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'SOBER HOUSE' ON CRACK CORNER

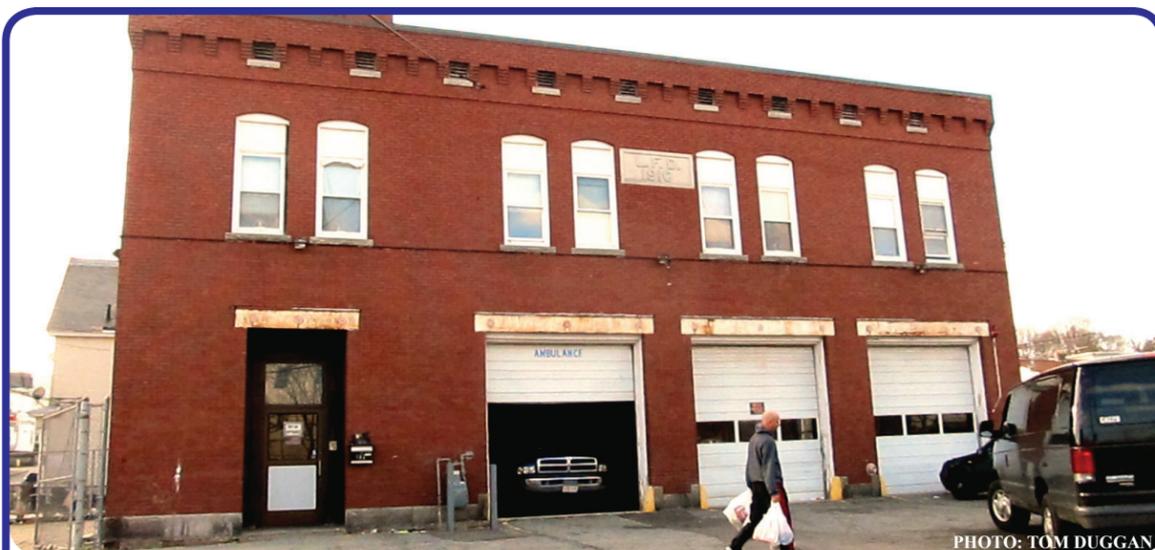


PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Known as "crack corner" by residents and police in Lawrence, the intersection of Oxford and Lowell Streets is also home to a "sober house" run by Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins. The facility houses prisoners with substance abuse problems. Our ongoing investigation uncovers no supervision and crimes being committed by prisoners who are placed back at the facility even after being caught.

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Hero in Our Midst: Lieutenant Clebe McClary

Helen Mooradkian
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

Heavy rain and fog shrouded the jungles of Vietnam like a canopy on March 3, 1968. Shortly after midnight, a 26-year old Marine, Second Lieutenant

Clebe McClary, Pawleys Island, SC, lay dying on Hill #46. He had been leading his 13-man patrol on reconnaissance deep into uncharted territory behind enemy lines before a planned attack involving several thousand troops. They

were in the Quan Duc Valley, southwest of An Hoa, an American base for helicopters and planes.

Suddenly the 13 Marines were ambushed by more than 200 North Vietnamese armed with mortars, automatic weapons, and hand grenades.

McClary, a platoon leader in the 1st Marine Division's 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, had successfully completed 18 patrols, more than any other lieutenant in his battalion, without losing a man. Now his team was nearly wiped out on this, his 19th patrol since arriving in Nam the previous October.

McClary himself was virtually dead. At least that's what the North Vietnamese soldier thought as he aimed a final bullet to McClary's head. That's also what the chopper crew thought when they finally got through the fog to pick up the wounded on Hill #46.

Delivered from death

Three grenades had ripped through McClary's body. Another explosive device had hurled him through the air. His left eye was torn from its socket. Blood covered his face completely. Left arm ripped off below the elbow. Both eardrums shattered. Right hand mutilated. Legs shredded like hamburger. Severe trauma to the head.

Yet he would not surrender. Between the rounds of grenades that hit him, McClary had picked up his shotgun and engaged in fierce hand-to-hand combat with the enemy. Despite excruciating pain, he resolutely moved among his men, from one position to another, en-



2nd Lieutenant Clebe McClary, U.S. Marine Corps (ret.), miraculously overcame the catastrophic injuries received in Vietnam, including loss of an eye and a leg, and now travels all over the world speaking a message of courage, faith, and hope to corporations, professional athletes, military personnel, and business associations. He is the recipient of three Purple Hearts, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star.

MCCLARY: PAGE 36

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Another Socialist Lie: Crony Capitalism

Doctor Chuck Ormsby

VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR/COLUMNIST

Circles can't be squares and squares can't be circles. For something to meet the requirements of both definitions is a logical impossibility.

Just as square circles and circular squares don't exist, I can assure you that crony capitalism doesn't exist. And if you knew and understood the meaning of the word capitalism you would immediately understand the logical impossibility of such a creature.

The term crony capitalism is a purposeful contradiction that seeks to undermine the meaning of capitalism while laying at capitalism's doorstep the evils of socialism.

What image comes to mind when you hear the term crony capitalism?

Do you picture excessively wealthy businessmen raking in gobs of additional, undeserved wealth because they have special political connections? The emotional response that is provoked proceeds from a rational distaste for injustice: Why should these individuals benefit from special privileges when these same privileges are not available to me or to others? It makes you mad, and rightfully so!

After your initial anger dissipates, the concluding emotion is intended to be a visceral hatred for the wealthy and specifically for the wealthy businessmen who are the icons of capitalism. The elixir that socialists want you to embrace is bigger

and more powerful government.

In simple terms you are supposed to conclude: The wealthy are evil. Capitalism is evil. Government is good. And government is the proper instrument for setting things right.

This is quite an accomplishment for a two-word lie.

So why is crony capitalism a logical impossibility ... a square circle? Because the special, government-granted privileges that are at the core of this problem contradict the very essence of capitalism and would never exist under capitalism.

Ayn Rand defined capitalism as "... a social system based on the recognition of individual rights, including property rights, in which all property is privately owned."

She goes on to say, "The recognition of individual rights entails the banishment of physical force from human relationships: basically rights can be violated only by means of force. In a capitalist society, no man or group may initiate the use of physical force against others. The only function of government, in such a society, is the task of protecting man's rights, i.e., the task of protecting him from physical force."

Finally, Ayn Rand writes, "In a capitalist society, all human relationships are voluntary. Men are free to cooperate or not, as their individual judgments, convictions, and interests dictate. They can deal with one another only in terms of and by means

of reason, i.e., by means of discussion, persuasion, and contractual agreement, by voluntary choice to mutual benefit." And later in the same paragraph, "It is the institution of private property that protects and implements the right to disagree – and thus keeps the road open to man's most valuable attribute (valuable personally, socially, and objectively): the creative mind."

How in a capitalist society are government-granted special privileges possible? They are not.

In a capitalist society, individuals have the right to deal with others or not based on their own rational judgment. The government would have no power to transfer one individual's wealth to another just because the other is connected. It would have no power to interfere with a private commercial transaction nor to dictate that any such transaction be concluded when both parties do not consent.

So how did the "crony capitalist" end up with his unearned wealth? Did the government hand him property expropriated from individuals via taxation? Did the government provide special monopoly power or restrict competition through licensing or tariffs? Did the government give special tax advantages or burden his competitors with onerous regulations? If so, he is a thief and a beneficiary of socialism. If he supports the system that gave him these privileges he is not a capitalist, he is a socialist.

No, the culprit isn't crony capitalism. And the beneficiaries of these evils are not crony capitalists; they are crony socialists.

While the term crony capitalism suffers from being a logical contradiction, crony socialism suffers from being a redundancy.

When private property rights are abolished, a central tenet of socialism, those with special access to the inner sanctum of government via friendship, bribes, or backroom deals will acquire special privileges. Such privileges are not the exception in a socialist system; they are the rule. Corruption is not just an unfortunate occurrence in a socialist society; it is a central and unavoidable feature of socialism's core tenants.

It would take an encyclopedia to detail even a very small fraction of the instances where crony socialism has committed theft on behalf of those seeking special privilege. From labor laws and licensing requirements to tariffs and permitting, the government is constantly using its powers to expropriate wealth from some and to confer advantages to others ... all while diminishing the freedoms of us all.

Crony socialism has accelerated dramati-

cally under the Obama administration. Today the government intrudes on every part of our lives. We live in a society where we have no right to keep what we earn, or to decide for ourselves how to expend what the government does allow us keep. Today, whenever we decide to do anything of consequence, we must ask, "Mother may I?" If we really want to play the game, we send lobbyists to Washington to ask the price of gaining special privileges.

Where the misuse of one hundred dollars by a government employee used to be considered criminal, today billions of dollars are thrown around with no accountability. We all know of prominent examples: bank bailouts, loan guarantees (be they for rotten mortgages or for corporations such as Solyndra), or the takeover of GM and Chrysler, or the hundreds of billions in stimulus projects which would never pass muster with private investors ... the list is endless.

Everyone likes to complain about the influence of lobbyists in Washington, but the simple fact is that all of these lobbyists would disappear overnight if our federal government wasn't in the business of selling favors. There were no swarms of lobbyists in the early decades of our republic when the federal government stuck to its enumerated powers.

Today there are two kinds of lobbying, one moral and one immoral. The moral kind consists of individuals and organizations trying to defend themselves from rules, regulations and taxes that infringe on their right to property and freedom of action. The immoral kind consists of attempts to gain special privilege.

Our current socialist government has become a master of soliciting both: the first by making threats and the second by offering potential privileges. The price of escaping the threats or winning the booty is the same: boot licking in the form of campaign contributions, bribes or any other means that increase and solidify the politicians' or the bureaucrats' wealth and power.

The system is rotten to the core. Of course it is ... it is socialism.

So the next time someone complains about crony capitalism, do not let the insult to capitalism stand. Interrupt them and ask, "Don't you mean crony socialism?"



Dr. Ormsby is an ex-member of the N.A. School Committee. He is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate from MIT. He is currently a Professor of Mathematics at UMASS, Lowell.

You can email him at: ccormsby@comcast.net

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We Endorse Speaker Newt Gingrich

Only He Can Institute Fundamental Reforms of our Government

Today, America is stuck on stupid. We are mired in the leftist claims of entitlement and the promise that our prosperity can be achieved through a national policy of wealth redistribution and central planning. Envy and class warfare are used to divide us with the expectation that there are more voters willing to loot than there are voters who believe in and appreciate individual liberty.

If you are not a student of history or not well schooled in the intellectual foundations of America, you might conclude that we can tinker our way out of this mess. Twist this dial, lower that tax 2%, spend a little less here, cut a few regulations, smile more ... that these would make everything better.

If you believe that, vote for Mitt Romney ... a fine and decent fellow, but a candidate that isn't committed to returning America to our founding principles. At least not as committed as Newt Gingrich. If elected, Romney would be a far greater president than the anti-American socialist that occupies the White House currently, but his presidency would merely amount to a temporary pause on our way to oblivion. With Mitt we could win the battle and lose the war.

Other candidates, all better than Barack Obama, have their own strengths and weaknesses. A few who might champion fundamental reforms, like Ron Paul and Rick Santorum, are too likely to be defeated in November to risk being chosen.

Only Newt Gingrich has evidenced a career-long passion for America's roots and only Gingrich seems to have the fire in his belly needed to champion fundamental reform of our government.

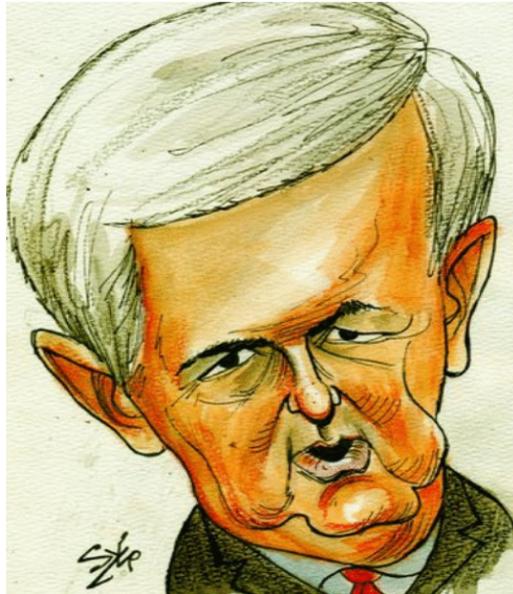
The Board of The Valley Patriot believes that Newt Gingrich is the best choice for Republicans in 2012.

