine to get you impeached, if not permanently institutionalized!

In summary, you are asking Israel to do what it doesn't want to do, due to legitimate security concerns, and what she could not do, even if she wanted to comply. Moreover, if the roles were reversed, it is clear that you wouldn't and couldn't do it for the very same reasons. Israel is our best friend in the Middle East. Our President should look for ways to support our key allies, not undermine them.

Oh, I have one last question, Mr. Obama: In devising your current policy on Israel were you listening to that old

popular song, "You Always Hurt The One You Love?" Were you singing these famous lyrics to yourself?

"You always hurt the one you love,
The one you shouldn't hurt at all.
You always take the sweetest rose,
And crush it till the petals fall."

Mr. President, I urge you to please rethink your ill-conceived policy on Israel. You are asking her to do what she should not do and what she cannot do. Moreover, your policies endanger our one true friend in that tenuous and historically unstable region. Please stop hurting the one we love.

Very Truly Yours,
Mark A. Dubinsky

Mark Dubinsky is former CEO of his



family's Methuen, MA based network of Dunkin' Donuts Franchises. Today, he develops commercial real estate and is a management consultant to "C" level executives and business owners.

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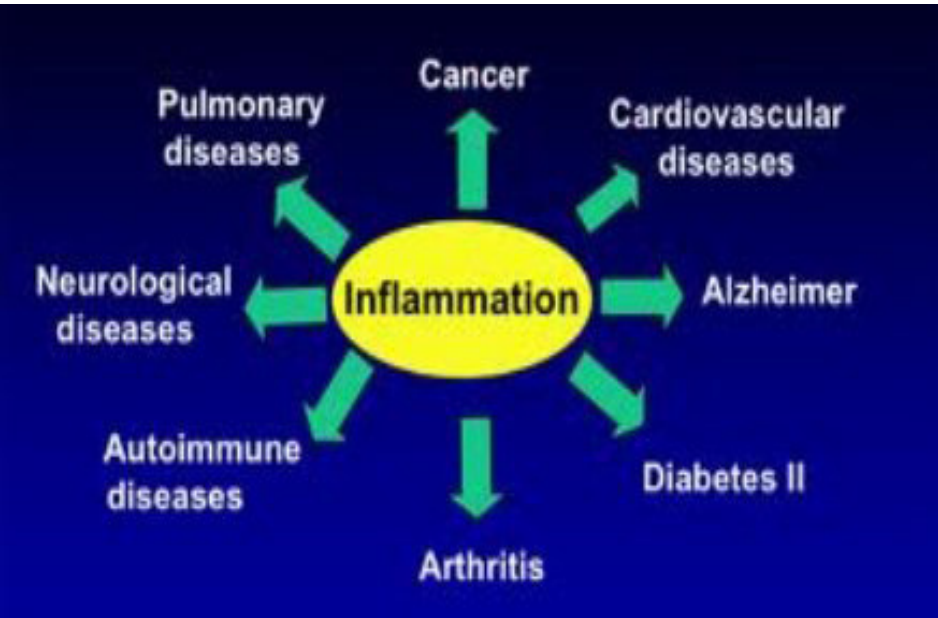
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Surviving Spring & Summer Allergies

Dr. Thomas Johnson
VALLEY PATRIOT ALLERGY COLUMNIST

Now that summer is just around the corner, it is time to plan accordingly. Start checking the daily pollen counts and be prepared for the upcoming allergy seasons. When you are prepared for the allergy season, you can give yourself the opportunity to enjoy a nice walk in the sun, or some gardening and outdoor activities.

Tree and pollen allergies can be the worst of the summer and spring season. Some of the following tips can help you prepare yourself for this season.

Tree allergies can be brutal in the summer months, especially when you start mowing the lawn, gardening, and trying to enjoy the outdoors. With your seasonal enjoyment, comes a certain amount of runny noses, itchy eyes, and coughing for allergy sufferers.

There are a few treatments that will be helpful in your search for allergy relief. Oral antihistamines are the mainstay of treatment of allergies. The advantage of oral antihistamines is that they have the potential to help many symptoms in several places: itchy or watery eyes, runny nose, itching, hives, post-nasal drainage and cough due to draining. The main disadvantage is that most cause drowsiness. If your allergy is held up at night, drowsiness could be a perk to help you fall asleep through the suffering. Antihistamines in genera are not expensive in their generic form. If you have trouble finding the right ntihistamine, ask your pharmacist for help.

If allergy symptoms consist of a runny nose, nasal spray may reduce the reaction to pollen. If the itchy eyes are the problem, try eye drops containing ketotifen or pheniramine. These drugs may be needed, either from exposure to pollen, to decrease your reaction, or to relieve symptoms when they occur.

Decongestants help relieve stuffy noses and runny noses. Decongestants open the



airway, reducing tissue swelling along the nasal area. Some people experience insomnia, anxiety, or palpitations, from use of nose drops, so be careful if you already suffer from these conditions. If you are allergic and planning to mow the lawn or mulch, it would be a good idea to treat with an antihistamine before and / or a decongestant.

Some allergic patients may benefit from the use of an expectorant to help with a consistent cough. An expectorant helps relieve and release any mucus. A cough suppressant may help as well, in suppressing a cough that is not liquid in nature or mucus-filled. For more information or if your allergy symptoms continue, contact your local physician.

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Do You Have Inflammation?

Dr. Jin Sung
VALLEY PATRIOT CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

Many patients suffer from chronic inflammatory disease processes which can cause systemic inflammation in the body. These types of patients are very difficulty to manage if their dietary habits are poor. Below I have listed a good basic anti-inflammatory diet which can benefit most individual regardless of their condition.

- All fruits and vegetables. Eat fruits raw and vegetables raw or lightly cooked. Red and sweet potatoes are acceptable as long as they are consumed with a protein, such as eggs, fish, meat, or fowl.
- Fresh or frozen fish. A recent study indicated that farmed-raised tilapia, catfish and bronzini had unacceptable omega-6 to omega-3 ratios, while all other fish had appropriate ratios (17). Shell fish are also a good option.
- Meat, chicken, eggs from grass-fed animals. Go to www.eatwild.com to find producers of grass-fed animal products. If you cannot acquire grass-fed products, do the best you can to get lean cuts of regular meats, which are available at all supermarkets.
- Omega-3 eggs. Common supermarket brands of anti-inflammatory omega-3 (n-3) eggs are Christopher Eggs (600mg n-3 per egg yolk), followed by 4-Grain Vegetarian omega-3 Eggs (300mg n-3 per yolk), Sparboe Farms omega-3 eggs (250mg n-3 per yolk), and Eggland's Best (110mg n-3 per yolk). Egg whites are also a good choice.
- Wild game (deer, elk, etc.)
- Nuts: raw almonds, cashews, walnuts, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, etc. As nuts are high in calories, be sure to temper your nut consumption if your goal is to lose weight. For example, 1/4 cup of nuts provides about 170-225 calories.
- Spices like ginger, turmeric, garlic, dill, oregano, coriander, fennel, red chili


pepper, basil, rosemary, kelp, etc. (sea salt is okay if you wish to add a little salt).

- Oils and fats: It is best to use organic oils, as it is thought that nonorganic oils may contain pesticides. Use organic extra virgin olive oil and coconut oil. Butter is also a healthy choice and the best butter comes from grass fed cows. You will get the best available butter if you buy organic butter (Organic Valley indicates that their butter and heavy cream are from grass-fed cows).
- Salad dressing: extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar (or lemon juice), mustard if you like, and spices (Greek, Italian, ginger, dill, oregano, etc.; whatever suits your taste). When eating in a restaurant, use dressings sparingly, as most are made with soybean oil or worse, and most are rich in sugar.
- Whenever you are thirsty, drink water or organic green tea (non-organic green tea may contain pesticides and should be avoided).
- Alcohol: Red wine and stout beer are the best choices.
- Candy: Dark chocolate. Be sure to temper your consumption as dark chocolate is high in calories. Try to eat no more than 50-100 calories per day.

We clearly have many anti-inflammatory food options and so should not think that there will be nothing to eat if we do not eat breads, pasta, grains, cereal, and pastries.

Source: www.deflame.com

Dr. Jin Sung is a chiropractor and the owner of Functional Chiropractic, Inc.



He treats patients both neurologically and metabolically to achieve the best outcome. He can be reached at 978 688-6999. Or visit his website at www.DrJinSung.com



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Thomas Connors
VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Here is a Goal I want you to give yourself. Expand your Thinking. And make sure you expand that thinking not just for today, but, for all your tomorrows as well. Take it step by step, moment by moment and realize that all you do today will undoubtedly color what all your tomorrows will look like. Always keeping in mind that the work you put into improving and developing yourself this hour will reflect your ultimate ability to make your Life a **WOW!** in the days, months and especially years ahead.

Now, I know it takes a huge leap of faith to follow this regimen of self-improvement, self-awareness and even self-sacrifice. But, trust me on this, in the end, you will never regret the effort and results it delivers right to your door!

The World is right at your Fingertips. Risk reaching out and holding all it represents in the Palm of your Hands.

Too many people live just for today. They become enamored with the small pleasures that the moment might bring. An analysis usually shows a lack of maturity to hold back and spend valuable time working to generate even bigger and greater satisfaction and success down the road. These people have no ability to see the Big Picture.

Another way to put it is they never seem to be able to connect the dots. They do not see the connection of taking courses and seminars now to guarantee stellar work performance a year from now. They cannot associate good eating habits today with the energy generated

three years from now when you might need it most in order to get ahead by completing a specific project. They also might find it difficult to accept that their spiritual development during the present will give them the faith and encouragement to face challenging times decades from now.

Yet, if they knew, if they had faith, that a world of opportunities was indeed within their reach ... right at their fingertips ... they would think differently and act differently in order to set themselves up for Living the **WOW!**

Stop fencing in your potential opportunities and chances for huge success. Learn to relate today's actions with tomorrow's results.

Think of it this way. Let's say you live in small Town USA. Let's further assume you never go beyond the town's boundaries. You become landlocked. And in the process, deny yourself the opportunities that lay just across the town border. Those opportunities might have opened you up to a new profession or career, new likes and dislikes, new epicurean wonders, new possibilities for personal and professional growth.

The same is true when you fail to focus on the Big Picture and instead narrow your thought process by limiting your potential. You choose to build fences or walls that keep opportunity out rather than encouraging it into your decision making process. The result is a way of thinking that also is landlocked or stunted. Instead of seeing the Big Picture and accommodating that with exciting and outrageously memorable actions, you get accustomed to settling

for less and less day by day until you are virtually crippled by your own thinking.

We encourage Big Picture thinking at American Training every day. It's one reason our reputation for unparalleled success will live on for years to come.

Each one of our Colleagues at our company brings with them a unique and valuable perspective of what it takes to live lives that matter. They teach and counsel with focus on the Big Picture. They encourage targeting what each Student or Guest can do not on whatever limitations they might have.

They also show through example how dedicated commitment to gaining knowledge and skill today, works in their best interest in Living the **WOW!** in the future.

Parables. Miracles. The 12 Apostles. The Bible. Talk about having a Big Picture perspective!