Of all the candidates, only Newt Gingrich has spent a lifetime studying history and in particular the great thinkers that gave rise to the founding of this country. Add to this his practical experience gained while serving in Congress and his exceptional oratorical skills, and you have a candidate that can return America to her greatness while restoring our cherished liberties.

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not mention Newt's well thought out positions on three issues: domestic economic issues (tax policy, regulatory reform, and energy policy), illegal immigration, and external threats to our national security.

On the economic front, Newt will stop the Obama-scheduled 2013 tax increase and replace it with a 15% flat tax while eliminating taxes on capital gains. He promises to drastically cut job-killing regulations including Sarbanes-Oxley, Dodd-Frank, and the Community Re-investment Act (also known as the Stupid Mortgage Requirement Act). In the process he will

break up Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, modernize the FDA so that Americans will not be denied the benefits of life-saving medical breakthroughs, and replace the EPA with an agency committed to rational environmental solutions consistent with our growing energy needs.



Newt boldly supports immigration ... LEGAL immigration. He knows that we are a nation of laws and that our immigration laws must be respected. His plan ensures that our borders will be controlled, our Visa program will be reformed so that Visas for entrepreneurs

and for those with critical skills will be expedited, and that a path to legality is provided for law-abiding immigrants that have proven to be productive members of our communities over a substantial period of time. This is a sensible plan we can all endorse.

Twenty years ago, the threats to America's national security were minimal. Today they are substantial and growing. Newt far outpaces his competitors for the nomination when it comes to knowledge of history, military strategy and national security issues. He has studied these for

decades and has taught these subjects to most of our Generals in our war colleges. He is an ardent supporter of our ally Israel, the only free country in the Middle East, and he is well versed on the threats emanating from Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, China, and Russia.

We won't respond here to the recent criticisms of Newt (see Don Feder's article posted on valleypatriot.com) except to say that the free world's greatest leaders all made mistakes as they matured. The saving grace was that they all shared a deep-seated knowledge, understanding and appreciation for the fundamental principles of individual freedom, free markets, and free societies; all of which put them in a position to understand and correct their past transgressions.

Gingrich is the candidate most in tune with Tea Party principles. Speaker Newt Gingrich will best defend job providers, will give a national voice to Tea Party principles, will implement the best fiscal policies for the nation, and will help small businesses begin investing, hiring, and spending again.

The Valley Patriot, New England's Number One Tea Party Newspaper, endorses Newt Gingrich for the Republican nomination for president.

May he be true to America's founding principles and slay the dragon this November.

Valley Patriot Editorial Board: Dr. Charles Ormsby, Ralph Wilbur and Tom Duggan

You can email us at valleypatriot@aol.com

Speaker Newt Gingrich The Past and the Present

Thomas Sowell

VALLEY PATRIOT SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

If Newt Gingrich were being nominated for sainthood, many of us would vote very differently from the way we would vote if he were being nominated for a political office.

What the media call Gingrich's "baggage" concerns largely his personal life and the fact that he made a lot of money running a consulting firm after he left Congress. This kind of stuff makes lots of talking points that we will no doubt hear, again and again, over the next weeks and months.

But how much weight should we give to this stuff when we are talking about the future of a nation?

This is not just another election and Barack Obama is not just another president

whose policies we may not like. With all of President Obama's broken promises, glib demagoguery and cynical political moves, one promise he has kept all too well. That was his boast on the eve of the 2008 election: "We are going to change the United States of America."

Many Americans are already saying that they can hardly recognize the country they grew up in. We have already started down the path that has led Western European nations to the brink of financial disaster.

Internationally, it is worse. A president who has pulled the rug out from under our allies, whether in Eastern Europe or the Middle East, tried to cozy up to our enemies, and has bowed low from the waist to foreign leaders certainly has not represented either the values or the interests of America. If he continues to do

nothing that is likely to stop terrorist-sponsoring Iran from getting nuclear weapons, the consequences can be beyond our worst imagining.

Against this background, how much does Newt Gingrich's personal life matter, whether we accept his claim that he has now matured or his critics' claim that he has not? Nor should we sell the public short by saying that they are going to vote on the basis of tabloid stuff or media talking points, when the fate of this nation hangs in the balance.

Even back in the 19th century, when the scandal came out that Grover Cleveland had fathered a child out of wedlock — and he publicly admitted it — the voters nevertheless sent him to the White House, where he became one of the better presidents.

Do we wish we had another Ronald Reagan? We could certainly use one.

But we have to play the hand we were dealt. And the Reagan card is not in the deck.

While the televised debates are what gave Newt Gingrich's candidacy a big boost, concrete accomplishments when in office are the real test. Gingrich engineered the first Republican takeover of the House of Representatives in 40 years — followed by the first balanced budget in 40 years. The media called it "the Clinton surplus" but all spending bills start in the House of Representatives, and Gingrich was Speaker of the House.

Speaker Gingrich also produced some long overdue welfare reforms, despite howls from liberals that the poor would be devastated. But nobody makes that claim any more.

Did Gingrich ruffle some feathers when he was Speaker of the House? Yes, enough for it to cost him that position. But he also showed that he could produce results.

In a world where we can make our choices only among the alternatives actually available, the question is whether Newt Gingrich is better than Barack Obama — and better than Mitt Romney.

Romney is a smooth talker, but what did he actually accomplish as governor of Massachusetts, compared to what Gingrich accomplished as Speaker of the House? When you don't accomplish much, you don't ruffle many feathers. But is that what we want?

Can you name one important positive thing that Romney accomplished as governor of Massachusetts? Can anyone? Does a candidate who represents the bland leading the bland increase the chances of victory in November 2012? A lot of candidates like that have lost, from Thomas E. Dewey to John McCain.

Those who want to concentrate on the baggage in Newt Gingrich's past, rather than on the nation's future, should remember what Winston Churchill said: "If the past sits in judgment on the present, the future will be lost." If that means a second term for Barack Obama, then it means the future is lost big time.

Thomas Sowell is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305. His website is www.tsowell.com. To find out more about Thomas Sowell and read features by other Creators Syndicate columnists and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Some New Year Thoughts for 2012

Jeff Katz

RADIO TALK SHOW HOST/TALK 1200AM

In 2011, the third House Speaker in a row, here in Massachusetts, became a convicted felon and is now a guest at Club Fed for the next seven years or so.

A few lesser Massachusetts politicians also traded their given names for assigned numbers this past year, as well. Sadly, those events don't make it a special year. We've all gotten used

to the Bacon Hill bottom feeders doing for themselves first, last and always. Sweetheart deals abound here in the Commonwealth. As long as you are part of the one party which exercises one party rule, you should be okay. They only ask that you check your ethics at the door. Most of their party members seem perfectly okay with that.

To effect real change in our Commonwealth, we desperately need real leaders

of the opposition. We need a Republican Party ready, willing and capable of contesting every seat at each election. No exceptions. We need passionate, honest and dedicated people willing to stand up and not only fly the flag but folks who will lace 'em up and put on the foil. In Massachusetts, politics is a full contact sport and we need to play to win.

2012 will see us with fewer Congressional seats. I suppose it is sad to lose 10% of your Congressional delegation but in the case of our state, the only thing better than cutting 10% of the usual suspects would be to cut 20% or maybe even have one of those 50% off sales that are so popular right about now.

In addition to the Congressional seats, a U. S. Senate seat is going to see a major battle. We've got local races and a little election for President too. As we head in to the year, I'll get in to individual races and candidates.

The Greater Boston Tea party has just elected a new leader. My congratulations to Christine Morabito on her election. She is a consistent conservative, in



VALLEY PATRIOT EXCLUSIVE

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

love with the Constitution and ready to stand for our nation. She is a true Tea Party patriot. I have high hopes for her.

The Massachusetts GOP also has a newly elected leader. Robert Maginn has donated major bucks to democrats like Deval Patrick and Chuck Schumer. Maginn is now in control of the State GOP and its operations. He is a solid Mitt Romney guy and will undoubtedly devote a huge amount of time and effort on behalf of his patrician patron.

The mission of enrolled Republicans should be to ensure that the MassGOP fields candidates for every open seat and provides resources for all, not just one or two. Maginn's conservative bonafides are questioned by many and his donations to extreme leftists do nothing to alleviate fears held by many.

Who knows? Perhaps 2012 will see the Grand Old Party reach out to the Tea Party and achieve some real victories for the people of Massachusetts. What can I tell you? I always feel warm, and fuzzy and hopeful around January 1st Happy New Year!

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Life-changing experience for Lowell Educator on Parris Island

Cecilia P. Calabrese
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

Want a crash course in decision making, leadership and teamwork skills? Tell it to the Marines! That is what Mary Payne of Dracut, Massachusetts did when she spent a week at the Marine Corps training facility at Parris Island.

Mary is the College Relations Counselor at Lowell High School. She was invited to attend the Educator's workshop held by the Marines at Parris Island. When the Lowell School Superintendent's office granted her permission to participate, she jumped at the opportunity.

As a College Relations Counselor Mary typically visits many college campuses and tours university and college facilities. She said that making such visits provides her with a different perspective of what each school has to offer Lowell students. This, in turn, gives her valuable experience is counseling students through the college selection and application process. When Mary was invited to Parris Island,

she was anticipating that the Marines would do likewise, offering tours of the facilities, attending meetings and workshops so that she could get a feel for what Marine life is all about.

It didn't take long for Mary to discover that the Parris Island experience was much more than what she had been expecting. "Going to Parris Island was a life changing experience". Mary said.

On the first morning they were required to be at breakfast at 5:00am and board the bus to Parris Island at 5:45am. When they arrived at the Island the bus door opened and a drill sergeant appeared and began "yelling" at the educators to get off the bus and stand in line on the Yellow Footprints. "I thought they were only kidding". Mary explains. She discovered they were not!

The group was instructed that they would be going through a "mini" version of the recruit training. For the next

TEACHER, PAGE 34



Elia Bloise, a marine recruit at Marine Corps Base, Parris Island, S.C. with Lowell Teacher Mary Payne. Recruit Bloise is a 2011 graduate of Lowell High School.

Judge Issues Restraining Order Against Clark Smidt

A Middlesex County Superior Court Judge has issued a restraining order against Andover resident Clark Smidt the soon-to-be former majority shareholder of 980AM WCAP radio in Lowell.

Despite a court agreement between Smidt (and his former business partner) Colonel Sam Poulten, giving Poulten control of station operations in a buyout deal, Lowell police say they received a call from someone at WCAP stating that Smidt had showed up at the station last month demanding to take control of the station and issuing threats.

"He came in with two thugs," one source at the station told The Valley Patriot. Apparently thinking he could intimidate people and demanding to take control of station operations claiming he was still the majority shareholder."

"The threat was made when Smidt was told to leave and that the police would be called."

Smidt then filed for a restraining order against Poulten seeking to bar him from WCAP property so that he could return and control station operations but, when the issue went before a Superior Court Judge it was Smidt who was barred from the Central Street radio station.

"WE COMAND YOU, Clark Smidt,

individually and as a member of Merrimack Valley Radio, and your agents, attorneys and counselors, (SIC) and each and every one of them to remain away from the subject property located at 243 Central Street, Lowell Massachusetts until further order of this Court," the restraining order states.

The restraining order also says Smidt is "restrained from altering, disseminating, destroying or transferring any of the subject radio stations financial records."

The restraining order was renewed a few short days later and Smidt is still barred from the property or making decisions about the day to day operations of the station.

"All I want to do is run a radio station,"



Colonel Sam Poulten told The Valley Patriot. I am not going to comment on these distractions. We have a great new lineup and we are now moving forward since the departure of Mr. Smidt. I am not going to comment on any legal matters other than to say my focus is on rebuilding this station and making sure that 980 WCAP is run as smoothly as possible."

Smidt had filed a court action against Poulten last year to take full control of the operations of the station but Poulten filed his own action asking the court to order "injunctive relief."

Court papers show the Smidt had been negligent in paying the station's taxes and the two finally agreed to settle their dispute out of court with Poulten buying out Smidt over a period of unspecified

months.

In 2007, Clark Smidt of Andover and Sam Poulten of Chelmsford bought 980AM WCAP radio in Lowell from longtime owner Maurice Cohen. At the time, the two pledged to expand the reach of the station and promised to keep the focus of the station "live and local."

Since then the two partners had locked horns over the direction of the station and the use of local talent. At the time Smidt told The Valley Patriot that former owner Maurice Cohen had brought the two men together as they had both shared an interest in purchasing the station.

The two sparring partners eventually agreed in October of 2011 that the dispute over controlling the station would be settled in mediation, but in the meantime Smidt offered to leave and be bought out. On October 31st of 2011 the Federal Communications Commission approved the transfer of the WCAP broadcast license to Poulten. The license must be renewed every five years.

Clark Smidt was contacted by the Valley Patriot but refused to make a comment promising to call back with a comment. The Valley Patriot is still waiting for that call.

What can Lowell look forward to in 2012?

Gerry Nutter

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

Taking a look into my crystal ball let's predict what the future looks like for some area politicians and Elected Officials in the Lowell /Dracut area in 2012.

City Manager Bernie Lynch – Another year of hearing former Sen. Steve Panagiotakos wants his job. Councilor Elliot continuing to question EVERYTHING the administration does and an opportunity to take a job outside of Lowell.

Mayor Patrick Murphy – Constant criticism from the "Local" Newspaper because he is the youngest Mayor and only a 2nd term Councilor. Raves from the School Committee for understanding the School Issues.

City Councilor Rodney Elliot – A falling out with his "partners" at the local paper and a string of negative stories NOT from a Blog.

CFO Tom Moses – An Ethic ruling

clearing him of any conflict charges and a refusal by a certain councilor to issue a formal apology for the attack on his character.

City Councilor Bill Martin – The opportunity to run for State Rep. when Dave Nangle lands a position with the Sheriff's Office.

City Councilor Ed Kennedy – The Vice Mayor's job and a growing popularity for his even handed and fair approach to being a councilor.

City Councilor Joe Mendonca – Having Kennedy as his 2nd vote, lots of stories how Joe is on the short side of the 7-2 votes and a growing respect for his willingness to stand up for what he believes in.

Former Councilor Bud Caulfield – Being officially named Lowell's Goodwill Ambassador and a party (where all proceed go to charity) to honor Bud for 24 years of caring for Lowell and its citizens.

School Committee members Bob Gignac, Kristen Ross-Sitcawich and Kim Scott – The book School Committee for DUMMIES and patience in understanding how slow change takes place in the School Dept.

Supt. Jean Franco – Getting the Technology Updated in 2012, recognition from the local paper that she is at least as good as her predecessor and a continued growth in city test scores.

State Rep. Kevin Murphy – Rithy Uong running against him for State Rep. Kevin may have been called Capt. Conflict but Rithy is the one who was actually found guilty by the Ethics Commission and had to resign from being a City Councilor. The "local paper" actually mentioning that during the election season instead of as in the case of Vesna Noun, waiting until after the election.

Dracut Selectman John Zimini – Recognition that he is his own man and can't be held responsible for other's actions.

A muzzle for his friend Brian Bond and another selectman who thinks like him so he isn't always on the losing end of a 3-2 vote.

Dracut Town Manager Dennis Piendak – Unions realizing that it was the position not just the man who got the 13% raise.

Dracut State Rep. Colleen Garry – Cathy Richardson running against her for State Rep. Cathy may be a strong Republican but she doesn't have the support or likability that Colleen has.

Nostradamus aka John Smith or whatever Fake ID the Dracut After Dark publisher uses – A long awaited law suit that shuts that sewer down along with the Postal Inspectors proving the child porn and identity fraud accusations that have surrounded this anonymous creep for years.

The Home of the Brave and the Free

Four Days at Marine Boot Camp, Parris Island Gives Reporter New Perspective

By: Kim Saltmarsh
WCAP NEWS DIRECTOR

It's dawn. You're hungry and cold, dirty and tired. The faint light of a rising sun only reflects the exhaustion and determination on your face. All you have is the hope that boot camp taught you well because you are an American Marine.

I always honored our American troops, but never did I fully appreciate them until I went to recruit training on Parris Island, SC. As a journalist, I took part in my own personal mission – a workshop designed to show what recruits go through before they become Marines.

Just like a recruit, I had no idea what was in store for me as my boot camp bus pulled up to the yellow footprints. "Get off the bus," screamed the drill instructor. All of my fellow "recruits" lined the famous footprints and the Marine-conditioning began. It's at this point that a potential Marine will never be the same – being broken down to be built back up again anew.



WCAP's Kim Saltmarsh learns to fire a weapon at Parris Island SC.

Marines not only learn physical skills, but they learn values and character during recruit training. But, it's not until recruits take on "The Crucible" that the real test begins.

"The Crucible" is the final mission. It's a two-day series of real-world events that

test courage, conviction and skill. If a recruit makes it through "The Crucible," they become a Marine. I had the opportunity to observe some recruits take it on. Dragging their bodies through dirt and pulling weights through sand while climbing through barbed wire, I felt the anguish

on their faces and I saw the courage in their eyes.

Glancing around as the recruits pushed onward in their final test, I was awestruck by something – their age. They looked so young like children playing war on a playground, but it's no game. While these people may be young, they're mature and balance the weight of responsibility with the weight of their equipment on their shoulders.

Following "The Crucible," is a moving graduation ceremony. It's the first time these new Marines have seen their families in 12 weeks. It's a sense of relief, pride and piles of mixed emotions as these men and women are presented as new.

When I say "Marine," I'm saying "American hero." These men and women are the first into a war zone and the last out. These men and women are volunteers fighting for freedom, so that you and I can have a phone conversation, travel freely, speak our minds or even write and read this article. Freedom. These men and women are true American heroes.

Dracut Public Meetings

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

- Tue Jan. 10th 7PM Board of Selectman
- Wed Jan. 11th 7PM Planning Board
- Wed Jan. 18th 2PM Council on Aging
- Thu Jan. 19th 6PM Cable Advisory
- Tue Jan. 24th 7PM Board of Selectman
- Wed Jan. 25th 7PM Planning Board

Dracut Senior Happenings

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

- Tue. Jan 10th 10:00 Grocery shopping
- 12:00 Movie "The Help"
- Wed. Jan 11th: 11:00-1:00 Senior Club meeting
- 2:30 DCOA Meeting
- Thu. Jan 12th 10:00 Valiancourt & Pescatore talk on Mass Circuit Breaker Tax Break
- Fri. Jan 13th 9:30 T J Maxx Plaza & Wendy's
- Mon. Jan 16th Closed MLK Day
- Tue. Jan 17th 10:00 Grocery shopping
- Wed. Jan 18th: 9:00-2:00 Red Cross Blood Drive
- 2:30 DCOA Meeting
- Thu. Jan. 19th 10:00 Coffee with the Director
- 1:30-3:45 Nurse Nancy
- Fri. Jan 20th 9:30 Target and Olive Garden
- Tue. Jan. 24th 10:00 Grocery shopping
- Thu. Jan. 26th 10:00 Campbell Real Estate talk on Allards Grove
- Fri. Jan. 27th 9:30 Kmart in Tewksbury and Applebee's
- Tue. Jan. 31st 10:00 Grocery shopping



Pictured after their installation as The Lowell Lions Club's newest members at the Olympia Restaurant In Lowell. This completes the clubs' goal of installing 10 new members this year, with two more to be installed in January (2012) Pictured Left To Right are: Lowell Lions Club president Marcel V. Plouffe, New Member Jose Cruz, Installing Officer PCC Len Tarmey, And New Member Deb Lussier.

Dracut School Events

- Tue Jan. 10th, 7pm: Campbell School PTO Meeting Campbell Cafetorium
- Wed Jan. 11th, Half Day District Wide, All Schools
- 7pm: Engelsby PTO Meeting, Engelsby Intermediate
- Thu Jan. 12th, 6:30-8:30pm: Special Education PAC Meeting, DHS Library
- Fri Jan. 13th, 6-8pm: Father Daughter Dance Campbell Elementary
- Mon Jan. 16th MLK DAY NO SCHOOL, All Schools
- Tue Jan. 17th, 7pm: LakeView Junior High PTO Meeting, LV Junior High School
- Wed Jan. 18th, 7pm: Brookside Elementary PTO Meeting, Brookside Elementary
- Sat Jan. 21st: Engelsby Intermediate Pats Peak Ski Trip 1
- Leaves from school
- Mon Jan. 23rd, 6pm: Executive Session School Committee Meeting, Harmony Hall
- 7pm, School Committee Meeting Harmony Hall
- Tue Jan. 24th, 7pm: Dracut High School PTO Meeting Dracut High School
- Thu Jan. 26th 7pm: Engelsby & LakeView JR High Winter Concert LV JR High School
- Fri Jan. 27th, 7-9pm: LakeView Junior High Dance, LV JR High School
- Mon Jan. 30th, 9:30am: Foreign Language Honor Society Induction, DHS Library
- Tue Jan. 31st, LakeView Junior High Report card Distribution LVJR High School

Karin Rhoton announces run for 14th Essex

SAYS "THE VOTERS DESERVE A VOICE THAT ECHOES THEIR OWN"

North Andover School Committeeman Karin Rhoton has announced that she will be challenging Democrat incumbent State Representative David Torissi in the 14th Essex District this November.

Rhoton is a Republican.

The first term educator made her announcement on the steps of the Town Hall of North Andover on January 10, 2012.

A press release sent out by Rhoton's campaign said.,

"First elected to North Andover School Committee in March of 2009, Rhoton has a proven success record of fiscal responsibility, securing funds for infrastructure improvements in economically depressed fiscal years, and driving efforts for lasting technology programs in the public schools. Karin Rhoton is confident that the voters of the I4th Essex District in

North Andover, Haverhill, Lawrence and Methuen deserve better."

"Mr. Torissi has done a decent job, but I will do a better job," Mrs. Rhoton states.

"I am hearing that the majority of the residents of this district are not satisfied with the cuts to local aid from the legislature, state takeovers of public education, and they want to see crime in our communities dealt with by fully staffed public safety departments." Rhoton added

"In general, everywhere I go I hear how folks feel ignored and are not happy with the way things are working . on Beacon Hill. They want better representation. That is where I am different, I will deliver their message. The voters deserve a voice that echoes their own."

Sal's Pizza Hosts Firefly Fisher, Raises Money for Boys and Girls Club

Sal's Pizza hosted an appearance at its North Andover location by Harlem Globetrotter Firefly Fisher last month.

All proceeds benefitted the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence.

Following his appearance, Firefly Fisher then visited local children at the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence. Along with donating all of the proceeds from the event to the Boys & Girls Club, Sal's Pizza made and delivered pizzas to the club for kids to enjoy.

Firefly Fisher is a third-year Globetrotter, coming to the team from Siena College in New York. He has played alongside his teammates for troops stationed in Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, and other locations across the Middle East. Firefly enjoys conducting basketball camps and mentoring youth, and would like to become a



teacher when his basketball career is over. He brings this passion for teaching and mentoring to the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, where he presented the Harlem Globetrotters character education program, C.H.E.E.R.