Now, those are a few examples that should get you thinking. Jesus knew His time on earth was limited. He was also very much aware that His greatest impact would last for millenniums if He lived His life for the long term with a Big Picture perspective.

Just look at what He did. He told outrageously memorable stories called parables. Their very nature taught the lessons He wanted to impart on the people He met. And those miracles He performed? Anyone who was present never forgot them. How about His Disciples or Apostles? He hand-selected each one, personally, to carry on His work when He left this earth. And what did they do? They wrote the Bible as

a recorded document of His life. He knew the impact each of these things would eventually have on generation after generation of Christians who would come to know Him in person or through His teachings.

Imagine the impact you could have if you consistently lived with Expansive Big Picture thinking!

Ok, well maybe miracles are out of the question. But, imagine the impact you could have. If people Living the **WOW!** are any indication that impact could be pretty darn good.

Think about it. Your decisions would be geared toward guaranteeing you a future filled with riches beyond belief. Not just financially, but in terms of peace of mind and accomplishment. You would also be an example for your children and grandchildren; someone they would look up to and admire. A legacy is what you would be leaving when you ultimately pass from this world, one that reminds others that you were one amazing individual.


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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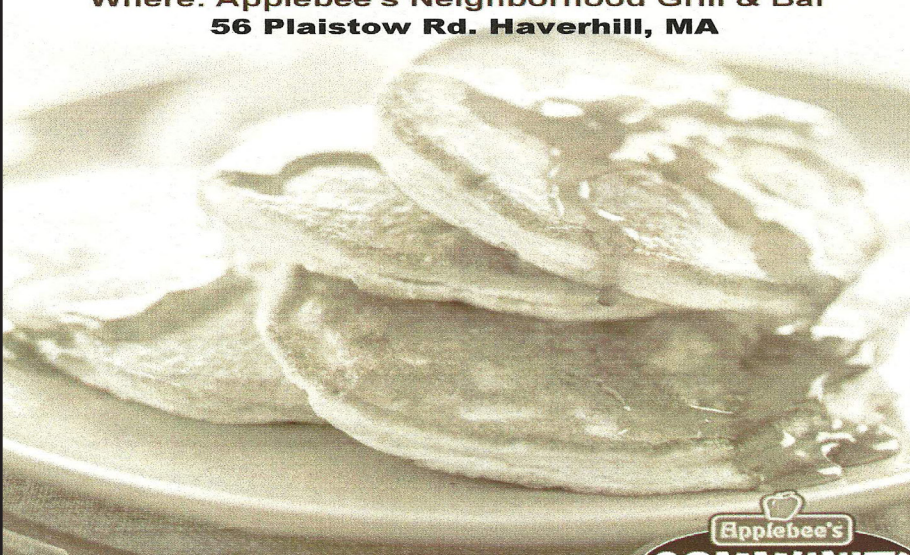



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Parole Reform, Truth in Sentencing must be top Priority

Senators Bruce Tarr & Steve Baddour

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNISTS

Every member of society should feel safe in their own community. They should feel safe to walk to the store, go to work and drive around town. They should feel that their children are safe to ride their bikes, play outside, and go to school - all without fear that violent habitual offenders are being freed upon parole to prey again in our communities.

Today in Massachusetts, we cannot say with confidence that this is the case. For far too long, criminal offenders have been able to game the system and use every loophole available to avoid having to pay for their crimes. Justice is not being served and the public is not as safe as it should be.

The Commonwealth needs to blend

a tough-on-crime and common sense approach towards those convicted of violent crimes by implementing immediate changes and reforms to the Parole Board and the Parole Process. These changes will help ensure that hardened, career criminals stay in prison - where they ought to be – and shift the power from the criminals back to the victims and society. Justice, not criminals, must have the upper hand; today she doesn't.

In the aftermath of the December 26th shooting death of Woburn Police Officer John "Jack" Maguire, we led a group of bi-partisan Senators who called for a moratorium on parole hearings pending the outcome of an investigation into the Cinelli case, with many of the Senators demanding the parole board members resign. Exactly one week later, on January 13th, the five board members

who had voted in favor of paroling Cinelli submitted their resignations.

The resignation of the parole board members was a necessary first step for addressing the gross miscarriage of justice that failed Officer Maguire and his family, but the process of implementing meaningful and lasting reforms to restore the public's faith and trust in our criminal justice system has only just begun.

Last month, The Judiciary committee held a hearing on several bills that contained a series of steps to ensure that truth-in-sentencing and parole reform become a reality in Massachusetts.

And, what is critically important is that two of the bills, Melissa's Bill (H. 434) and our bi-partisan comprehensive Parole Reform bill (S. 891), would eliminate the circumstances that led to the early release of a habitual violent offender like

Domenic Cinelli. These bills would make anyone with more than one life sentence ineligible for parole – period.

Most people deserve a second chance, but no one deserves a 3rd or 4th when we are talking about repeat violent criminals.

These are key pieces to improving public safety. However, there is more to do. We want these bills to be the starting point of a comprehensive reform effort that fixes how we sentence criminals, prohibit parole for any habitual violent criminal offender, AND reevaluates who oversees the parole process. This makes sense and sends a powerful signal to the citizens of the Commonwealth that we are serious about restoring credibility to our criminal justice system. Melissa Gosule, Officer John Maguire, all victims, and every citizen of the Commonwealth deserves no less.

Repeal of Ban on Educational Dinners for Doctors Passes House

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

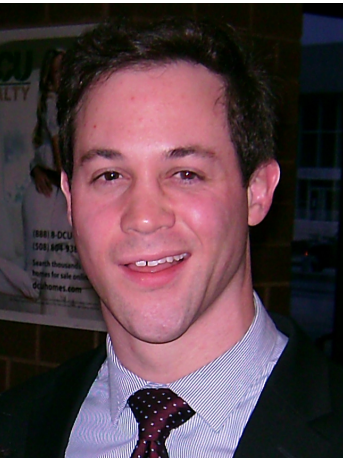
Boston - Massachusetts is now one step closer to repealing the controversial ban on "Educational Dinners for Doctors," a law no other state has and one that makes Massachusetts unlikely to see pharmaceutical conventions return to the Bay State until it is repealed. The vote was an amendment to the budget, and the issue will now be voted on in the State Senate in the coming weeks.

The repeal has been proposed previously, but has gained momentum recently as the debate over the economic impact, and the loss of pharmaceutical conventions, as become evident. One of the Bill's original sponsors in previous years, State Representative Garrett Bradley (D-Hingham) was please with the support. "I am happy that we were able to repeal the Pharmaceutical Gift ban during today's budget debate, said Representative Bradley. "It is clear that the Commonwealth has lost revenue while this ban has been in place and

many local Restaurants have lost a significant part of their business as well."

Another advocate, Dave Andelman of the Phantom Gourmet, became active on this issue after he watched the bill fail last year. "I was shocked once the case was made and the impact was realized. It made no sense to handcuff our state's convention business, not to mention restaurants, when no other state has this restriction." stated Andelman. He concluded, "That is why my team and I felt the need to get involved."

And their impact was felt. After contacting Representative Bradley's office, they began reaching out to others. In the State Senate, Bruce Tarr filed the



corresponding piece of legislation, and several legislators in the House added their names as cosponsors.

One such legislator, State Representative Paul Adams, (R-Andover) agreed with the impact stating, "I thank Dave Andelman and his team for bringing this issue to my attention in January, early enough for me to cosponsor this legislation.

This repeal will make it easier for medical and pharmaceutical companies to do business here and stay here."

And Representative Adams was not alone.

"With this repeal, the Commonwealth will be able to tap into the lucrative and profitable medical industry. This will enable an influx of revenue into

the state's economy, thus benefiting the taxpayers," added State Representative Kim Ferguson (R-Holden). She continued, "I also want to thank Dave Andelman for his work and advocacy on this and other issues. The information his team provides is valuable."

Echoing her sentiments was State Representative Steven Levy (R-Marlborough) who added "This ban accomplished none of its stated goals and had unintended detrimental consequences to the hospitality industry. I thank Dave Andelman for his role in bringing this issue to forefront and being an advocate for this needed change."

Dave Andelman is the CEO of Phantom Gourmet Inc. He is an attorney and MBA who has been successfully advising restaurants in their operations and promotion for the past seventeen years. Phantom Gourmet is on TV38 Saturday & Sunday 11AM and 96.9FM Boston Talks Saturday 4 to 7PM.

FROM 15: Local Home Prices Slow in March

family homes, condominiums, and multi-family homes for sale locally has risen over the past few months, but is still well below the peaks set in 2006 and 2007.

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

March 2011 vs. March 2010	# Sold March 2010	# Sold March 2011	Yr over Year Change	Median Price March 2010	Median Price March 2011	Yr over Year Change	Avg. DoM March 2010	Avg. DoM March 2011	Yr over Year Change
Single Family	211	176	-16.6%	324,900	\$286,750	-11.7%	124	139	12.1%
Condo	90	84	-6.7%	162,600	178,750	9.9%	124	145	16.9%
Multi Family	48	37	-22.9%	157,750	180,000	14.1%	85	82	-3.5%

March 2011 vs. Feb 2011	# Sold Feb 2011	# Sold March 2011	Mo over Month Change	Median Price Feb 2011	Median Price March 2011	Mo over Month Change	Avg. DoM Feb 2011	Avg. DoM March 2011	Mo over Month Change
Single Family	100	176	76%	\$255,250	\$286,750	12.3%	134	139	3.7%
Condo	39	84	115.4%	115,000	178,750	55.4%	124	145	21.8%
Multi Family	31	37	-14.3%	175,000	180,000	-10.7%	94	82	-5.0%

Year-to-date Jan – March	# 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	489	422	-13.7%	\$300,400	\$290,000	-3.5%	125	131	4.8%
Condo	225	190	-15.6%	168,000	165,000	-1.8%	128	139	8.6%
Multi Family	140	110	-21.4%	163,750	175,000	6.9%	140	90	-35.7%

NEAR Territory	Andover, Billerica, Boxford, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Lawrence, Littleton, Lowell, Methuen, North Andover, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro, Westford.
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Ask the Reverse Mortgage Guy NH Poll Shows Romney Leading among Likely GOP Primary Voters

Bob Irving

VALLEY PATRIOT MORTGAGE SPECIALIST

Celebrity TV Endorsements - Robert Wagner is back on TV in a toned down commercial for reverse mortgages; this time for Guardian First Funding Group out of New York and Philadelphia. According to an employment ad, this company operates a Call Center and hires telephone representatives as they “aggressively expand operations” in an upscale Manhattan office.

How the ladies still love Bob! He is ranked as the number one spokesperson for reverse mortgages and his ads generate thousands of phone calls to the Call Centers. Then there is Fred Thompson, Pat Boone. Even The Fonz (Henry Winkler) is hustling late night free DVDs or videos on reverse mortgages.

What do these celebrities actually know about reverse mortgages? Nothing! The free DVDs and videos provide generic information of little value. However, they clearly help lenders identify TV viewers who are interested in reverse mortgages... and that’s what it’s all about as far as these Call Center advertisers are concerned. If you respond to the offer for a free disc/tape... be prepared for numerous phone calls to “follow up” on your information request.