Top 40 Highest Paid Dracut City Employees

2011

NAME	POSITION	SALARY
Mellonakos, Demetri C.	Det. Police Dept	132,277.87
Richardson, Kevin M.	Police Chief	131,834.56
Pappas, Jr., Peter L.	Sgt. Police Dept	131,340.46
Fleury, Michael D.	Lt. Police Dept	130,381.02
O'Brien, David A.	Police Officer Patrolman	127,240.78
Flynn III, Lawrence J.	Police Officer - Patrolman	125,104.01
PiendakDennis E.	Town Manger	124,098.06
Seamans, Jonathan D.	Sergeant	123,347.17
Lyons, Barry T.	Sgt. Police Dept	122,641.21
Gosselin, Marc J.	Lt. Police Dept	122,239.31
Chaput Stephen D.	Lt. Police Dept	112,419.94
Gaudette, Leo T.	Fire Chief	107,307.94
Gorman, Alexander G.	Patrolman	106,860.98
Quealy, Jr., James A.	Police Officer Patrolman	105,381.24
Chartrand, David J.	Deputy Police Chief	102,664.82
Gibson, Tyler J	Patrolman	101,414.78
Byam, Gregg T.	Patrolman	99,783.62
Cotnoir, John R	Patrolman	99,660.35
Williams, Michael T.	Patrolman	99,521.46
Barker, Thomas A.	Lt. Police Dept	96,964.73
Generoso Jr., James J.	Principal -DHS	95,879.94
Graham, Andrew G.	Bldg & Grounds Supervisor	95,704.44
Tully, Sharon E.	Teacher - DHS	95,000.10
Rogers, Theresa F.	Principal	94,686.02
Buxton, Michael R.	DPW Director	94,417.30
Grande, Leon E.	Teacher -DHS	93,512.42
Rose, Thomas P	Business Manager	90,000.04
Gosselin, Jon M.	Patrolman	89,335.79
Hill, David S.	Principal	88,572.12
Greenwood, Joseph R.	Captain - Fire Dept	88,086.22
Vogel III, William H.	Principal	87,129.14
Galello, Paul G.	Principal	86,019.98
George, Jason F.Sgt.	Police Dept	85,816.88
Perrin, Jacquelyn	Principal Englishby Inter	85,683.91
Vandal, Ann M.	Fin. Dir./Treasurer	85,608.95
Moulton, Robert F.	Teacher - DHS	85,273.99
Trouville, Linda M.	Principal	83,877.78
Breton, Michael D.	Teacher - LJHS	83,442.22
Patterson, Jr., Richard E.	Deputy Fire Chief	83,361.24
Edwards, Glen A.	Asst. Town Manager	83,255.47
D'Addario, Frank G.	Principal	82,889.04

Top 40 Highest Paid North Andover Employees

2011

NAME	SALARY	POSITION
Hottel, Christopher	\$176,208.32	Superintendent
Hutchinson, Kevin	\$130,257.96	Asst. Superintendent
McEvoy, Thomas J	\$122,675.93	Police Sergeant
Scuzzarella, Carla	\$120,590.10	Principal
Mealey, James T	\$119,629.38	Schools Business Mgr
Gallagher, Paul J	\$116,635.67	Police Chief
Foulds, Eric J	\$112,588.99	Police Sergeant
Melnikas, Andrew V	\$109,310.71	Fire Chief
Pickard, John H	\$109,075.30	Police Sergeant
McQuade, Joan M	\$108,536.33	Principal
Rees, Mark H	\$108,458.55	Town Manager
Salois, Eugene H III	\$107,789.51	Police Sergeant
Driscoll, Kelly L	\$107,541.22	Teacher
Gray, Charles P.	\$106,032.16	Police Sergeant
Carney, John P.	\$105,927.08	Police Lieutenant
Crane, Timothy J	\$100,506.85	Police Sergeant
Driscoll, Thomas F	\$ 99,774.86	Patrolman
Cushing, Richard J	\$ 99,688.80	Principal
McCarthy, William A.	\$ 99,093.10	Fire Lieutenant
Thibodeau, Bruce D	\$ 98,828.51	Public Works Dir.
Gilligan, Greg T	\$ 98,421.10	Principal
Daley, Sean J	\$ 97,477.42	Patrol Officer
Beirne, Michael J	\$ 96,863.09	Fire Lieutenant
Landry, Greg T	\$ 96,764.80	Principal
Motherway, Michael J	\$ 96,452.54	Teacher
Crevier, Daniel J	\$ 96,010.64	Patrol Officer
Staude, Jay S	\$ 95,706.55	Patrol Officer
Jackson, Chester A	\$ 95,677.57	Asst Principal
McEvoy, John W	\$ 95,658.66	Patrol Officer
Lynch, William F	\$ 94,852.93	Patrol Officer
Valentino, Vincent J	\$ 94,385.18	School Custodian
Brush, William H III	\$ 94,070.43	Patrol Officer
Gregoire, Mary J	\$ 93,717.01	Teacher
Nugent, Steven M	\$ 93,608.28	Guidance Director
Gilmartin, Deborah A	\$ 93,312.34	Teacher
McCarthy, Mary Lou	\$ 92,614.48	Principal
Bellavance, Curt T	\$ 92,255.14	Community Dev Director
McGuire, Timothy J	\$ 91,556.10	Fire Lieutenant
Santilli, Raymond T	\$ 91,458.47	Asst Town Manager
Davis, Michael J	\$ 91,151.41	Police Sergeant

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Activities From the North Andover Senior Center

I was making a list and reflecting upon the year 2011 and how often the North Andover Senior Center and staff have supported our community. I thought it would be an appropriate time to share with you many ways we at the North Andover Senior Center give back to the community.

We work with other organizations to maintain numerous programs that support our seniors, such as the Boston Food Bank, providing monthly provisions for those that need additional support. Medical transportation is provided by 21 volunteers. These volunteers are recruited by the North Andover Senior Center and they are supported by the Northern Essex Elder Transport Program.

Through our transportation coordinator we are able to provide medical transports for our older adults to Boston and local health care facilities for their medical appointments.

These drivers receive a stipend for their mileage from the NEET Program. Monthly, through donations brought into the Senior Center, we send care packages to our troops all over the world. We support our older adults socially by offering various programs that are supported through the efforts of so many businesses in the community.

The Friends of the North Andover Senior Center provide funds for emergency assistance programs, scholarships for free classes and programs along with half

price MVRTA transportation tickets for North Andover Seniors. We serve as an emergency shelter during storms. Through the support of Lazarus House we arrange to have hot meals delivered on holidays to elders who are home alone. Our Tuesday morning knitting group has provided knitted hats to Lawrence School children. Youth volunteers are able to earn community service credit by giving their time at the Center. Our Friday morning Cuddles program has sent handmade

dolls to children locally and all over the world. Many of our seniors are on a fixed income but that does not stop them from giving back to others. We are so fortunate to live in this community and we are so grateful for what we have and what we can do to help our neighbors. Thank you sincerely from the bottom of our hearts! SLIDE SHOW ON JANUARY 17th: Collette Vacations is promoting a 7 day trip to San Francisco and Lake Tahoe. Call us at 978-688-9560 to reserve your space

at either the 2:15 or 6 p.m. slide show. Trip is planned for July 27, 2012. SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS NEW PROGRAM: GIRL TALK with Lu, starts January 11, 2012, 12:30-1:30, no fee, call to sign up. The group will explore life's transitions and related women's issues. STRESS RELIEF: Wednesdays from 2-4 pm, 20 minute sessions with Miriam Smith, Pranic Healer. \$5 donation to the Senior Center. FOOT CARE SCHEDULE: Dr. Connolly is scheduled to see clients on the 2nd Wednesday of every month starting September 14 from 1 - 4 pm by appointment only; \$30 fee. BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC: held every Wednesday, 9 to noon. SHINE VOLUNTEERS offer free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to North Andover residents on Medicare. Call the North Andover Senior Center and ask for a SHINE appointment, (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders). FOXWOODS: Next scheduled trip, Tuesday, January 17, \$25 includes lunch buffet, transportation and Keno. Bus leaves from St. Michael's parking lot at 6:30 am. HEART TO HEART: will host Cheryl Gresek from Congressman Tierney's office on January 18 at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome.

ZUMBA WITH TALLIE!



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

Remembering Rita Krupa One Year Later

One Year Later: Remembering Rita Krupa January 29, 1919 – January 13, 2011

Lawrence native Rita Krupa was the executive Director of the Greater Lawrence Association for Retarded Citizens. The Valley Patriot would like to recognize just some of her enormous contributions to the community and in particular retarded children and adults.

When her son William, was born with Downs Syndrome there were no public services for retarded children, Krupa made it her life's work to help form and run the Greater Lawrence Association for Retarded Citizens.

She studied, learned all she could and lobbied civic leaders and politicians in the community to help service the needs of mentally retarded children and adults.

Rita had various degrees and certifications in areas such as Early Childhood education, was a religion teacher, on the advisory committee of the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Area Board, was a board member of Fidelity House, Ladies Solidarity of Saint Patrick's, St. Mary's

Alumni Association, Vice President of Mary Immaculate Nursing Home Guild, and the Conference of Executives of Associations for Retarded Children, among many more.

Krupa receive the Lawrence Exchange Club's "Book of Golden Deeds Award and was the recipient of a Senate resolution presented by Senator William X. Wall.

Rita Krupa's once convinced the alderman (the city council of that day) "as well as the Burke Hospital Trustees to donate a part of the city owned hospital as a center for the retarded," reads a portion of her nomination for the ARC outstanding employee of the year. The nomination was submitted by her best friend Mary McGovern who is also a past president. Krupa won that award.

We could write volumes about the countless lives Rita Krupa impacted made a difference for the better.

This month on January 13th, please take a moment to remember Rita and all those out there who make people's lives better through self-sacrifice and service to others.



Rita Krupa (far right), visiting with mentally retarded adults at home. Krupa dedicated her life to studying, teaching and providing services to the retarded. She helped form and was the Executive Director of Greater Lawrence Association for Retarded Citizens.

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Mayor Steve Zanni's Inauguration Speech

Welcome to The Great Hall of the Nevins Memorial Library, another shining jewel among the many that makes us all wonderfully proud to live in Methuen. Thank you all for being here today. I am honored by the opportunity that the citizens of Methuen have given me. I look forward to working with all of you to move our city forward. Today is the beginning of an important journey for all of us and I am excited by your encouragement and support.

Thank you to Father Richard Burton for your presence and prayers, to Krista McLeod and the Trustees of the Nevins

Memorial Library for this historic setting for today's ceremony, to the police and firefighter's color guards, and to Paul Webster Greene and the North Regional Theatre Workshop for their important contributions to this event. Finally, I'd like to thank our city clerk, Tina Touma-Conway, for presiding over today's ceremonies.

I am grateful, as we all should be, for the tireless service and commitment offered by our former mayors. Mayor Dennis DiZoglio, Mayor Sharon Pollard, and Mayor Bill Manzi – I simply say thank you from a grateful community.

I must most importantly congratulate the members of the Methuen City Council. I look forward to working with each of you individually and collectively for the betterment of our community. As someone who has served on the City Council, I deeply respect the important role that each of you plays on behalf of our citizens. While we will likely disagree from time to time, I hope we will never lose sight of the common goals for our city. We should all strive to serve with pride, honor and respect for one another and our citizens.

On a more personal note, I'd like to thank my beautiful wife Janice for her



infinite patience and especially her sense of humor which I have severely tested over these past months. I'd also like to thank my son, Jeff and his wife Sarah; my daughter, Jana and her husband Vinny; my sister Florence and her husband, Jay. And, of course my grandchildren Gianna, Eva, Enzo, and my namesake Stephen.

I'd also like to introduce the people that I've chosen to work with me in the Mayor's office. Nancy Colbert Puff, who will serve as my chief of staff, is a highly skilled public administrator. She brings an outstanding education and extensive municipal experience to this important job. Joining Nancy will be Phil DeColo-gero, who has experience as a legislative assistant in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and Juliette Cormier, a graduate of the College of the Holy Cross. This team represents a fresh start for the Mayor's Office – we're all anxious to get to work for the people of Methuen.

I'm grateful for the opportunities that our city has provided to me and to my family. I want to work together - with all of you - to make available and expand these opportunities for future generations. If we make decisions and act with these future generations in mind at all times then, our discord will be minor and our mutual accomplishments plentiful. This will be the test of our success together.

Like most cities across our country, we will continue to face many obstacles. As mayor, I will work with my partners on the city council and throughout the community to confront the challenges of our budget, to protect our citizens, to build our economy, and be a mayor you will be proud of. Maintaining a balanced budget always seems to be an uphill battle. We will work together to ensure an efficient and cost-effective government and look for opportunities to sustain services while saving taxpayer funds through consolidation, regionalization, and responsible privatization.

Yes, saving money in the budget is important. But our ultimate success depends on generating new revenue as well. With the appointment of a skilled community

development director who will work in concert with my staff, our government and community opinion leaders, we will better position our city to compete for new business opportunities... to expand our current workforce... and grow our tax-base.