Most forms of Reverse Mortgage advertising are designed to snag your name & phone number and are not informative. If you were among hundreds of thousands who called the 800 number and eventually received the promised CD or Video... you were highly disappointed with the contents. I certainly was. You were probably even more annoyed by the stream of dinner time follow up phone calls from strangers located far away trying to “help”. You see, your name and phone number were sold to someone else and you were targeted for sales calls as a result of this innocent inquiry. That’s the sole purpose of those ads; to snag your name and phone number.

Face To Face Is Key - How could you ever have a face-to-face family meeting to discuss reverse mortgages when the “loan officer” is actually a youngster located somewhere in Colorado? This is not really a decision you want to make on a conference call with a junior telemarketer, is it? You want your loan officer to have some life experience (maturity) in order to be able to relate to issues that concern seniors. That’s what makes Wagner’s ads so successful... for the lender. He has some life experience. Too bad he’s not going to sit down at the kitchen table with you to provide real answers to your specific questions.

63% of seniors use the internet as a research tool. You can learn a lot on the internet... if you are very careful. You should understand that there are hundreds of internet-based commercial operations promising to “put you in touch with preferred lenders” or have “our reverse mortgage expert call you immediately” or “send you valuable reverse mortgage

information.”

Beware! - These people are simply trolling for names and addresses that they turn around and sell to lenders anywhere in the country. Lenders pay as little as \$5 per name or as much as \$150 depending upon so-called quality. The more expensive

“leads” are usually the result of responses to TV commercials like the long running Robert Wagner offer to learn “much, much more...”. Chances are good that your contact information was sold to a lender willing to call you repeatedly and usually at dinnertime to annoyingly offer reverse mortgage services.

Google Ads - If you “Google” the

words reverse mortgages you come up with millions of listings. Listings that appear on the resulting first page are not there by accident. There is an entire industry dealing with SEO (search engine optimization) that assists those who want to appear among the first few pages of search results. For a fee, search engines allow individuals or companies to have their listing appear within the top couple of positions. These paid listings are recognized by the shaded yellow background. More advertisers appear on the extreme right column of the page. You wonder why would someone pay money to have you click on their listing? The answer is usually that they will be making money from the information they collect from you.

Other Problems - In the experience of many, the promised information is almost worthless. The material you receive will be generic at best, outdated and inaccurate at worst. The list of “preferred lenders” is laughable. Even HUD’s published lender list is woefully inaccurate, incomplete and way out of date.

Boiler Room Operations - Not only is the information probably worthless, it is likely that you will be dealing with someone sitting in a room full of phone banks calling seniors all over the country from a location in, say – Colorado. You will never see this person face-to-face. This person will know nothing about lending regulations in your state, Massachusetts or New Hampshire, for example. You will have no idea if this person is an expert in the reverse mortgage industry or a youngster that started working the phones yesterday.

Next issue we will discuss tips on the best ways to choose a lender to work with.

Bob Irving is a Sr. Reverse Mortgage Consultant and Certified Senior Advisor with First Integrity Mortgage, LLC in Lawrence MA and. He is fully licensed in MA, NH & ME (NMLS #19086) and works with senior clients, their families and trusted advisors by referral. If you have questions, he may be reached direct at 978-686-0394 or by email at rhirving@gmail.com . Visit his website at www.rhirving.com for access to more detailed information about reverse mortgages.



Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney is a clear front-runner in New Hampshire, while low favorability ratings from Granite State voters have left Donald Trump back with a crowded pack of Republican presidential hopefuls, according to a Suffolk University/7News (WHDH-TV) poll of likely voters nine months before the New Hampshire Primary.

Romney dominates the field of 18 names and is favored by 35 percent of those polled. The highest percentage that any possible opponent secured was in the single digits. Among Granite State Republican Primary voters, Romney’s favorable rating is a commanding 65 percent, while 22 percent of respondents view him unfavorably.

“Today, Mitt Romney is the clear front-runner in the New Hampshire Republican Primary – but front-runner status has its drawbacks,” said David Paleologos, director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center in Boston. “He will quickly become the target, and like Hillary Clinton a year before the 2008 party primaries, being positioned as the ‘inevitable’ nominee is often followed by a decline in the polls.”

Donald Trump, Rudolph Giuliani and Ron Paul all received 8 percent in the Suffolk University/7News poll of New Hampshire primary voters. Sarah Palin garners 7 percent; Mike Huckabee, 6 percent; and Tim Pawlenty, 5 percent.

Michele Bachmann gets 3 percent, as does Newt Gingrich. Other potential candidates divvy up the rest, and 13 percent of respondents remain undecided.

Trump received a dismal 27 percent favorable rating, while 56 percent of respondents view him unfavorably. Sarah Palin’s unfavorable rate also was high, but at 46 percent was much less than Trump’s, and 42 percent of those polled viewed her favorably.

Health care

On the issue of health care, 86 percent of likely Republican Primary voters felt that universal health care should be repealed (52 percent) or modified (34 percent). Despite this, a majority of respondents (53 percent) said that Romney’s involvement in helping to pass Massachusetts’ universal health care law would not affect their decision to vote for him.

“New Hampshire Republicans tend to look at issues a bit differently than others in the country, so Romney’s not out of the woods on the health care issue,” Paleologos said. “But, given the influence of New Hampshire’s Presidential Primary and that independents and new voters who register at the polls may choose a Republican ballot, it’s beneficial to Mitt Romney that these voters are not holding his Massachusetts health care legacy

ROMNEY, page 36

TEA PARTY: FROM PAGE 26

disturb free speech. For that, they should be commended. The always classy anarchists reacted by swearing, making vulgar hand gestures and waving their offensive signs complete with profanity.

Why are these two groups of protesters so threatened by the Tea Party?

The public sector unions, while enjoying extravagant benefit packages paid for on the backs of average citizens are now being asked by those same overburdened taxpayers to make a modest contribution. To this they are vehemently opposed. Unlike private unions, public unions negotiate for benefits, not with those who actually pay for those lavish perks, but with government bureaucrats who they continue to re-elect through their enormous campaign contributions. It’s

about time the taxpayers had a seat at the table.

As for the young anarchists, who have yet to experience a real job, live in the real world or pay real taxes, well, they are just too immature to know any better.

Please join us at our next Merrimack Valley Tea Party meeting: Wednesday May 18th @ 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

RUSTUM: FROM PAGE 29

► Alpha-lipoic acid. Used as a treatment for peripheral neuropathy in Europe for years, this antioxidant may help reduce the symptoms of peripheral neuropathy. Discuss the use of alpha-lipoic acid with your doctor before using it, because alpha-lipoic acid may affect your blood sugar levels. Side effects may include stomach upset and skin rash.

► Biofeedback. During a biofeedback session, the therapist applies electrical sensors to different parts of your body to monitor your body’s physiological response to your peripheral neuropathy symptoms. The biofeedback device then teaches you how your body responds using cues such as a beeping sound or flashing lights. This feedback can help you associate your body’s response with certain physical functions. Once you begin to recognize your body’s responses, you can learn ways to lessen the reaction through techniques such as relaxation or guided imagery.

► Prevention: - Manage underlying conditions

The best way to prevent peripheral neuropathy is to carefully manage any

medical condition that puts you at risk. That means controlling your blood sugar level if you have diabetes or talking to your doctor about safe and effective treatments if you think you may have a problem with alcohol.

- Adopt healthy lifestyle habits

Whether or not you have a medical condition, eating a healthy diet that’s rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein can help keep your nerves healthy. For example, nerve damage is common if you have a vitamin B-12 deficiency. The best food sources of vitamin B-12 are meats, fish, eggs, low-fat dairy foods and fortified cereals. If you’re a strict vegetarian, fortified cereals are a good source of vitamin B-12 for you, but you may also want to talk to your doctor about B-12 supplements. Regular exercise also is important. If possible, try to get at least 30 minutes to one hour of exercise at least three times a week.

As much as possible, avoid things that can cause nerve damage, such as: Repetitive motions, cramped positions, Toxic chemicals, Tobacco smoke, Excessive alcohol consumption.

See our Coupon Offers: Page 1

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Shawn Hansen’s Sports Corner: A look at the Red Sox

Looking at the standings in Major League Baseball nearing the end of April with the Red Sox sitting in fourth place holding a record of 11-13, some fans might feel worried about how far they will go this year.

Starting the season off being swept out of Rangers Ballpark in Arlington by the reigning American League Champion Texas Rangers, and by the Cleveland Indians at Progressive Field by a combined score of 38-16, the Red Sox were off to their worst start in 15-years with a record of 0-6.

The combinations of playing the Texas Rangers, Cleveland Indians, New York Yankees, Tampa Bay Rays, Toronto Blue Jays, Oakland Athletics, Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim, and the Baltimore Orioles, the Red Sox have only been outscored by their opponents 106-103, which means they are scoring runs, whether people think they are, or not.

Playing eight series through April 28, the Red Sox have lost series match ups against the Rangers (26-11), Indians (12-5), Rays (19-7), and the Athletics (8-5).

On the other side of the field, they have beat the Yankees (17-15), Blue Jays (27-10), and the Angels (20-5).

Despite having a rough series with the Orioles losing two out of three, they ended up tying up the trio of games 11-11.

Jon Lester won the only game against the Halloween team from Maryland increasing his lifetime record to 14-0 against the Orioles.

This year with the additions of Adrian Gonzalez, and

Carl Crawford, the Red Sox were marked down as the team to beat.

Through the first eight series played, Gonzalez has adapted to the Red Sox quickly picking up 30 hits, 10 doubles, one triple, 1 homerun, and 15 RBIs. He has walked 9 times, and struck out 16, earning a .306 batting average in 24 games.

With the name of Gonzalez, and a cartoon character named, “Speedy Gonzalez,” Crawford, who is known for his speed has had a slower start in Boston tallying home 15 hits, four doubles, 1 homerun, and 6 RBIs, walking four times, and striking out 17. He has a .160 average in 23 games. He has stole four bases out of a possible six.

Despite the slow start the Red Sox have been off to, they have brought their bats to work day in, and day out. Bigg Papi, Kevin Youkilis, Darnell McDonald, and J.D. Drew all have homeruns, but the spark to the fire so far is the amazing turn around for a few of the younger players.

Turning their seasons around thus far, Short Stop Jed Lowrie, Centerfielder Jacoby Ellsbury, and Closing Pitcher Jonathan Papelbon have been playing sensational baseball.

In 19 games, Lowrie has hit 3 homeruns driving in 12 RBIs on 24 hits, picking up four doubles, striking out 10 times, walking three with a .400 average.

Ellsbury has picked up 23 hits, 6 doubles, 4 homeruns, and 14 RBIs, walking seven times, striking out 23. He has a .264 average in 24 games, and has stole five bases out of a possible eight.

Papelbon has picked up five saves in five opportunities



these fair weathered fans have towards the Red Sox changed as fast as a freight train trying to catch a cab.

When in Middlesex Community College, taking a baseball class, the teacher always said, “In baseball, every team is going to win 50 games, and lose 50 games. It’s the 62 games after that, that counts.”

Adding onto his quote, think that if the Red Sox don’t win the World Series this year, which they most likely will, and create history for becoming the first team coming back from a 2-10 start to win it all, there is always next year.

Also, just think, from starting 0-6 as the worst start in 15-years, the Sox beat the Yankees twice for our first two wins of 2011!

Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner: ... ShawnHansen.weebly.com

In the town of Burlington, MA, there has been a Late Night television show named, Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner [SHCC] that has been on for one year, two months, and six days... not that anyone’s keeping track or anything. This information is said taking into consideration that everyone knows the show started on February 23, 2010, and this article was written on April 29, 2011.

Within that time frame, which happens to be 430 days, SHCC turned into a complete Late Night Show in December 2010 bringing in musicians, authors, poets, and fighters of the Boxing World, and the Mixed Martial Arts World, including Actors, Actresses, and Artists... Triple-A now has a new meaning.

Beneath The Surface of SHCC, there is a Web site that many can go to for more information about Shawn Hansen, or his Late Night television show.

“First off, I would like to say that Rescue Me is one of my favorite television shows aside my show, Rick Heneghan’s Common Sense HD, and Jeff Ferguson’s JeffTV,” said Hansen. “Despite Rescue Me airing their last season this year, they have shown 13 episodes each season since they started in 2004. Right now, as of Friday, April 29, 2011, I have taped 169 Shawn Hansen’s Comedy Corner episodes. My next show will be Thursday, May 5, 2011 with Comedian Craig Martin, which Scientists are still working diligently trying to find out if he is related to Steve Martin. On that note, they are still trying to find out if Comedian Andy Lester, who was on my 169th show is Red Sox pitcher Jon Lester’s father. Anyways, in Rescue Me terms, my show will be starting it’s 14th season on May 5, mainly because 13 multiplied by 13 equals 169, which is the number of shows I currently have taped. Add one to this scenario, and you get Season 14.”

Getting to the topic of www.shawnhansen.weebly.com, everything on the site is going to be discussed as



it is in a lineup of a baseball team, because baseball is my favorite sport. With that said, batting first, on the, “Home,” page anyone can find out how SHCC came to a TV near you.

Batting second is, “Conspiracies,” which is one of the best tabs on the Web site of SHCC. This portion of the site brings the SHCC reader, SHCC fan, SHCC spectator, or whatever you would like to call them a glimpse of how two and two not only equals four, but connects two different stories together.

For example, on the site it says, “I interviewed Nevil Rivet, who worked for Fox Hill Cemetery. Growing up, I went to Fox Hill Elementary School.”

Batting third is, “Contact Us,” where it has links to the SHCC YouTube page at www.youtube.com/shcctv, and Facebook fan page at www.facebook.com/shawnhansenscomedycorner. There are also regulations of the show, and directions to the studio.

Batting in the clean up position is, “Experience.”

Clicking directly on the tab will show fans some of the different jobs Shawn Hansen has had. Scrolling down, there is information about Hansen going to the Connecticut School of Broadcasting [CSB], University of Massachusetts Lowell [UML], Middlesex Community College [MCC], and Dean College. These schools are written down from most recent, to the oldest because that is something I learnt from CSB.

Batting fifth is, “Links,” where you can find out that Hansen is not selfish whatsoever, and has links to different SHCC mediums as well as friends Web sites.

Batting sixth is, “Newspapers.” In this tab ... Speaking of, “Tab,” Comedian Chris Tabb was on the 102nd SHCC episode, show, whatever comedy fans want to call it. Scrolling down in this section, anyone can see select SHCC columns including Made Up Words, such as Sweetcellent, Sweetastic, and Welp.

Batting seventh is, “Schedule.” where fans can click to see who is going to be on the next show, along with, “Show Archives,” to see who appeared on the show in the past.

Batting eighth is, “Shawn Hansen.” Here, anyone can read up about television host Shawn Hansen, who also has broadcasted basketball games, covered a season of Lowell Devils hockey for The Valley Patriot, interviewed hundreds of people, went to Florida seven times, and is an avid pool player.

Next up was a dispute between an umpire, and manager, so “SHCCtv,” intervened to tell everyone about the SHCC YouTube channel.

Batting ninth is, “Sports,” where it talks about all the different sports athletes Hansen has interviewed, along with all of the sports card shows he has been to.

For more information about Shawn Hansen, go to www.shawnhansen.weebly.com.

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“Faces of Jesus” International Mail Art Exhibit Showing In Haverhill

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER-EDITOR

When Methuen artist Sharon Silverman decided to curate a Mail Art exhibit depicting the many faces of Jesus from around the world, she had no idea how big or how popular it would become.

“I wanted to do an art show that depicted the many ways people in different cultures around the world see Jesus, but I wanted it to be respectful,” Silverman told The Valley Patriot.

“What I didn’t want was shock art, or Jesus humor. I have no interest in that kind of art, there’s plenty of that garbage out there, that’s not what I am doing here.”

“Besides,” she added, “if I put one piece of shock art in here, everyone would be talking about that, and the rest of these wonderful pieces of mail art would be overlooked and ignored. So, I know some people are pretty negative about what I am doing, especially in the art world where pieces like the cross in urine is celebrated but that’s not what I wanted to do. If someone else wants to do that let them do it.”

Silverman said she was sick of seeing “depressing” depictions of Jesus and pieces that mocked him and what he stood for. “But I was always fascinated that Jesus is shown in every culture in some way. Through the different art periods all the art changed too. You will see a cubist piece and a Byzantine piece and all these folk art pieces. So, not only is Jesus shown in different cultures but in different art forms. But no one was showing what people were doing today. What kind of stuff was going on in this little sliver of time? So, when I didn’t limit it, except to be respectful of the subject matter, people were sending in all kinds of different art forms from all over the world.

A Unique Art Show

Silverman said she put out the call on a website for the International Union of Mail Artists (iuoma-network.ning.com), an organization which she has been a member of for decades, “and the art came pouring in from as far away as the Netherlands, Australia, Russia, Africa, and every state in the US.”

“People sent in patches, they sent in stickers, broaches, hand carvings, and some really creative pieces made from just about every material you can imagine. We even got a Harley Davidson biker patch,” she said laughing. “So you never know what people are going to send you when you do a showing like this, some of it is really fascinating.”

Silverman said that the one thing every piece in the gallery has in common is that they were all sent in through the mail, as is. “And that’s important because it shows proof of where the artists come from and when the art was created because every piece went through the mail, so everything is stamped through the post office with a date that chronicles where it came from and when.”

Free Art for Arts’ Sake

Silverman says her “Faces of Jesus” Mail Art Show is not only unique because of the subject matter, but none of the pieces showing at The Angles & Art Gallery in Haverhill, Massachusetts are for sale.

“It’s a free show for anyone who wants to see it, but the art is not for sale. We



Sharon Silverman is curating an international Art show called “The Faces of Jesus” in Haverhill until June 3rd. The show features artistic depictions of how every culture in the world views Jesus. You can visit the free “Faces of Jesus” International Mail Art Show at Angles & Art Gallery, 80 Wingate Street, Haverhill, MA.

are not doing this to make money we are doing it to celebrate mail art and the subject,” she said. “Some people don’t get it. They say, ‘what are you crazy, you’re doing an art show and you are not making any money on it?’ They can’t fathom that.”

“I say, why can’t you fathom that art is for everybody? Come in, see it, enjoy it, photograph it and go home. If you like it, you like it. And if you don’t, you

don’t. That’s ok too. I want the artwork to speak for itself. It’s a concept that people aren’t used to, ‘art for arts’ sake.’ It’s free to the public but it’s done so that people can come in and enjoy it and not have to worry about someone trying to sell them something.”

The “Faces of Jesus” Mail Art Show is being hailed as an unusual show because it’s something the art world doesn’t see

very often. Silverman says that it took her nearly three and a half weeks to hang the art because of how many pieces were mailed in from around the world. She says that the show will be traveling and hopes to have it shown in Boston and Baltimore as well as other major cities across the country.

Take as many photos as you like

FACES OF JESUS, page 42

Doggy Boot Camp

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

According to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, about 55% of all adult dogs are overweight or obese. MERRIMACK VALLEY let’s get those poochies MOVING!!

Obesity in dogs is just as harmful as it is to humans. Animals are prone to several of the same diseases as we are. But the good news is, they are also just as preventable. Simply put, a balanced diet and plenty of exercise. A little extra love time also helps too!

Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care will be hosting a 4 week “Doggie Boot Camp” in North Andover starting on June 5, 2011. The purpose of this camp is to get your dogs moving and to have fun doing it. Under the instruction of Jon Boston, six year dog training veteran, there will be activities, play stations, and exercise routines. Tracey Zysk will be offering an education piece to the program offering health & wellness tips and resources.

Come join us and help your dog get back into shape. This class is great for dogs that may be overweight, have extra energy to burn or just want to get some social doggy play time. We ask all dogs be dog friendly as there will be interaction with other dogs and that they are up to date with all their shots. Owners please bring proof of vaccinations, poop bags,



water and wear your sneakers. This will be similar to a training session and owner participation is welcomed.

The cost will be \$20.00 a session. If you are interested please contact Tracey at 978-697-6571 to reserve your spot. wigglewalk@comcast.net

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



4th Annual Dog Day Festival

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

It’s that time of year...Dog Day Festival! Yes, once again Jackie Fitzgerald of Treadwell’s Ice Cream will be hosting her annual fundraiser for the MSPCA at Smolak Farms.

This year marks the fourth anniversary of this wonderful event. Having been a vendor, I can tell you it truly is one NOT to miss. What a great way to spend an enjoyable day bonding with your family and your dog. There is just so much to do:

While the kids are enjoying hayrides, duck races, bouncy houses and slides, spoil your dogs with a full body doggie massage by Good Dog Aquatic, a reiki session with Ellen Walker or have their nails trimmed by GroomTown. Stop over to Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care for some treats, celebrate their 10th year anniversary and to learn more about their new Doggie Boot Camp program. From there stroll over to Ciao Bow Wow, Dawg City, and Sit Pretty Hand Made Dog Collars to find some of the new and trendiest merchandise for your furry friend. A Boy and his Dog Bakery will surely have some delicious samples to try and Pawsitive Paws Dog Training will be presenting a Frisbee demonstration at 2PM. Pet Stop will be able to demonstrate how an electric fence works. For the

safety of our pets, River Road Veterinary Hospital will be offering a microchip session.

Don’t have a dog or thinking about adding another addition to your family? MSPCA and the German Shepherd Resource & Rescue will be on site to answer any questions you may have and to help you with the adoption process.

And don’t forget the FAMOUS raffle baskets...OH MY..these baskets are unbelievable. You could win free training sessions, dog walking discounts, merchandise, treats, grooms, massages, etc . Honestly, you just don’t know what may be in these baskets, who knows, maybe a little something for your kitty too!

Food will be available at the farm stand and doggie dishes of vanilla ice cream with biscuits at Treadwell’s!

There will be a \$2.00 parking fee with all proceeds being donated to the MSPCA. Last year’s event brought in approximately \$2500.00 for the MSPCA and this year is expected to bring in even more!