I am deeply committed to the success of Methuen businesses. I will appoint a Methuen Jobs Council to make sure that our business community has a seat at the table as we work together to create jobs and build opportunities throughout our city.

As a career educator, I know that education equals opportunity. I'm looking forward to working with our School Superintendent, Judy Scannell, the members of the Methuen School Committee, and our teachers, administrators and other school staff to provide our children with the very best education while demanding standards of excellence by them and our students. Here again, we are not without challenges. I am deeply disappointed that our high school construction project – which is critically important to our children's future – has already experienced serious setbacks. I will work diligently – and immediately – to put this project back on budget and on schedule.

Let me turn for a moment to public safety and to the dedicated men and women that serve and protect our community. We have sadly been reminded of the sacrifices - the ultimate sacrifices - that these public servants are prepared to make to preserve the health and safety of our citizens. This administration will never compromise the safety of our citizens or the men and women who protect us.

As you've heard me say before, I want to be a mayor that you are proud of. I am a man of my word and promise you that every day I am in office I will work hard to make this city as great as it can possibly be.

We, all of us in this room, will work together to achieve this greatness – and be collectively proud of the manner and means in which we accomplish this vital goal. We are Methuen.

WE ARE METHUEN. Thank you.



The Family of Firefighters: Honoring Hero Robert George

Diana Fay DiZoglio

VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

With heavy hearts people from all across Massachusetts honored four firefighters who lost their lives this holiday season. Among these brave fathers, husbands, brothers and sons was firefighter Robert George of Methuen who unexpectedly passed away just a few days before Christmas. Robert or "Robby" as his close friends called him, was greatly admired and esteemed by those in the brotherhood who travelled from all over to pay their respects.

Firefighters from Haverhill, Lawrence, North Andover and Andover covered Methuen's stations during the funeral so that Robby's local brothers and sisters could attend. President Pat Driscoll and Lieutenant Graeme Millar of the Lawrence Fire Department, who recently lost Lieutenant Jim "Jimbo" Zahn, did a great deal by helping Methuen firefighters to arrange the church ceremony and funeral. The Salem, NH, Lowell, and Boston Fire Departments also played integral roles in the funeral procession.

Matthew DiZoglio, cousin and good friend of Robby said, "The firefighters have just been unbelievable. They showed up on his wife's doorstep with prepared meals and

offered to clean or help out in any way they could. The support has been non-stop."

"We all look to each other in a time of crisis and are all there to help each other. When you lose someone it is like losing a family member because you live together, sharing meals and conversation, for forty hours a week", said Methuen's Local Union President Tim Sheehy. "Robby was very smart and known for his leadership. He was well liked and respected by his fellow firefighters and will be missed greatly by all of us," he added.

President Edward A. Kelly of the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts said, "We all take an oath to protect our fellow citizens. It's through this oath we take and the sacrifices we make that our brotherhood is forged. We know the sacrifices that we as firefighters make is to protect society; so when we lose one of our own, we owe it to each other to take care of the families we leave behind".

Note: The four firefighters referenced above as stated on the PFFM website are as follows:

Jon Davies, Worcester FD, Line of Duty, 12/8 -Robert George, Methuen FD, Active Duty, 12/21 -Jim Rice, Peabody FD, Line of Duty 12/23 - Randy Rideout, Medford FD, Active Duty 12/29



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Random Thoughts with Ronnie Ford

Ronnie Ford

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

COPS, COPS, COPS! You only like them when you need them, the rest of the time, who cares? Well, we better start caring, but quick! A short time ago, a Methuen Police Officer, Brian Hellman, backed up by Officer Sean Moore, were faced with a hairy, touchy situation. This involved two gun wielding outlaws, who had just finished doing their best to knock some guy's head off. These two guys were armed. However, they were subdued by Brian Hellman, and later backed up by Sean Moore. Hellman got those two darlings in check, and his happiness became explosive when he saw another blue coat and silver shield. NOT A SHOT FIRED! It was a nice piece of police work for which commendations are in order and already set in motion. I am proud of my guys and gals in blue. Both the police and fire! They need more man power and equipment. The city of Lawrence produces almost an average of death from shootings of one per week! This has to end. Give these guardians of our homes, streets and persons what they need. NO MATTER WHAT! This job they have ain't easy. Willie, Steve, LETS GO!

You know we have a wonderful young man by the name of Tim Tebow who has been making the TV and newspapers of late. He is an up and coming quarterback for the Denver Broncos, and a Heisman Trophy recipient. He is also a good Christian man who is not afraid to show his

thanks to his Creator in public for blessings and favors received. However he is being mocked and vilified by the news media for bending his right knee and putting his head in his hand after each touch down that he makes, or a play that goes well. This mocking is done mostly by the talking heads on ESPN, on the sports segments and newspapers. We finally get someone whom our young people can admire and look up to, who is worthy of their admiration, and the press makes fun. Even Saturday Night Live had a segment on which I thought was biased. Instead of extolling Tebow they love to turn and twist and make fun of him. The kids emulate these rock stars, coke heads, models with little clothing on and gyrating fools on TV. Now that we have someone decent the young can admire, the news media acts with great recklessness. Why not give encouragement to the young about being more like Tebow than the trash they seem to honor. No, that would be too easy. They have to sell papers and have huge TV ratings.

By now if you do not know that our media is bent toward the left in all things, especially politics and such, then you must live with you head you know where! Show some support for this young man. I think he is great!

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

Ronnie may be reached at radiotalk@comcast.net



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The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

Ireland's Oldest Woman From Laugh Bo, In Her 107th year

Jack Doyle, County Sligo

VALLEY PATRIOT IRISH COLUMNIST

By Harry Keaney, The Roscommon Herald, November 29, 1985

One of the Country's oldest citizens, 107 years old Mrs. Kate Tahony died in St. John's Hospital in Sligo in November 1985. On the 29th July of that year she celebrated her 106th birthday. In an interview conducted by the Roscommon Herald following her 105th birthday she remarked that she "never was better" in her life.

On that occasion, sitting up in her bed, white-haired with the years manifesting themselves in her complexion, her alertness and sharpness of mind never nevertheless belied her age. As she talked she occasionally paused, but the drop of a place name or person put her train of thought back on the rails again.

The late Mrs. Taheny was born near Lough Bo, about two miles from Conway's Cross, in the year of the apparition at Knock, at a time when Irish life was difficult, when thoughts of the famine or "great hunger: of about thirty years previously still haunted people's minds. She was the youngest of the family of Mr. and Mrs. Denis Savage. Her mother, whose maiden name was Karen Clarke was born "up at Keash"

"They didn't expect me and they had given away the cradle" she recalled. Her other brothers and sisters were, John, Ann, Bizzie, Mary and Sonny. She was educated to sixth class in the lakeside national school at MountTown overlooked by her home which was possibly in the town land of Doongeelagh. A school building, now closed and dilapidated, replaced that early building. The schoolmaster at the time was Master McDermontt, thought to be from Loughglynn. County Roscommon. Kate said she "never went any place" after school. Her father bought three or four acres from her cousin, old Jhonny Savage. "I worked with the loy and the shovel and at the hay. We kept a cow out grazing

on Killadoon. Ah, I would only be about eleven when my mother died, when my father died I was an old maid." She said.

Kate's people had a shop at Lough Bo which they later gave up. The goods were brought by cart from Sligo. "I never worked in the shop. Tom Butler had a little shop and we used to get our goods there. He was a next door neighbor." Kate got married to Thomas Taheny from Drumnaghanshy, Keash, a widower with two sons. The marriage ceremony was performed Very Rev. Fr. Quinn in Riverstown Chapel. Afterwards she continued to work on the land. She said she would have been "over eighty" when her husband died. They had no children.

In Kate's young days she attended Riverstown Chaple with her brothers and sisters. "We used to walk three miles to it. There were two roads into Riverstown, in through Ross and the straight road as we used to call it. Many a day I traveled those roads. We hadn't a halfpenny candle to get, not alone lamp oil. A rush candle we used. I didn't value the rush candle but it wasn't so bad. Life was tough, you didn't know it. That time they made good use of a turning loy and we wouldn't have a crop if they didn't but now they can use no loy". Ireland is gone when the men are not able to use a loy." She remembered St. Columba's Church being built and "paid well to it" She said

Time passed and for the past number of years, Kate had been in St. John's hospital in Sligo. She had a store of memories and an experience of life stretching back over a century. Her funeral took place on Tuesday 27th of November 1985 at Keash Church and she is buried at Knockbrack Cemetery.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



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

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Replace Mayor Lantigua

Mark Gray

VALLEY PATRIOT POLITICAL COLUMNIST

Mayor Lantigua needs to be recalled and replaced. But the valid question remaining is: with whom?

People seem to pop off a name because it would serve to agitate the mayor, but does the name of the candidates you propose serve the public?

Not in theory, title, or in narrow context but can Lantigua's proposed replacement really serve ALL of Lawrence?

We might just replace one mayor who is divisive to Lawrence's warring factions in with another.

Having heard many names bantered about to replace Lantigua should the recall succeed I have yet to hear anyone who is more committed to the city than themselves or their "supporters".

Kind of puts it all in perspective doesn't it? It should.

The issue has been kicked around for a couple of weeks. Round table discussions have lead me to believe we need skills and qualities that should be found anywhere, but in fact rarely found at all in Lawrence.

Integrity, not being for sale, representing special interests and not the public... How many people on the short list to replace Lantigua got scratched off the list when they were looked at in these criteria alone?

What Lawrence needs is someone with character and the ability to deal with an issue and not back away from it or re-label it for someone else to address.

We need someone with Vision who will to take all the input from Lawrence citizens for 4 months of real solicitation of ideas and shape a 10 year plan of what we want Lawrence to look like in 10+ years.

Single family homes, parks, schools, a map of what the vision will look like and apply that model to all the grants

and capital improvements that Lawrence gets. If it doesn't fit in, reject it. We need someone who can deal with Lawrence's epidemic of violent crime. We need someone who will deal with crime and remove where crime nests, where it moves and capitalize on the habits the criminals have to remove them.

We need someone who will put up camera systems, curfews and road checks.

We need someone with a solid education. An accountant with forensic auditing experience to find out where all the money is going would be a good start.

We need someone who will hire city employees who are qualified over political hacks with no leadership skills.

We need someone who will demand from legislators cooperation in finding ways to improve quality of life (not by throwing money at the problem) and make the public aware of legislators not working in the best interest of the public, instead of sucking up to everyone for the popular votes.

If the recall against Mayor Lantigua succeeds, it isn't going to be easy to find a suitable replacement. But we need to start looking now.

Secondly we can't settle for less because honestly we just can't afford to.

If you're not being part of the solution, don't cry about the problem.

Everyone needs to be involved in the recall process and that includes recruiting a replacement for our current mayor.

Jump at the opportunity to voice your thoughts and concerns. I've discussed this issue with people from Lawrence and surrounding towns, because we cared enough to debate the issue and put our two cents in. We also cared enough to get involved... shouldn't you?



Chester's Coup d'etat

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT POLITICAL COLUMNIST

As of the time this article went to print, The Massachusetts Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Mr. Mitchell Chester held meetings with the Lawrence Teacher's Union, Lawrence Parents and Community members, and finally with the Lawrence Public School Personnel.

His message to all is that he is going to need everybody's help and cooperation to improve Lawrence's Schools. Sounds like the same message that we heard from the last two Superintendents, so what's new? It seems to me in my humbled opinion that Commissioner Chester hasn't got a full grasp on what he has signed on for.

He doesn't seem to understand that his concept of a good quality education for every student that attends Lawrence's Public Schools is totally different from what Lawrence's Hispanic Community, (who make up the majority of the parents of the students in Lawrence), think about education never mind a quality education. Part of the problem is that there is no incentive to learn English or to westernize in Lawrence.

There are even those that if they could have it their way would love to have Bi-Lingual Education back! There are some among the Hispanic community who are unlike other immigrants coming to America who believe that education and learning English is a priority to succeed in the United States.

Now there is another side to this coin, classes in Lawrence to learn English have long waiting lines and this is shameful! With all the money the City of Lawrence receives in the name of Education, very little is spent on Adult Education and ESL Classes, this I blame on politics. Lawrence is an Immigrant City and that is not going to change anytime soon so the politicians in this city and State need to wake up and make more of an effort to get their constituents educated!

Until this issue is dealt with, there will be no real change in The Lawrence Public

Schools.

The Commissioner's next move was to step aside and appoint a Receiver/Superintendent by January 1, 2012 who will have the ultimate responsibility to work with this paradigm and will be expected to deliver! But the Commissioner somehow forgot about Christmas and New Years so he decided to push back his appointment of the Receiver/Superintendent until sometime after the New Year. But in the meantime the Commissioner himself will assume the position of top man in charge. (Smells to me like Mayor Lantigua is still calling the shots.)

Not doing what you said you were going to do Mr. Commissioner is not a good way to start this takeover. It would help if you would say what you mean and mean what you say!

I truly want to be optimistic with the State's takeover of the Lawrence Public Schools, but my gut feeling is that when all is said and done, very little in the way of improving MCAS scores will be accomplished. The example we have of a similar takeover of a School District was by Boston University in the city of Chelsea in 1989 and the most notable improvements were in updating the "day to day operations" and "the rebuilding of aging schools".

So what is this take over by the State really all about? Well my friends I would like to offer what I believe could be one reason. We must take note of what is the common denominator of all the players who are involved in this endeavor, beginning in Washington D.C. to Boston and all the way to the City of Lawrence. The State of Massachusetts is in line to receive 50 Million Dollars in President Obama's Race to the Top Grant Money for Education.

The question remains is how much of this will end up in Lawrence's classrooms? I do not believe for one minute that Commissioner Chester made the decision to recommend to the Board of Education that the State take over the failing Lawrence Public Schools without the blessing of our Democrat Governor Deval Patrick. As you

CHESTER: PAGE 33

Some 2012 Predictions for The City of Lawrence

Jamison Tomasek

VALLEY PATRIOT POLITICAL COLUMNIST

January means it is list time again. Americans love lists. Rather than looking back at

"notable events" in 2011, it's more interesting to make some predictions for 2012.

1. Wilfredo Laboy will finally get his day in court. He was supposed to go to trial in 2010, and then it was reported that the as-

sistant district attorney on the case had to go on maternity leave and it was to be delayed. It must have been a long leave because it took more than a year for the new trial to start. A few days before the November 2011 date it was postponed because there was no judge available. Does anyone question how the courts are run? Apparently not! At any rate, he will be found guilty of some of the charges but not all. The trial will result in at least one new allegation of wrongdoing by other people involved in this affair.

2. Concerning one of Mayor Lantigua's legal troubles, the Office of Campaign & Political Finance investigation, charges will be made public. There is evidence that he incorrectly reported amounts spent on and taken in at campaign fundraisers. These are the least serious of the rumored allegations against him, and these types of violations most often result only in fines. No other state or federal indictments of him will come forward in 2012. He will still be in office at the end of the year.

3. The "remove Chief Romero" story coming out of the City Council is a public trial balloon for the real move, which is sidelining him by keeping him in place but removing all his responsibilities for the duration of his contract and putting close Lantigua associate Melix Bonilla in effective charge of the department.

4. After the state takes over the Lawrence schools they will find significant financial irregularities involving the expenditure of school funds. They won't find any (or at

least reveal that they found any) that implicate the Mayor.

5. Partly due to the new Director of Finance, Mark Ianello, but helped by other factors, the fiscal 2013 Lawrence budget, which begins July 1st, will be less of an issue than the fiscal 2012 budget. Instead of cutting and then having money left over at the end of the year, there will be more accurate numbers in the beginning and the budget will be balanced.

6. At least one of the Lawrence area State House incumbents will be knocked off in the November 2012 elections. It won't be Marcos Devers. Depending on who runs against them, there will be several incumbents defeated across the Merrimack Valley.

7. One of the State House candidates the mayor chooses to back in November will be a surprise to many observers.

8. After a relatively quiet 2011, this year will again bring up concerns about the fairness of mutual assistance for firefighting where Lawrence is concerned.

9. Democratic US Senate candidate Elizabeth Warren will not come to Lawrence and the Mayor will not be publicly supporting her. Her vote totals in the city will suffer as a result. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas will not come to Lawrence either, but the Mayor will support her and she will do well in the city.

10. The Valley Patriot will have another great year.

Well that's my take on what could happen next year. Hope all of you have a great one!



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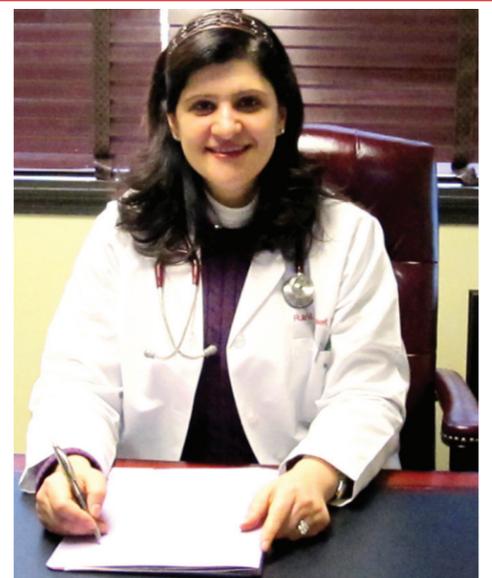
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GEORGETOWN TODAY

A New Year for a New (Massive) School Override

Lonnie Brennan

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

There's a bridge in Haverhill, you all know it. Just as you get through the speed-trap zone in Groveland, you cross the river. The bridge is old, rusted and generally falling apart. Instead of properly maintaining the bridge, the state is simply building a new bridge alongside of it. The cost? Millions. Who cares? It's 100 years old, isn't it?

Meanwhile, in Georgetown, a 40-year old building called the Penn Brook School has been slated for demolition. Build a new one alongside it then tear it down. That's right, it's old (hey wait, my house was

built 61 years ago...do I have to tear mine down?). But, that's what 'they' want, and so, expect yet another override to pass to service a new multi-million bond.

Your cost? Well, it depends on who you ask. If you ask the override folks, last spring they told us the \$1.2 million override that passed would cost a mere \$300 per household in its first year (and then grow 2 1/2 percent each year, but they failed to mention the future growth part of the equation). Then, six months later, the Georgetown Board of Assessors released the true numbers: \$675 per household, on average (5-column headline in the weekly paper). Yup, the override folks were off by more than 100%. Guess we can't trust their numbers, but then again, most of you reading this knew they had cooked the books.

Well, this time, the \$40 million needed to build a new school will come with all kinds of add-on costs for new fields, mothballing or changing the use of the existing Perley School, and well, you can guess that down the road, that number will zoom just as the recent override number zoomed.

But, they tell us "the state" will pay 50% of the bill, so who cares. Let's get a new school! Yippee! Yahoo!

Let me be the first to congratulate the school building committee and supporters on their ability to ensure passage of a new tax increase. If the past is any indication of the future, they will skew all numbers to minimize the anticipated impact on households. Then, they'll maximize all numbers to defeat any attempts at adding additions or modernizing, or making any changes to the existing building (remember, it's easier to let the bridge decay, and simply build new). Finally, they'll vilify

anyone who speaks up in opposition to the new building. After all, it's for the kids, so if you don't support a new school, you're a hater.

If you look around at other communities, if you look around at enrollments, if you look around at the true needs and alternatives, you will be wasting your time. You see, they've been at this (various groups now) for more than 8 years. That's a lot of water under that bridge,



and a lot of time to let the current building miss many opportunities for repair, renovation, expansion, etc. (Just as you would put a new roof on your old house, and repair floors, boilers, and if you needed space for more kids,

add on a couple of extra rooms.)

Well, I go back to congratulating them, because 57% of the voters stayed home last year. They didn't bother to vote, and then, when they got their tax increase, they didn't understand it. I suspect the same apathy will play out this time. So, for those few paying attention, please do not confuse my congratulatory attitude with one of defeatism, rather, I just don't care. I have my one vote and I can't vote to support wasteful spending, nor can I support increasing taxes on our older neighbors who are on social security and do not get 80% of their salary in retirement, the way our superintendent (80% of greater than her current annual earnings of \$176K+) will have upon retirement. Count me as a no vote.

In the non-government world, our neighbors who worked for small businesses, large businesses, or anything other than Mass. Govt., simply can't afford tax increases year after year, and there are few of us 'in-the-middle' of the age and income bracket who can help them anymore.

If those who advocate modest support for a phased school expansion/renovation program can't get out the vote, or if they are hoodwinked again (believe the override numbers which were skewed to represent only half of the true cost), if they are discouraged from voting (the Supt. repeatedly called only the student households last spring, in a get-out-the-vote effort which has never been seen in this town before), then we get what the minority desires. Wants, desires, wants, needs. We've never been able to separate our wants from our needs in this town. Why should 2012 be any different?

Top 40 Haverhill City Officials in 2011

Denaro, Alan R.	\$190,976.98	Police Department
Scully, James F.	\$176,615.42	School Department
Wrenn, Michael J	\$147,162.21	Police Department
Barbieri, John D	\$139,858.34	Police Department
Leeman, William A	\$137,691.48	Police Department
Thompson, Donald E	\$130,982.18	Police Department
Burrill, Dana W	\$126,384.84	Police Department
Florent, Joseph A	\$125,691.31	Police Department
Haugh, Anthony L	\$124,753.93	Police Department
Moriarty, Brian F	\$124,409.31	Fire Department
Pellot, Victor M	\$123,877.00	Police Department
Iannalfo, Stephen	\$123,471.89	Police Department
Ratte, Alan J	\$123,011.25	Police Department
Spero, John M	\$121,607.56	Police Department
Parolisi, Kim J	\$121,528.57	Police Department
Laliberty, William F	\$119,474.70	Fire Department
Pistone, Robert P Jr	\$118,639.16	Police Department
Accardi, Ricci A	\$117,026.89	Fire Department
Moriarty, Dennis J	\$116,024.92	Police Department
Sullivan, Michael J	\$115,633.79	Fire Department
Borden, Richard B	\$114,551.24	Fire Department
Pearl, Jason E	\$114,286.90	Police Department
Arahovites, John P	\$113,685.37	Police Department
Davoli, Donald F	\$113,656.78	School Department
Smith Todd J	\$112,923.11	School Department
Proulx, Brian M	\$112,734.44	Police Department
Sullivan, Timothy W	\$112,147.85	Fire Department
Butt, David J	\$111,812.17	Fire Department
Stankovich, Michael I	\$111,453.31	Highway
Rogers, Francis Jr	\$111,106.19	Police Department
Covino, Maurice M	\$110,115.26	Sch. Department
Surette, Jeffrey R	\$108,324.93	Police Department
Robinson, Raymond	\$107,641.96	Fire Department
Rosario, John J	\$107,534.27	Police Department
Doherty, Stephen J J	\$107,255.39	Police Department
Kosmes, Kara M	\$107,068.73	School Department
Dorr, Kevin J	\$106,593.85	Police Department
Little, John D	\$105,824.24	Police Department
Kitsos, Elizabeth	\$105,551.78	School Department
Stronach, Jon P	\$105,457.96	Fire Department

Why I want to be your next Republican State Committeeman

I am Sheila Mullins, I live in Newburyport, and I am running for an office that you may not have ever heard of and frankly up until a couple of years ago, neither had I. I am running for Republican State Committee in the First Essex district which is the State Senatorial district that is currently being served by Steven Baddour.

The big questions are:

1. What is the State Committee and what do they do?
2. Why should I care?
3. Who are you, Sheila?

The role of the Republican State Committee is to act as a liaison between the city/town committees and the national GOP. They are responsible for the monetary distribution to a candidate that is donated to the MA GOP. The job of the State Committee is also to help grow the Republican Party in Massachusetts, get Republicans elected, and to assist city and town committees with training, support, etc.