Mark you calendar and we hope to see you on Sunday May 15th from 10-4PM at Smolak Farms in North Andover, MA

Dogs Ten Commandments

1. My life is likely to last 10 to 15 years – any separation from you will be very painful.
2. Give me time to understand what you want of me.
3. Place your trust in me – it is critical for my well being.
4. Don’t be angry with me for long and don’t lock me up as punishment..... You have your work, your friends, your entertainment.....I HAVE ONLY YOU!!!
5. Talk to me. Even if I don’t understand your words, I understand your voice when you’re speaking to me.
6. Be aware that however you treat me, I’ll NEVER forget it.
7. Before you hit me, remember that

I have teeth that could easily crush the bones in your hand but I choose NOT to bite YOU.

8. Before you scold me for being lazy or uncooperative, ask yourself is something might be bothering me. Perhaps I’m not getting the right food, I’ve been out in the sun too long or my heart may be getting old and weak.

9. Take care of me when I get old. You too will grow old.

10. Go with me on difficult journeys. Never say, “I can’t bear to watch it” or “Let it happen in my absence”. Everything is easier for ME if you are there. Remember that I love you.

The Prayer of a Stray

Dear God,

Please send me somebody who will care! I am tired of running, I am sick with despair. My body is aching, it is racked with pain and, Dear God, I pray as I run in the rain that someone will love me and give me a home, a warm cozy bed and a big juicy bone.

My last owner tied me all day in the yard, sometimes with no water and boy that was hard.

So I chewed my leash and I ran away to rummage in garbage and live as a stray. But now I am tired and hungry and cold and I am so afraid that I will never grow old.

They have chased me with sticks and hit me with stones while I run the streets just looking for bones. I’m not really bad God, please help if you can, for I have become a “victim of man”.

I am wormy and ridden with fleas and all that I want is an owner to please. If you find one for me, I’ll try to be good and I won’t chew their shoes but I’ll do as I should.

I’ll love them, protect them and try to



obey when they tell me to sit, lie down or to stay. I don’t think I’ll make it too long on my own, because I’m getting so weak and I am so alone. Each night as I sleep in the bushes I cry cuz I’m so afraid that I am going to die!

I’ve got so much love and devotion to give that I should be given a new chance to live.

So please, Dear God, please answer my prayer and send me someone who WILL really care.

against him.”

Voter predictions

Overall, only 39 percent of respondents believed that Trump will become an official candidate for president. In addition, 59 percent said that the White House’s release of President Barack Obama’s long-form birth certificate has put the issue of Obama’s citizenship to rest.

Compared to Trump, Obama did far better among likely Republican primary voters, with a 36 percent favorable rating, even though only 12 percent said the country was heading in the right direction and 84 percent said it’s on the wrong track. And, disregarding their personal presidential preferences, 28 percent of Republican Primary voters said they expect Obama will be the next president, 20 percent said Romney, 8 percent Trump, and 4 percent Huckabee. Twelve percent chose one of the other 15 candidates, and 30 percent weren’t sure.

“The strong perception in New Hampshire– even among likely Republican voters – is that Barack Obama will stay in the White House,” said Paleologos.

A number of Republicans have ruled out a run for President in 2012. However, if he were to run, the poll shows Gen. Colin Powell would vault to the front of

the GOP pack. Some 30 percent said they would support Powell over the candidate they currently support, followed by 16 percent who would switch to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. Powell also received a 65 percent favorable rating, the same as Mitt Romney’s.

The top issues facing the country were jobs and the economy (37 percent) and reducing the national debt (28 percent). On reducing the deficit, Republican Primary voters were against raising taxes almost 2-1 (63 percent agree vs. 32 percent disagree), and split over whether cutting or changing entitlement programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security would be necessary to help pay down the debt (48 percent agree vs. 45 percent disagree).

Methodology

The statewide survey of 400 likely voters in New Hampshire’s Republican Presidential Primary was conducted April 30-May 2, 2011 using live telephone interviews. The margin of error is +/- 4.9 percent at a 95 percent level of confidence. Marginals and full cross-tabulation data will be posted at 11:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4, 2011, on the Suffolk University Political Research Center Web site. For more information, contact David Paleologos at 781-290-9310, dpaleologos@suffolk.edu.

Raising a puppy to change a life

Tracey Zysk
VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

The generosity of a Bedford, New Hampshire family gives independence to a blind person.

Honey Weiss and her family have much to celebrate; G-Lee - the puppy they lovingly raised - has graduated from Guiding Eyes for the Blind as a guide dog.

Guide dogs aren't born with the skills to keep a blind person safe; they are carefully trained and prepared for the job. Guiding Eyes puppy raisers provide hours of patient teaching and numerous socialization journeys. For Honey Weiss and her family of Bedford, New Hampshire, their hard work paid off in March when G-Lee was matched with Enrique Mejia.

For a person without sight, a guide dog can provide a life-changing independence. From college to marriage to the workplace to kids' soccer games, Guiding Eyes' blind clients revel in the

sense of normalcy their guide dogs allow them.

Honey says, "We began raising Guiding Eyes puppies to help others when our children were in elementary school. That was fourteen years ago. Raising these dogs has been a privilege. This is why puppy raising is awesome." Lee Nordin, the program's director, notes that, "without the extraordinary dedication of our puppy raisers, we would simply be unable to provide guide dogs to the blind and visually impaired."

The Guiding Eyes Puppy Raising Program is comprised of more than 400 volunteers from Maine to North Carolina. Puppy raisers come from all walks of life and include couples, families with children, young adults, and senior citizens. Some already have forever pets of their own, while others commit to raising guide dogs as a way give their love to a new pet each year. No matter the circumstance, all puppy raisers agree that the program is emotionally rewarding. Raisers live in urban, suburban, and rural

areas, in apartments, townhomes, and single family residences.

Puppy raising classes are held on Sunday evenings in Nashua, New Hampshire. Please call 1-866-GEB-LABS or visit www.guidingeyes.org/volunteer/puppy-raising/ for additional information on the Puppy Raising Program.

About Guiding Eyes for the Blind
Guiding Eyes for the Blind (www.guidingeyes.org), an internationally accredited nonprofit guide dog school, was founded in 1954 to enrich the lives of blind and visually impaired men and women by providing them with the freedom to travel safely, thereby assuring greater independence, dignity and expanded horizons of opportunity. Since that time, Guiding Eyes has become one of the foremost guide dog schools in the world, graduating more than 7,000 guide dog teams. It provides superbly bred Guiding Eyes dogs, professional training and follow-up support services to students at no cost to them and depends on contributions to fulfill its mission. The



Guiding Eyes for the Blind March Graduate Enrique Mejia and his Guide Dog G-Lee

comprehensive cost of breeding, raising, preparing, training, and supporting a Guiding Eyes team is \$45,000. Guiding Eyes for the Blind's Headquarters and Training Center is located in Yorktown Heights, NY and the Canine Development Center is in Patterson, NY.

Pets Go All-Natural - Holds Grand Opening

North Andover, MA****Ciao! Bow Wow, Inc. announces the opening of its pet supply retail store in North Andover, MA. Ciao! Bow Wow specializes in all-natural and organic foods and treats for dogs and cats. Top-quality pet gear and gifts for pets and the humans who love them are also available for sale in a fun and unique atmosphere.

Ciao! Bow Wow recently moved its retail store in Rowley, MA to its new, bigger location in North Andover within The Butcher Boy Marketplace shopping center.

Store owner and entrepreneur Melanie LaRocca says, "Ciao! Bow Wow outgrew our space after three successful years in Rowley. We developed a significant base of quality and health-conscious pet owners and needed to expand. We knew North Andover was the location to serve a greater number of like-minded individuals.

Our pet food ingredients are all-natural, human-grade and minimally processed. We research the manufacturers of every product in the store to ensure the highest

quality and price-value."

Local artisans are featured at Ciao! Bow Wow, with a selection of pet collars, specialty treats, pet apparel and jewelry. All of the shop's gear and gifts, from organic shampoo to handcrafted leather collars, have fascinating stories behind them. Typically, those stories involve the love of a special pet by a talented owner.

Ciao! Bow Wow was named "Best All Natural Dog Food" by New Hampshire Magazine in 2007 and was voted "Best Pet Supply Shop" in 2009 and 2010 by Community Newspapers People's Choice Awards.

The store is located at The Butcher Boy Marketplace, 1109 Osgood Street, North Andover, MA, at the intersection of Route 125 and Route 133. For directions, check our web site at www.ciaobowwow.com.

Store hours are Monday through Friday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and on Sunday 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. For more information, visit our web site at

www.ciaobowwow.com.

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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Reading your pet food label is more important than the brand of food

Kate Whitney
VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY COLUMNIST

It's hard to believe summer is here! I want to share something with you that I do at the end of every Spring. I look through each of my pet's health records to make sure they are up to date with shots and vaccinations. Also be sure to check your heartworm pills and flea/tick preventative; it's imperative that these be given at the same time each month to ensure protection.

Something that seems to be on the top of people's lists these days is eating healthy. I know I am constantly surrounded by words like organic, holistic and fresh. So if we humans are so conscious these days about foods and our diet, what about our pets? Have you ever really stopped to read the label of your dog's food?

Do you just buy whichever food your vet recommends or whichever food is on sale at the grocery store? I would guess that most of you don't read the label on the bag and for those of you who might, do you really understand what you are reading?

In the spirit of starting our Fall off on a healthy foot, I would write about how to make sure you are feeding your dog (or cat) healthy, nutritious food. I decided to discuss the topic with Justin Pepelis. I first met Justin when I visited Salem Animal Rescue League in Salem, NH. I was there to learn more about the shelter and its programs which I wrote about in one of my past articles.

I noticed Justin walking around with a tool belt on. He looked busy. Not only is he an adoption counselor, he also donates his time at the shelters doing maintenance and lends advice and training tips to anyone who needs help. He has a passion and a respect for dogs that anyone would admire. He also has two adopted dogs, the Boxer I mentioned earlier and a Doberman Pincher (one of my favorite breeds, I grew up with two Dobies.) He's like a local Cesar Milan!

With so much knowledge about dogs, I wasn't sure what I wanted to interview him about. I didn't have to think much

harder, though, because right when we sat down, he said "I know what your article can be about ... nutrition and diet." I was immediately drawn to this topic. I am always wanting to learn about ways to keep my dogs healthy. What prompted Justin to learn more about food and diet, was his dog Mercedes, a Boxer. She had severe allergies and no one could figure out the cause.

There are two types of allergies: environment and food. Veterinarians can only test for environmental allergens, so figuring out what is affecting our dogs can sometimes be frustrating. Some dogs are even allergic to grass! If you have a dog that is allergic to things, I'm sure you go out of your way to monitor what goes into its system. I once had a cat that had diabetes, and I was always on the lookout, making sure everything he ate wouldn't affect his blood glucose levels in a negative way. For those of us who care about our animals, this is just how we are.

Ok, so should you have a pet that is allergic to some-thing, you first need to look at the ingredients in the food. Look especially at grain ingredients. In order to figure out what the specific cause is, rotate off different foods. Give the animal 2-3 weeks before making any conclusive results. It takes time for the animal's body to adjust.

There are two especially dangerous things you do not want to see on your pet's food label: BHA and BHD. These are preservatives that are carcinogens (cause cancer) and are put in food to make it last longer, in some cases the food would last forever. A healthier choice is something called tocopherals. The food won't last as long, but it's much safer!

Make sure that corn is no where in the ingredients list. Corn is the worst grain possible. Dogs can't digest it, it's the #1 allergen, and it promotes yeast infections in female dogs.

When reading a label, make sure the first five ingredients make up 80%-90% of the food. There should be at least two meat sources, preferably three. The words "fat" and "byproducts" should be nowhere in the first five ingredients.

Wheat and soy can also be harmful



ingredients. It's important to be aware of how each is processed. What I mean by this is that if the main healthy components in each of the foods are used up, and then whatever is left over is put into the dog food, this is not good. You don't want that left over junk in the food. Justin also pointed out an example of "Dried Beet Pulp."

He said that this is bad and has no nutritional value. It's just a filler composed of sugar residue and, just like carbohydrates, it turns into a sugar-like substance that compares to giving your dog caffeine. A few harmful foods that should never be given to dogs are chocolate, grapes (can cause a seizure), raisins, and onions.

So let's talk a little bit about food brands. Everyone knows the top brands such as Science Diet, Iams, Pedigree, etc. These are big companies that spend exorbitant amounts of money on advertising and some even have contracts

with your veterinarians. I know that I would rather have money put back into making a healthy, safe food than spending it on TV ads. I asked Justin what the best foods on the market were.

These companies are smaller, you may never have heard of them. If money is no object, check out these brands: Artemis, Innova, Timberwolf Organics, and Solid Gold. The best value foods (bigger bag for a little less money) are Canidae, Wellness, and Chicken Soup.

If you have questions regarding diet or training and would like to consult with Justin, please email me and I can put you in touch with him.

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

Come to the Lowell Humane Society and take us HOME!

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, call us at (978) 452-7781 or visit our website at lowellhumanesociety.org



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Valley Patriot TV REVIEW



Mad Love, CBS Mondays 8:30 p.m.

Beth Daigle
VALLEY PATRIOT ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

What is going on with this show “Mad Love”? Does anyone else feel like it is ridiculously similar to “How I Met Your Mother”? It is on the same network, airs on the same night, stars Sarah Chalke, who had a relatively significant stint on “How I Met Your Mother” as Ted’s girlfriend Stella and the narration is noticeably alike.

If I were the people at “How I Met Your Mother” I would be annoyed at the obvious similarities. Actually I am annoyed as a viewer. Do writers and producers feel that TV goers are so undiscerning that we would not notice this blatant reuse of social dynamics, storylines and character profiles?

Sarah Chalke’s character, Kate, seems to be a direct carryover from the part she played on “How I Met Your Mother” and Jason Biggs’ hopeless romantic role as Ben is so similar to Ted that I sometimes forget which show I am watching. Even some of the sets and camera angles are strangely reminiscent. Déjà vu strikes every time a bar scene pops up.

In “Mad Love” the cliché interplay between supporting characters, Larry and Connie is boring at best. The idea that they are so disgusted with one another, yet perpetually involved in each other’s business strikes me as sheer laziness on the part of the writers. It is

extremely apparent that their dislike for one another will eventually turn into an opposites attract romantic scenario that is painfully overdone. Do Barney and Robin come to mind at all?

I do have to give credit to Tyler Labine who plays Ben’s best friend Larry. He is by far the best thing the show has to offer. His humor and timing could possibly carry the show if it were to squeak out another season. Unfortunately, his continual banter with Connie got old after their first heated exchange.

It is a shame really that the show comes off as such a copycat because as a standalone it might have had some merit.

At this point “How I Met Your Mother” has to be nearing its end. Had “Mad Love” waited to enter the scene following its predecessor’s farewell, it might have made for a suitable replacement versus a too similar sidekick.

Nobody likes a copycat and while imitation is the finest form of flattery, in this case it just falls flat and comes off as repetitive and unoriginal.

There is just so much of the same out there already that I am just begging for something fresh and new.

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



Valley Patriot MOVIE REVIEW

Insidious: A Movie Review

Ben Flagg
VALLEY PATRIOT MOVIE REVIEWER

Another month, another mediocre horror movie Insidious, . But this one had something special going for it. It was in the vein of being a Sam Raimi film, where it’s the over the top horror that isn’t meant to horrify you as much as it is meant to just make you jump and then laugh at the fact that you and all the other wimps in the audience just jumped. And it succeeded with being that type of movie for the first 20 minutes. Then it got way too over the top so that I wasn’t even jumping anymore. I was just laughing at how absolutely horrible the movie had become. When you get to the point where people are laughing at your horror movie in a comedy sense, you know you’ve done something wrong.

The plot to this movie (just like everything else) started out fun and campy then turned into just another mess. It stars Patrick Wilson (yes, THE Patrick Wilson) and Rose Byrne as a married couple who live in a spooky house. Their son fell asleep one night and simply did not wake up the next morning. When they bring him to the hospital, the doctor says that he isn’t in a coma (like they thought), his mind is just gone. So the family goes about their peaceful lives until the usual weird horror movie stuff starts happening. Well actually, all of that stuff starts happening, plus some dumb stuff that was starting to ruin the mood. For example, a ghost boy dancing is..... okay. But a ghost boy dancing to a beach rock song is just..... well, it’s off-putting to say the least. So they bring in a psychic to figure out what’s happening, and if I went any farther with the plot I’ll

give a lot away.
But the ghost boy dancing is just one example of how the movie has something scary and then proceeds to fanatically ruin it. For example, the first time you see the demon is straight up horrifying. It comes out of nowhere, it’s impossible to see it coming. But the scary thing about it was the fact that you only saw it for a split second. Then later you see it unobstructed for 5 solid seconds at a time. Actually, to prove how bad this movie gets, I’ll just compare the early and later demon sightings. Early demon sighting: Comes out of nowhere, half hiding behind someone, and is gone just as quickly as it appears. The later demon sighting: It has its face pressed up against the glass and is making funny faces at the audience. It was so out of nowhere and the comedy (at least I think it’s supposed to be comedy) couldn’t have been more horribly timed if the director tried.

So there we go another disappointing PG-13 horror movie that everyone is going to see anyways. It tries to be Sam Raimi, but it just can’t. I wouldn’t expect anybody to be Sam Raimi, he’s the absolute master at what he does. But a little more effort to try to be him wouldn’t hurt, and this movie just isn’t showing it. So this season, whatever you do, don’t go see Insidious. Sit at home and watch Evil Dead, Drag me to Hell, or any other movie.



Ben Flagg is a freshman at Methuen High School. He participates in the JROTC and Drill Team. He also enjoys playing the bass guitar in his spare time.



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American Legion News

John Lenotte
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

Not all news is bad, nor is it always good by any stretch. I have tried to include both in my articles and will do so in the future. Example: In late March, I had the privilege of representing the American Legion at the Future Farmers of America Massachusetts convention held in Sturbridge. I was surprised in a couple of ways. First of all, there were over 400 youth in attendance! Remember, this is Massachusetts and I know I myself don't think of this as an agricultural state. I was one of several judges reviewing poster type presentations. And later I got to present some awards and a scholarship from the American Legion, Department of Massachusetts. What was not surprising was the talent, interest and dedication of the youth and adults involved in this program. And let me note that there was a good showing from Essex County.

As I mentioned in last month's article, I also had the opportunity to be one of the Massachusetts American Legion delegation to attend a conference in Washington, D.C. where we did get to visit with most of the legislative aides in our Congressional delegation offices. Essentially, they are behind most of the priorities that we are seeking, except for the Flag Amendment. I will address this in the June issue in honor of Flag Day.

Well, the baseball season has officially started. This time of year I like to point out some of the legends and current players who were Legion baseball participants. Names like: Ted Williams, George Brett, Roger Clemons, Carlton Fisk, Greg Maddux, Frank Robinson, Al Pujols, Mo Vaughn, Dave Winfield and Carl Yaztremski. There are 52 members of the Baseball Hall of Fame who played Legion Baseball. I hope you will turn out and watch some of the local games and cheer them on. You may be watching a future hall of famer.

I have a quote from the American Legion website that follows up on what I have made note of in previous articles. "The American Legion supports the U.S. Department of Labor's decision to ensure that federal contractors offer jobs to military veterans as mandated by law.

The department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs is proposing a rule that would strengthen the affirmative action required of federal

contractors and subcontractors regarding recruitment and employment of certain military veterans. The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 mandates the offer of jobs to veterans with disabilities and those recently discharged, as well as those who served during a military action for which a campaign badge is offered.

The proposed rule would target federal contractors and subcontractors who fail to follow the affirmative action law by imposing sanctions upon them, such as withholding payments on contracts in progress, terminating existing contracts and disqualifying them from bidding on future contracts.

"With an increasing number of service members, including many combat veterans, coming home to a challenging job market, it is very important that employers – especially ones being awarded federal contracts – do the right thing by these deserving young men and women," said Jimmie L. Foster, National Commander of The American Legion. "All the Department of Labor and The American Legion are asking these employers to do is follow the rules or suffer the consequences. That is not too much to ask."

The proposed rule has been published in the Federal Register with public comments solicited until June 25. "I urge members of the Legion to comment favorably on this proposal," said Foster. "I would add that all concerned citizens should comment on this proposal. If these organizations are receiving our tax dollars, they should be held accountable to follow the law.

I trust you will have a relaxing, enjoyable Memorial Day weekend. But I do also hope you will take a few minutes of your time to turn out for the parade and ceremonies in your city or town. Teach your children or grandchildren the meaning of the day and of the flag. And to show thanks and respect for those who have served our country and preserved our freedoms.

May God Bless America , the troops who defend us and keep their families safe also.



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

Alerts to Terrorist Threats in Europe

John Cleese
BRITISH WRITER, ACTOR AND TALL PERSON

The English are feeling the pinch in relation to recent events in Libya and have therefore raised their security level from "Miffed" to "Peeved." Soon, though, security levels may be raised yet again to "Irritated" or even "A Bit Cross." The English have not been "A Bit Cross" since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out. Terrorists have been re-categorized from "Tiresome" to "A Bloody Nuisance." The last time the British issued a "Bloody Nuisance" warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The Scots have raised their threat level from "Pissed Off" to "Let's get the Bastards." They don't have any other levels. This is the reason they have been used on the front line of the British army for the last 300 years.

The French government announced yesterday that it has raised its terror alert level from "Run" to "Hide." The only two higher levels in France are "Collaborate" and "Surrender." The rise was precipitated by a recent fire that destroyed France's

white flag factory, effectively paralyzing the country's military capability.

Italy has increased the alert level from "Shout Loudly and Excitedly" to "Elaborate Military Posturing." Two more levels remain: "Ineffective Combat Operations" and "Change Sides."

The Germans have increased their alert state from "Disdainful Arrogance" to "Dress in Uniform and Sing Marching Songs." They also have two higher levels: "Invade a Neighbor" and "Lose."

Belgians, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels.

The Spanish are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

Australia, meanwhile, has raised its security level from "No worries" to "She'll be alright, Mate." Two more escalation levels remain: "Crikey! I think we'll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!" and "The barbie is canceled." So far no situation has ever warranted use of the final escalation level.

Reps, Senators, Sheriffs and Commissioners join together to create child abuse awareness

Massachusetts - In recognition of Child Abuse Awareness Month, on Monday, April 25th, elected officials with Protect Mass Children to passed out 32,789 child abuse awareness brochures at train stations across Massachusetts.