We all know that Massachusetts is, by and large, a one party state and that this imbalance has not been good for the beleaguered Taxpayers. Without more Republicans and others who seek a constitutionally compliant government (as in limited government), we will continue to get more of the same: excessive regulations that kill businesses, job growth and hamstringing small companies; ever-increasing taxes; a government that sees its employers (meaning the Taxpayers) as its own ATM; fewer services for American citizens but more cost to the same; and the like. This is NOT the direction I think is beneficial to anyone living, working and paying taxes in Massachusetts. These are some of the reasons why you should care.

Then the question still not answered is who am I? I am a member of the Newburyport Republican Committee and former Treasurer during the time that Larry Giunta was Chair. I just completed my term as the Clerk of the Newburyport Charter Commission (my only elected office). I have spent a



number of years in Newburyport doing what I can to help make my adopted hometown a better place. I am a Friend, member, and volunteer at the Custom House Maritime Museum; a founder, former Treasurer, former Secretary, and current chair of the Captain Courageous Fund of the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society among other things. I have been politically active working on campaigns in Newburyport since the late 1980's and I ran for City Council at-large in 2003.

Obviously, then the follow up questions are why are you running and why are you asking for my vote (and your help as well). Well, see two paragraphs ago for starters! But seriously, I've been to a lot of RTC and RCC meetings; I've seen good things done and some things that could be done better; I know as Republicans we can do better! We have the can-do attitude and we are not afraid of hard work! Do I have all the answers? Of course not, but I know what has worked, I have ideas of what to do, and I'm not afraid to work hard! I am asking for your vote during the Presidential primary election on March 6th. I cannot win this on my own, it will take a lot of help and I'm asking you for your help. If you want to find out more about me, please visit www.sheilamullins.com where you can also find all my contact information. I thank you in advance.

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Christine Morabito to head Gr. Boston Tea Party

Tom Duggan

The Greater Boston Tea Party has elected as their new president, Valley Patriot columnist Christine Morabito.

Morabito replaces another Valley Patriot columnist, Christen Varley, who served as the first president and is credited with organizing and promoting the Greater Boston Tea Party (as well as other chapters) to the successful organization that it is today.

Morabito is a local nurse and one of the founders of The Merrimack Valley Tea Party and has served on its board since 2009. She serves as a committee chair. She has also served on the steering committee of the Greater Boston Tea Party since the organization's incorporation in 2010. She will serve as president of the

Greater Boston Tea Party for two years, beginning January 1, 2012.

"Christine has been a dedicated activist within the movement and has exhibited outstanding leadership qualities in her writing, her public speaking and her service to the Greater Boston Tea Party," said Christen Varley, outgoing president.

"I have complete confidence Christine can successfully lead the organization through the exciting months ahead of us."

Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan said that the Greater Boston Tea Party could not have picked a more dedicated and organized person to head the grassroots organization.

"Fact is, the Tea Party Movement nationwide needs a clear message and a focus on promoting the organization, growing it and using it to make a differ-



Christine Morabito interviews Newt Gingrich



Christine Morabito with U.S. Senator Scott Brown

ence, but not just on the national stage it really needs to focus on local issues and local elections," Duggan said.

"Christine Morabito gets that. She gets the evolving political landscape and she knows what the Tea Party needs right now. I am going to miss Christen Varley, she leaves very big shoes to fill. She has done Herculean work to make sure the organization had legitimacy and purpose. But, she has left the Greater Boston Tea Party in capable hands. I don't think we have heard the last of Christen. There are really big things in store for her."

In 2012, the Greater Boston Tea Party will continue its mission of educating and informing voters as well as advocating for and against public policy at both the state and national level. Monthly meetings, guest speakers and public rallies are scheduled for the next nine months as the nation looks to elect a President and Federal legislators.

"When we articulate the principles of limited government, free speech, free markets, individual liberty and personal responsibility, we will naturally grow our numbers and have a positive effect on public policy, both locally and nationally," said Ms. Morabito. "I am both humbled and honored to have been chosen by the steering committee to be the next president of the Greater Boston Tea Party."

Patrick Humphries was re-elected to serve as treasurer of the group, while Christen Varley was elected to serve as secretary. The steering committee nominates and elects officers every two years. New terms commence January 1, 2012 and end December 31, 2013. Other members of the Steering Committee include Austin Hess, Katherine Malone, Peter Laird and Ralph Zazula.

You can email us: valleypatriot@aol.com

Area Home Sales Volume Up Substantially in November

Forecast for 2012: Moderate decrease in median prices, with pockets of price appreciation

(MERRIMACK & NASHOBA VALLEYS) — The Northeast Association of Realtors (NEAR) — which represents more than 1,200 Realtors throughout the Merrimack and Nashoba valleys — today held a program titled, "State of the Housing Market: 2011 Review & 2012 Forecast, at which it was reported that sales of single family homes and condominiums in the area during the month of November rose substantially compared with November of last year, and that the median sales price for both property types declined by more than 14 percent versus last November. NEAR's report is based on data from MLS Property Information Network based in Shrewsbury.

Year-to-date through the end of November, the sales volume of single family homes was at 2,386 sales, basically unchanged and dropping by a less than 1 percent versus last year, while the number of condominium sales year-to-date, at 886, was down by 5.3 percent compared with the same period in 2010. For single family

homes sold in the local area, median sales prices from January through November were down by 6.2 percent compared with last year -- \$300,000 versus the \$319,900 median posted from January through November of 2010 — but actually rose by 4.5 percent over the previous month's median of \$258,450. Meanwhile, the median price for condominiums sold year-to-date was up by less than 1 percent, rising to \$178,500 versus the median price of \$177,750 from January through November of last year, and dropped by 13.3 percent compared with the \$188,000 median price set in October. The median price is the point at which half the properties sold cost more, and half cost less.

Providing analysis regarding the current state of the local housing market, NEAR President Tom Courtney said, "Despite the bleak picture about the housing market being reported nationally, our local market is holding up fairly well." He added, "It's a great time to be a well-qualified homebuyer. There is still an excellent selection

of available homes, prices have declined from historic highs, sellers are negotiating, builders continue to offer concessions, and mortgage interest rates remain near historic lows. The market is especially favorable for first time buyers who don't have a property to sell. And, while those who do have to sell in order to buy may not get the price they were expecting, they are also finding they do very well on the purchase end."

In addition to Courtney, other panelists at the State of the Housing Market program included

Elizabeth Phelan, 2011 President of the Massachusetts Mortgage Bankers Association, and Clayton Mersereau, 2012 President of the North East Builders Association.

The November area home sales report also reflected that as of December 15, the inventory of homes for sale in all three property categories — single family, condos, and multi-family — locally has decreased since last month and remains well

below the peaks set in 2006 and 2007.

Also included in the report are details on the average length of time it took to sell a property locally. For properties sold in November, the average number of days on market were: 1) for single family homes, 123 days, up by 10.8 percent versus last November; 2) for condominiums, 148 days, down by 22.9 percent; and, 3) for multi-family properties, 45 days, down by 46.4 percent since last year.

The Northeast Association of Realtors 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.

Nov 2011 vs. Nov 2010	# Sold Nov 2010	# Sold Nov 2011	Yr over Year Change	Median Price Nov 2010	Median Price Nov 2011	Yr over Year Change	Avg. DoM Nov 2010	Avg. DoM Nov 2011	Yr over Year Change
Single Family	173	204	+17.9%	\$320,000	\$270,000	-15.6%	111	123	+10.8%
Condo	67	83	+23.9%	190,000	163,000	-14.2%	192	148	-22.9%
Multi Family	38	34	-10.5%	187,500	213,000	+13.6%	84	45	-46.4%

Nov 2011 vs. Oct 2011	# Sold Oct 2011	# Sold Nov 2011	Mo over Month Change	Median Price Oct 2011	Median Price Nov 2011	Mo over Month Change	Avg. DoM Oct 2011	Avg. DoM Nov 2011	Mo over Month Change
Single Family	222	204	-8.1%	\$258,450	\$270,000	+4.5%	108	123	+13.9%
Condo	73	83	+13.7%	188,000	163,000	-13.3%	128	148	+15.6%
Multi Family	42	34	-19.0%	189,175	213,000	+12.6%	99	45	-54.5%

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

SCOTT BROWN'S OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN KICK OFF (JANUARY 19TH AT MECHANICS HALL, WORCESTER)

January 17th, 2010: Thousands of people filled Mechanics Hall to show their support for Scott Brown.

January 19th, 2010: Scott Brown is elected US Senator by the people of Massachusetts.

Two years after his historic victory, our Senator will be returning to Worcester to officially kick off his campaign for re-election.

Please join us on January 19th, 2012 at 6pm (doors open at 5pm) at the historic Mechanics Hall in Worcester.

Please help us pack Mechanics Hall once again to show our continued support for our Senator as he begins another tough battle for the People's Seat. We will be making phone calls to friends and supporters January 3rd thru January 18th and we NEED your help! Those who volunteer their time and are able to recruit the most friends and supporters to attend on January 19th will be offered a spot on stage with Scott or in the front row as he announces his candidacy for re-election live on the evening news.

Here is the information for the phone banks taking place next week. Please let me know if you would like to help get the word out, but cannot attend one of these phone banks. I'm happy to accommodate anyone who would like to help out!

WHAT: Phone Banks to Invite Friends & Supporters to January 19th Campaign Kick Off for Senator Scott Brown

WHERE: Osgood Bradley building, 4th floor (18 Grafton Street) Worcester

Contact Kayla Berube, Regional Field Representative at 508-414-5482 or kberube@massvictory.com if you are planning to attend or would like more info.

HAVERTHILL - The following is a statement from the new owner of the Haverhill Paperboard site. Barrow Development Group is excited to announce the acquisition of the former Haverhill Paperboard site along the Merrimack River in the Bradford District of Haverhill. The project, currently named Pentucket Park, will focus on repositioning the existing, functionally obsolete site to achieve the highest-and-best use for the property. The project's infrastructure, location and expansive frontage along the Merrimack River provide powerful optionality for potential future use, which has not been determined. Current development options include a combination of residential, commercial, and recreational uses; infrastructure considerations include providing renewed access from the Salem/Peabody Street intersection, a marina, or walking

trail. Barrow Development is encouraged by discussions with the City of Haverhill, which occurred throughout the due diligence period. We are committed to transforming the project into a performing asset that contributes to the already-thriving Downtown District of Haverhill.

IRS KICKS OFF 2012 TAX SEASON WITH DEADLINE EXTENDED TO APRIL 17

The Internal Revenue Service opened

the 2012 tax filing season by announcing that taxpayers have until April 17 to file their tax returns. The IRS encourages taxpayers to e-file as it is the best way to ensure accurate tax returns and get faster refunds. The IRS also announced a number of improvements to help make this tax season easy for taxpayers. This includes new navigation features and helpful information on IRS.gov and a new pilot to allow taxpayers to use interactive video to get help with tax issues.

"At the IRS, we're working hard to make the process of filing your taxes

as quick and easy as possible," said IRS Commissioner Doug Shulman. "Providing quality service is one of our top priorities. It not only reduces the burden on taxpayers, but also helps in filing an accurate return right from the start."

Taxpayers will have until Tuesday, April 17 to file their 2011 tax returns and pay any tax due because April 15 falls on a Sunday, and Emancipation Day, a holiday observed in the District of Columbia, falls this year on Monday, April 16. According to federal law, District of Columbia holidays impact tax deadlines in the same way that federal holidays do; therefore, all taxpayers will have two extra days to file this year. Taxpayers requesting an

extension will have until Oct. 15 to file their 2011 tax returns.

The IRS expects to receive more than 144 million individual tax returns this year, with most of those being filed by the April 17 deadline.

The IRS will begin accepting e-file and Free File returns on Jan. 17, 2012. Additional details about e-file and Free File will be announced later this month. IRS Free File provides options for free

brand-name tax software or online fillable forms plus free electronic filing. Everyone can use Free File to prepare a federal tax return. Taxpayers who make \$57,000 or less can choose from approximately 20 commercial software providers. There's no income limit for Free File Fillable Forms, the electronic version of IRS paper forms, which also includes free e-filing.

The IRS also reminds paid tax return preparers they must have and include a Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) on all returns they prepare.

All PTINs must be renewed for 2012. Tax return preparers can obtain or renew PTINs online For tax law questions or account inquiries, taxpayers can also call our toll-free number (7 a.m. to 7 p.m. local time) or visit a taxpayer assistance center, the locations of which are listed on IRS.gov.