32,789 represents the number of children confirmed as abused and neglected in Massachusetts in 2009.

"According to the US Dept of Health and Human Services, Massachusetts Ranks number one for confirmed cases of abuse and neglect," said Joseph DiPietro, the President and Founder of Protect Mass Children.

Representative Donald Wong (R -Saugus) who arrived bright and early at the Park Street T station stated, "We're here today to raise awareness to protect the children because they cannot defend themselves." Wong is also the lead sponsor of a "Three Strikes" Bill that will require life sentences to thrice convicted sex offenders.

State Senator Bruce Tarr, also in attendance, who serves as Republican Minority Leader, followed by adding

about the legislation, "We want to bring more truth in sentencing," referring to the fact that many criminals never serve what they are sentenced.

Of the legislation, cosponsor State Representative Nick Collins (D-South Boston) added, "We need to send a clear message that the Commonwealth will not tolerate any behavior that preys on or victimizes children,"

State Representative Steven Levy (R-Marlborough) who came into Boston from the furthest away to hand out brochures offered, "As legislators, and more importantly as citizens, we have reached a point where we have to be active in awareness directly."

Protect Mass Children is a non-profit organization committed to protecting the children of Massachusetts from sexual predators. Protect Mass Children's goals include passing legislation, create and provide educators and parents with materials that will inform, and enable and empower children to be protected and protect themselves. More information can be found at www.protectmasschildren.org



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Reveling: FROM PAGE 27

holding the bloody head of Bin Laden instead of her flaming torch.

I firmly believe that if the victims of 9/11 are now in heaven they are very disappointed in the vile attitude displayed in their name at the death of a human being, even if it was the mastermind of an unspeakable evil.



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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TOM DUGGAN’S NOTEBOOK: FROM 23

Museum, and a scenic trip along the Mohawk Trail. Cost is \$310 per person, double occupancy

- Senior Health and Fitness Fair; The Haverhill Council on Aging is planning a Senior Health and Fitness Fair at the Citizen Center, 10 Welcome St., on Wednesday, May 25, 2011, from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. This is a great opportunity to take advantage of health screenings that will include bone density screening, eye screening, oxygen saturation readings, blood pressure readings, glucose levels, and spinal screening. Information will also be available on dental health, travel, life long learning, financial well being, health clubs, and hospital services. A pharmacist will be available to review prescriptions. There will also be demonstrations, music and snacks.....come and have some fun! A one-mile City Walk will leave the Senior Center at 11:30 a.m. following the Senior Health and Fitness Fair. No registration is required.

PROM GOWNS - Last chance in 2011 for students to choose a gown for the Prom! Many new, but most gently used. Shoes and accessories may be available too! How it works: Volunteer personal assistants on hand to help find and choose a gown. Suggested donation request of \$10.00. We welcome everyone. Please be ready to wait your turn. Last give-away date: Saturday May 14th 11am - 5 pm. Location: Stone Mill, 15 Union St., Lawrence (behind Everett Mill). Marston Street exit off 495, between Canal and General Streets. Read more about us: www.pricelesspromgownprogram.com or call Carol 978-521-2664, Carla at Bella Beads 978-474-4424

METHUEN VILLAGE - Dealing with Death and Loss Discussion 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 our monthly Family Night on Thursday, May 12 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. This month’s event will feature author and businessman Rick Dewhirst of the Dewhirst Family Funeral Care. He will present, “The Death Care Journey; Before, During, and After a Loss.” Light refreshments will be served.

RSVP by Tuesday, May 10 if you would like to attend. 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.

Barbershop Harmony 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 the Merrimack Valley Townsmen on Monday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m. Advance RSVP encouraged. Methuen Village is located in the heart of downtown Methuen at 4 Gleason Street. For more information, call 978-685-2220 or visit www.MethuenVillage.com.

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 John Michael Nutter, on Tuesday, May 17 at 2:00 p.m. Advance RSVP encouraged. Methuen Village is located in the heart of downtown Methuen



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Offers: Page 1



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LAWRENEC VETERANS’ SERVICES Director Francisco Urena is seeking volunteers on May 21st to help decorate Veterans’ graves on the 21st. Volunteers should show up at 9:00 AM to St. Mary’s cemetery mausoleum on Barker Street. Volunteers should bring comfortable shoes and drinking water.

May 21st – Decoration Day at Cemetery 7500 flags will be placed on Veterans’ graves by area volunteers.

9:00 AM - Volunteers will meet at the St. Mary’s Mausoleum Barker street

May 21st – Lawrence’s Vietnam Memorial 20 yr anniversary. Bellevue Cemetery 100 Reservoir Street (Red Barn) 11:30 AM

May 22nd – Dedication of two squares in the city. Meeting location White and Elm Street; (2nd will be Union and Haverhill Street) 11:00 AM

May 28th – Son’s of Italy Road race; Three races will start 10:30, 10:45, 11:00. 10:00 AM Step off from the Son’s of Italy lodge 155 Marston Street, Lawrence.


May 30th – City of Lawrence Memorial Day Ceremony, Bellevue Cemetery 100

THE LAWRENCE CHESS CLUB meets on the second Thursday of each month., Our next event will be: Thursday, 12 May 2011 from 6-8pm, at the Lawrence Public Library, located at Lawrence & Haverhill streets. It is always FREE.ALL ages & abilities are welcome. English is not required. Please bring a friend and a chess set, if possible.

ANDOVER-LAWRENCE □ Rep. Adams Announces Andover Office Hours State Rep. Paul Adams has announced that on Wednesday, May 11th he will hold open office hours from 8:30-9:30am at The Andover Senior Center located at 36 Bartlet Street. The representative would like to extend an invitation to citizens who wish to meet with him to discuss issues of concern. Any citizen wishing to meet with Rep. Adams or his staff may do so by scheduling an appointment with Diana DiZoglio via email at Diana.DiZoglio@mahouse.gov. The Representative and Diana may also be contacted by phone at 617-722-2800 x 8661. Those persons wishing to correspond by mail may send letters to the office of Representative Paul Adams in Suite 39 at the State House in Boston, MA 02133. Rep. Adams is also available to be contacted directly via email at Paul.Adams@mahouse.gov. The representative and his staff are fluent in Spanish

NORTH ANDOVER/METHUEN – One of North Andover’s most well liked firefighters, Sean Fountain has decided to throw his hat in to the ring for Methuen City Council.

LOWELL- GO JOHNNY MAC! John Macdonald, Vice President of Lupoli Properties and Sal’s Riverwalk is running for Lowell City Council! GO JOHNNY!



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.

FACES OF JESUS MAIL ART SHOW: FROM PAGE 35

Another unique part of the “Faces of Jesus” Mail Art Show is that patrons of the gallery are allowed to photograph the artists’ work.

“It’s nice that people are allowed to photograph the different art pieces here. Usually the first thing they tell you when you walk into an art show is, ‘no photographs, no pictures.’ But we wanted this particular show to be photographed as much as possible, for personal use only of course. So, you can come in, photograph your favorite pieces, keep the photos for yourself, hang them on your wall, do whatever you want, as long as it’s for personal use.”

No controversy but plenty of negative comments

Asked why she decided on the “Faces of Jesus” as a mail art show, Silverman replied, “It was just an exhibit that meant a lot to me. I’m an artist myself and I thought this was really important.” Silverman admits, however that she has had problems with the perception of what she was doing and backlash from anti-religious zealots.

“There were so many people that tried to discourage this show,” she admits. “I went through so much to get this up. You would think I wouldn’t have to deal with that doing a show on Jesus in a respectful manner, especially doing a respectful

showing of Jesus.”

“You wouldn’t believe it, but people come after you. You know, some people have worked very hard to try and turn this exhibit into something controversial or make it seem like it’s something that it’s not. One newspaper even wrote that I was ‘trying to bring controversy to Haverhill,’ but of course, I’m not trying

to do that. It’s not about that. But it is really interesting to see how people interact with this subject. People try to incite, especially in the newspapers to make this something negative. I’ve even had people say some really mean things to me. I have had people try to make me afraid I had one person make a comment to me when we were moving some of the

pieces in here that I should worry about having my windows broken. But I’m not doing anything mean or hateful. It’s really bizarre.”

“A ton of people told me ‘you can’t do it, you can’t do it’. I said why not? I’m an artist and I’m pretty sure I can. I just had to find the right place for it.”

“This is a show about the art. It’s not about controversy, it’s not about shock, and it’s not about making money. It’s about the art itself and nothing else. The one thing I don’t want is for people to think this is Sharon Silverman’s show, or a show about the artists. I want to make it clear to people that this is a show about the subject matter and that’s it. It’s about how people around the world view Jesus, how they depict him in their art in whatever culture they come from, So, just come into the Gallery with an open mind and take what you want from it.

The “Faces of Jesus” International Mail Art Show is showing at Angles & Art Gallery, 80 Wingate Street, Haverhill, MA. Artists who wish to send in their work for this or future shows can mail their art to: The Face of Jesus - An International Mail-Art Exhibition, P.O. Box 1212, Haverhill, MA 01831 (USA) This show has been extended until June 5th

Tom Duggan is president of The Valley Patriot, you can email him with comments or story suggestions at valleypatriot@aol.com

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Lawrence DPW workers dig at the old Kane School Gym site off Osgood Street looking for the source of raw sewage that is flowing out of city pipes and into the Shawsheen River.

Raw Sewage Still flowing into Shawsheen

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT OWNER/EDITOR

A Full year ago, in May of 2010, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sent a letter to Lawrence DPW Director Frank McCann informing the City of Lawrence that the EPA has first hand knowledge that the city was pumping wastewater (human waste) into the Shawsheen River.

According to documents obtained by The Valley Patriot, the EPA received complaints by members of the Shawsheen River Watershed Council and parents involved in the South Lawrence East Little League that the City of Lawrence has been dumping human waste into the Shawsheen River through a storm water drainage pipe that runs along the side of the ball fields behind the South Lawrence East School. The smell of human waste was often so strong as to overpower the children trying to play on the ball fields.

Members of the Lantigua administration declared within a month that the situation was “resolved” and Tennis Lilly, of the Lawrence Conservation Commission said that the culprits had been found “Kentucky Fried Chicken Bagle-Boy and at least one other business were dumping into the sewer system that should be resolved very shortly as the city is going to be tracking back through the pipes to resolve the problem.”

But The Valley Patriot has learned this month that the problem has not been resolved and sewage is still flowing into the Shawsheen River behind the South Lawrence East School.

The valley Patriot also learned this month that Lawrence DPW began digging at the old Kane School Gymnasium site off Osgood and Exeter Streets, just a few hundred yards from pipe that is contaminating the Shawsheen River in an attempt to find the problem.

“I’d like to know why it has taken over a year to fix this problem,” on Little league parent asked. “We’ve been smelling this stench since two summers ago when we first complained, they are just getting to this now?”

Members of the SLE Little League first noticed the foul odor of human waste nearly two months ago

In April of 2010, The Environmental Protection Agency sent an agent to the South Lawrence East School, which abuts the Shawsheen River and beneath which the huge drainage pipe seems to run, and took real time samples of the human waste water pouring out of the drainage pipe. After sending the samples to an independent laboratory, they determined that human waste water was indeed coming out of the pipe and being dumped

directly into the Shawsheen River without any type of treatment.

“It poses a health hazard,” EPA enforcement official George Harding told the Valley Patriot. Harding said that the contaminated water flowing into the Shawsheen could cause illness to anyone whose skin comes into contact with the water because of E-coli and other contaminants being dumped into the river. It was apparent that school children routinely use this area as a shortcut.

“Right now we do not know the actual source of the contaminated waste water, but the city has hired an outside engineering consulting firm to test the water once a week during dry weather and to track back the source of the contamination. It could be anything from a city sewage pipe being illegally hooked into the drainage systems in that neighborhood, or it could be a leaking pipe that is somehow contaminating that line,” Harding said. “but we will not know the answer to that until they track back the source.”

The Shawsheen River runs through South Lawrence and into North Andover where it empties into the Merrimack River at Sal’s Riverwalk near Rt. 495.

Harding said that as far as he knows, town officials in North Andover were not notified by The City of Lawrence that human wastewater was flowing into the Shawsheen, posing potential health hazards running through North Andover. They have also not informed the town of North Andover that the problem still exists.

Harding sent his letter to DPW director McCann on May 3, 2010. The letter states that the issue must be resolved by May 28th. Harding says the city has not resolved the issue but even though the wastewater has been dumping into the Shawsheen for over two months, they did grant the city an extension to June 15th.

As of the time we went to print (June 8th) our reporters observed first hand that human waste water was still flowing into the Shawsheen (see photos).

Danger to Public Health in Lawrence and North Andover

George Harding from EPA said that people need to be careful when coming into contact with contaminated water. “Anytime you have sewage discharge there are pathogens in the water, our prime concern is, if people are coming in contact with water, canoeing, wading, fishing, or coming in contact with pathogenic organisms, the public’s health is at risk. How much risk depends on how much is being discharged. We won’t know what that is until the engineering consulting find the source.”

The Lawrence Rotary Presents Paul Harris Awards

Last month the Lawrence Rotary Club presented a Paul Harris Award to Kathy Boshar, longtime member and current president of Lawrence Rotary. Ms. Boshar was one of the first women to join the Lawrence Rotary Club in 1989, and she is the first female president in its 90-year history. Ms. Boshar has been active in Rotary-based community affairs during that entire period. The Paul Harris Award is the most coveted award any Rotarian can receive.



It is given for a lifetime monetary contribution of \$1,000 to Rotary International in support of Rotary’s global commitment to world peace, global economic well-being and freedom from disease. The award was presented by Assistant District Governor Terry Kidder. Rotary’s motto is “Service above Self” and we pride ourselves on helping those less fortunate. The Lawrence Rotary Club welcomes new members from all walks of life. Please join us for lunch Thursdays at noon at the Lawrence Vocational Technical High School on River Road in Andover. For more information about the Lawrence Rotary Club, please visit www.LawrenceRotary.org



Alex Talcott First to Pull Nomination Papers for 2011 Amesbury Elections

Amesbury, MA — Minutes before 8:00 a.m., Amesbury resident Alex Talcott requested and obtained nomination papers from the Amesbury Town Clerk, becoming the first person to do so on the first day papers were available for the fall municipal elections.

Talcott, a consulting entrepreneur and attorney by trade, is considering opportunities to serve as a Municipal Councilor At Large or Library Trustee.

“Being first in a one-man line early this morning at the Clerk’s Office was important to me as a way of showing my energy and seriousness about serving Amesbury. If I run and am chosen to serve on the Municipal Council or Library Board of Trustees, there will be plenty of late nights doing the people’s work. But my wife and I chose to join family here for that very reason—Amesbury’s culture of community service and spirit.”

Talcott has set up an email account – AlexForAmesbury@gmail.com – to engage with neighbors and learn more about their ideas and resources for moving Amesbury forward. Any and all thoughts on Amesbury – concerns, challenges, and opportunities – are most welcome at that email address.

Alex Talcott, J.D., 57 Pleasant Valley Road, is the founding principal consultant

of Vaura Consulting LLC, based in Amesbury. A graduate of Dartmouth College and Notre Dame Law School, his Massachusetts volunteerism has included work with the Coastal Trails Coalition, Steve Grossman for Treasurer Committee, and AES World Languages and Cultures Institute, as well as regular attendance at community meetings and events in Amesbury and throughout the Merrimack Valley. A multipartisan, multistate political organizer, Talcott’s campaign work has also included field, operational, legal, and communications contributions to presidential and statewide runs by numerous candidates, including Texas Congressman Ron Paul, former Georgia Congressman Bob Barr, former Illinois Comptroller Dan Hynes, U.S. Senator from Kentucky Rand Paul, and, most recently, former New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson. Regarding a potential run for municipal office in the Commonwealth’s second smallest city (Amesbury), Talcott is mindful of the political cliché that there’s no Democratic or Republican way to fill a pothole. Family in Amesbury: Kristin, wife, social worker; Drs. Andrew and Marilyn Lyons, general dentist and endodontist, parents-in-law.

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NORTH: FROM PAGE 1

the “Nightstalkers” — when they took out the world’s most wanted terrorist.

These “Operators” — part of the same “Tier One” Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) unit the Reagan administration employed in Grenada in 1983, and two years later during the Achille Lauro hijacking, are now the focus of public acclaim and controversy thanks to the O-Team’s insatiable thirst for public approval.

President Barack Obama’s surprise announcement at 11:35 p.m. Sunday night, “The United States has conducted an operation that killed Osama bin Laden,” has generated well-deserved accolades for those who planned and executed the mission. Unfortunately, it has also prompted extraordinary criticism, speculation and damaging revelations about operational capabilities that ought to remain classified at best or uncertain at least.

Within hours of Obama’s announcement, unnamed administration officials were providing what turned out to be conflicting details on what transpired in Abbottabad. This transparent attempt to show how closely the White House “supervised” the operation only served to stimulate a tsunami of controversy and obscure the extraordinary courage and skill with which the raid was carried out.

The O-Team should have known the so-called mainstream media’s quest to find fault with the U.S. military would not be placated by the narrative they had released. The potentates of the press

demand to know:

“Did the SEALs ‘botch’ the destruction of a damaged MH-60 helicopter” at the compound?

“Was there a 40-minute firefight with the SEALs or not?”

“Did the president personally order bin Laden killed?”

“Why the haste to give this murderous terror leader a Muslim burial at sea?”

“Why not release photos of the dead terror kingpin?”

At the United Nations, America’s critics now want to investigate whether Osama bin Laden’s human rights were violated. Pakistani officials, implausibly claiming they knew nothing of the al-Qaida founder’s presence in the compound, are complaining about violations of their sovereignty.

A Native American tribal leader has even groused about bin Laden’s code-name: “Geronimo.” And in Congress, anti-military doves insist we should immediately pull U.S. troops out of Afghanistan.

None of this had to happen. All the White House had to do once they knew bin Laden was dead was to say nothing. That’s the way it’s supposed to be for covert operations. When asked, respond with: “No comment.”

Such a course of action would no doubt result in extraordinary speculation. Photos of the tail section of a U.S. MH-60 helicopter and images of the dead taken by Pakistani authorities after the raid would still get published, and global “social networks” would be full

of rumors, theories and supposition for weeks or months. But intricate details on intelligence means and methods, tactics, techniques and procedures, numbers of U.S. personnel involved and unique communications equipment and capabilities would remain matters of conjecture.

Inevitably, there would be unconfirmed “leaks” from officials in Washington and Islamabad. Yet, the message to America’s enemies would still be the same. Be afraid. Be very afraid. After all, that is the reason we have JSOC.

A “we will not confirm or deny” statement from the White House in the aftermath of the JSOC operation would have made it more difficult in the short-term for Obama to appear “decisive” and “hands on.” But years from now, when the full story was finally revealed, he would have been seen as more “presidential.” It also would have made it easier for those friends we do have in Pakistan to continue cooperating with our military and intelligence services.

Some lessons learned:

Our Special Operations troops are world-class athletes who employ remarkable technology while taking enormous risks. Only a small handful — like Navy SEAL Medal of Honor recipient Michael Murphy, for whom a destroyer was named this week — are ever recognized for their courage.

Second, the enhanced interrogation techniques approved in the Bush administration worked. Thank you, GWB.

Third, U.S. bases in Afghanistan were essential to the success of the operation. The ayatollahs running Tehran’s nuclear weapons program are hoping we quickly pull out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Fourth, the decision not to release “death photos” of bin Laden was right. Bowe Bergdahl, a U.S. Army soldier, is still being held by the Taliban. Enough said.

Finally, we are told by the president’s handlers that he made a “courageous” and “gutsy call” in ordering the SEALs to eliminate al-Qaida’s founder, instead of doing it with a JDAM or a cruise missile. But given what we now know about where bin Laden was hiding — surrounded by an entire division of Pakistan’s Army — that was never really an option.

Obama really had but two choices: Go with the JSOC mission or not go at all. He made the right decision. Regrettably, he also decided he wanted everyone to know about it.

Oliver North is the host of “War Stories” on Fox News Channel, the founder and honorary chairman of Freedom Alliance, and the author of “American Heroes in Special Operations.” To find out more about Oliver North and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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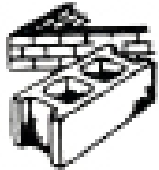
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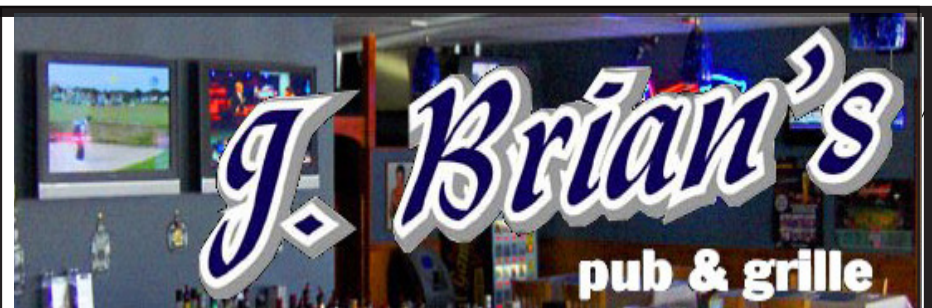
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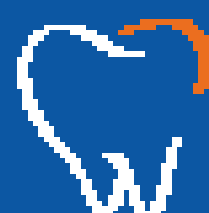
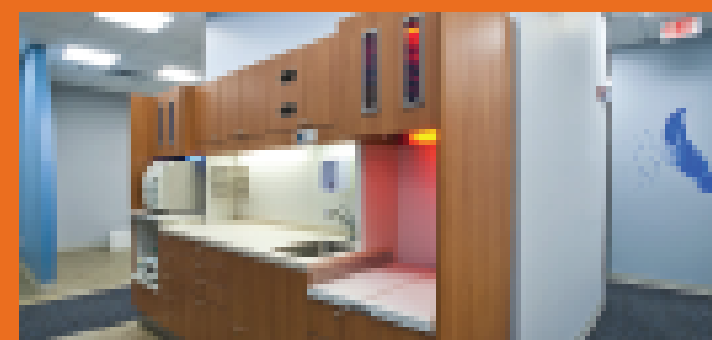
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