THE LARE TRAINING CENTER, a branch of American Training Inc., was honored at Fenway Park on December 14th by the American Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA) at their holiday celebration "Leaders of Tomorrow Through Education."

ALPFA, along with El Mundo Newspaper and Liberty Mutual Insurance,



Rumor has it that on his very last day as Mayor of Methuen, Ellen Bahan's prediction finally came true as Bill Manzi declared an emergency measure and suspended the city charter to declare himself king for life. ...no, not really!

selected the LARE Training Center as the only non-profit organization to be honored at this event. Because of its leadership in the education field, ALPFA donated \$5,000 to LARE which will be used to support additional programming. As the premier business organization for expanding opportunities for Latino Leadership in the global market, ALPFA's mission is to create opportunities, add value, build relationships for its members, the community and its business partners while expanding Latino leadership in the global workforce.

LARE was honored this year because of its work in communities with high Hispanic populations. With the support of dedicated Colleagues, LARE Training Centers are leaders in their communities for GED attainments, job and skill training, job placements, and supporting young mothers' educational and personal goals.

LARE's unique approach to education includes supporting and fostering the goals of every individual instead of seeing them as just students. ALPFA's generous donation will show students how their LIFE matters by providing them with new learning opportunities.

The educational branch of American Training, LARE has provided award-winning education, occupational skill training, and job placement programs to youth and adults for 30 years in Lawrence, Chelsea, and Lowell, and will soon expand to Revere. Licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Proprietary School Division, LARE is recognized as one of the most successful programs of its kind in the state.

Headquartered in Lawrence, American Training Inc. is a non-profit organization that supports a diverse population throughout the North of Boston area with programs designed to help them lead meaningful lives. ATI programs support unemployed workers in need of technical training; young parents and youth in need of direction; and people with disabilities or mental illnesses who want to more fully participate in their community, or need a place to live.

For more information please contact: Elektra Pearson, Marketing Assistant, at elektrapearson@americantraininginc.com

METHUEN VILLAGE: Hand Bell Choir 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 First Church Congregational Hand Bell Choir and Children's Chapel Ringers on Thursday, January 12 at 7:00 p.m. Advance RSVP encouraged. Methuen Village is lo-

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NEWS ITEM: At the halfway point of his four year term, Lawrence Mayor Willie Lantigua not only has the State Dept. of revenue running the city's budget, but has now admitted he is incapable of running The Lawrence Public Schools. The State Department of education will take over the schools this month.

cated in the heart of downtown Methuen at 4 Gleason Street. For more information, call 978-685-2220 or visit www.MethuenVillage.com.

Pianist John D'Ambrosio 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 pianist John D'Ambrosio on Tuesday, January 31 at 2:00 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 visitwww.MethuenVillage.com.

NECC SPONSORS ANNUAL PEACE POETRY CONTEST

Students in grades kindergarten through 12, from both public and private area schools, are invited to participate in Northern Essex Community College's Fourth Annual Peace Poetry Contest and Reading. Participants may create and submit original poems and art work on the subject of peace.

The deadline for submission is Thursday, March 15. Some 80 poems and accompanying artwork will be selected for publication in a small book of poetry to be published this spring. Selected entrants will be invited to take part in a poetry reading from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Friday, May 4 in the David Hartleb Technology Center on the Haverhill campus. Those poets will receive prizes and awards to celebrate their contributions.

This annual contest, which draws entries from students in more than 40 area schools, is the college's first college-wide

service learning initiative. NECC students collaborate on the project developing a website, designing posters and award certificates, judging poetry submissions and hosting a public reading.

NECC invites participants to create and submit original poems on the subject of peace.

This contest was coordinated by NECC associate professor of English Dr. Paul G.

Saint-Amand, a Vietnam era veteran who is committed to peace.

"As an educator, I want to fuel children's imaginations toward peace," he says. "A lot more has been written about war than about peace."

Entries can be submitted to peacepoetry@necc.mass.edu or NECC Peace Poetry Contest, 100 Elliot St., Spurrk 317H, Haverhill, MA 01830-2399.

For additional information contact Saint-Amand at 978-556-3307, psaintamand@necc.mass.edu or visit the webpage at http://www.necc.mass.edu/academics/enrichment/service-learning/peace-poetry/.

This contest is sponsored by the NECC office of the vice president of academic

NOTEBOOK, PAGE 32

Adopt Us at the Lowell Humane Society



(Above) My name is Banana. I am a 1 year old girl who loves treats! I get along with other cats and would love a playmate-person or feline!



<<<My name is Trotter and I am a sweet 6 year old male who would love to go to a home with lots of petting and love!

>>>>>I'm Brownlee, a sweet 3 year old Terrier Mix who needs a home with older children and might even do well with another dog if it is the right match.



>>>>I'm Brock, a handsome 8 year old American Bulldog Mix who gets along with cats and other dogs!



I'm Babe, a 2 year old guinea pig who loves to eat greens!

CONTACT CHRIS ARNOTT, COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR LOWELL HUMANE SOCIETY AT (978) 888-4770

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PHOTO: EMILY WHITE

PROSPECT HILL: The member of the hard rock band Prospect Hill with Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan hang out during rehearsals at their secret location in Lawrence. Each month The Valley Patriot will publish scheduled gigs and information about rock music's biggest rising stars from right here in The Valley. Pictured from left to right are: Edgar Troncoso (bass), John Roberge (rhythm guitar), Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan, Mark Roberge (drums), Adam Fithian (vocals), and Derek Rousseau (lead guitar), with their copies of the paper. Prospect Hill is managed by Dan Roberge of Lawrence. You can email him at 1111Management@gmail.com. You can check them out on line at (prospecthillmusic.com)

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"I AM" The Valley Patriot!

Meet Linda Lemerise our Copy Editor

Linda Lemerise lives in Methuen, MA and has been with the Valley Patriot as a copy editor since 2009.

She is responsible for checking spelling and typos, checking layout and photos and making sure The Valley Patriot is operating efficiently and that we publish on time.

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

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



Linda Lemerise
 Copy Editor



Israeli Soldiers in Tel Aviv, Israel, with their December, 2011 Valley Patriot during a break from delivering free pizzas and other foods to fellow soldiers on the front line in their defensive war with the Muslim terrorists. The Valley Patriot is proud to be able to provide free newspapers to freedom fighters around the world. At Right, Henri Sebbane in Israel, our biggest fan outside the United States. Henri owns Tshal Pizza in Israel and provides free Pizzas to the troops every week. (www.tsahal-pizza.com).



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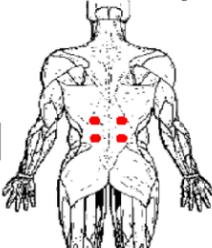


Rami R. Rustum, M.D. is the Director of Merrimack Pain Associates. For any questions or concerns, please email Dr. Rustum at: ramirustum@comcast.net

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Ye Gay Ol' Valley

Dirty Words

D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

I recently watched the movie *The Help*, an outstanding movie. Good enough to be put on my Christmas list. Like any good movie, it ran the gamut of many emotions and it was a story I revisited for days afterward thinking about its meaning, impact and historical value. I could feel my blood boiling while I watched these prejudiced, ignorant white people of the 1960's treat human beings like sub-standard creatures. I had no idea that outhouses and special bathrooms were installed in some homes so that 'the help' wouldn't soil the family's porcelain throne because 'they carry different diseases' than we do.

It still baffles me, after inhabiting this earth for over 200,000 years, why the human race is still struggling with the ability to treat all people equally and with simple human decency and kindness. The argument is always the same when trying to justify discrimination: "They're not like the rest of us," "They don't think, feel, act and believe the same things as we do." And then, sooner or later, usually too much later when lives have been hurt or destroyed people realize, "Well, I guess, they are like us after all." This is usually preceded by year after painful year of fighting, sit-ins, violent confrontations, petitions, marches and wasteful spending on a law that should have existed in the first place.

I just read an article in *Curve* magazine about a secret underground lesbian subculture in Palestine. These women have to meet in secret because there are not supposed to be any lesbians in the Muslim world. They have to get their name on a special list to attend and if their name is not on it, they cannot enter. This has been going on for a number of years now. Lesbian Muslims are considered a disgrace. Muslim women who divorce are considered whores. Many Muslim lesbians have lost their families, livelihoods and even their lives when found out. So, they do as the Christians did in ancient Rome, they congregate in hiding. Hopefully there won't be five million of them buried below the streets of Palestine like the Christians of Rome. But because most, if not all, of Islam's lesbians are afraid to come out the world will never know how many of them have lost their lives when discovered.

I find it infuriating and frustrating that people hide behind the veils and icons of their faith to tout hatred, discrimination and ignorance. Those people from that Westfield Baptist Church have got to be the worst. "God hates fags" is a favorite sign of theirs. God is incapable of hate. God is the epitome of love and acceptance and it is up to mankind to emulate this in their own lives. Too much blood has been shed for thousands of years in the name of God, Allah or 'the' gods, depending upon one's beliefs. The ancient Aztec, Maya and Inca sacrificed thousands upon thousands of innocents to please their gods. Muslims have long believed that to fight and die for Islam is a great honor. Their founder Muhammad told them so at the same time he was fighting to promote women's rights by giving them the right to divorce, inherit land, have their own wealth and given the right to vote. So many seemed to have forgotten that piece. And let us not forget about the Crusades fought in the name of the Christian God. Charlemagne, the Frankish who fought to protect the Italian Pope and Christianity against advancing Germanic tribes believed, "...God's blessing protected Frankish swords, engaged as they were in a just war against pagans." How disturbing it is that a loving and just God would protect anyone's weapon at all? Every one of these 'holy wars' were fueled by the dirty words of prejudiced, hatred and fear and they still are.

What happened to thou shall not kill and love thy neighbor? How is that murderous behavior justified through the twisting and skewing of religious scripture? Men can be beasts, that's for sure, but when, if ever will it stop? Will there be a world of true love and compassion? Will there be a constant season of good will toward men? Will the dirty words: prejudice, hatred and fear forever be washed from the mouths of those who try to subjugate those they see as inferior and a threat?



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 Dani-BLangevin@aol.com

A candidate who's finally ready to tell the emperor he has no clothes on?

"One of the things I will talk about, that no president has talked about before, is I think the dangers of contraception in this country....Many of the Christian faith have said, well, that's okay, contraception is okay. It's not okay. It's a license to do things in a sexual realm that is counter to how things are supposed to be."

~ Presidential candidate Rick Santorum

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The statement above by Rick Santorum will earn him the ridicule and scorn of the media, the press, the general public, and even most Christians. He will be accused of all the usual things, from being out of touch, stupid, from another era, a puritan, etc., etc. As a result he will not be taken seriously as a candidate. The problem is he is right. The second problem is that there is a dearth of people who understand this, and less who have the courage to communicate it.

There is a simple reason why most people will consider what I just stated as nutty. Often when someone is addicted to a drug he cannot admit it because he is not aware of it. He is so conditioned by, and dependent on, the lifestyle it brings him that he assumes his experience of reality is normal and that there is no viable alternative.

The same can be said about a society. We as a people are in the midst of the greatest drug dependence ever experienced, and it continues to skew our vision, breakdown our families, and destroy our lives in ways that we are not even aware of. That drug is the birth control pill.

Since the 1970's this pill has reshaped the economy, the family, and our cultural standards so much as to condition a people to believe things that common sense would quickly reject when sober.

This drug-dependence leads us to believe that large families are wrong, that premarital relationships must be sexual, that women must have careers, look sexy, and give in to men in order to have self worth; that pregnancy can be a "mistake" that is corrected by abortion, that marriage can be a mistake corrected by divorce, and that limiting marriage to a man and woman has been a mistake universally for four thousand years.

A new (politically correct) language has arisen and a new reality has been shaped in our minds because of this drug. Like its purpose, it creates a mentality that separates sex from procreation, love from life, and as a result all "sexual expression" and subsequent lifestyles become rationalized and legitimized. If you don't buy into this skewed vision you are a labeled a bigot.

Rick Santorum will be called a Catholic bigot, even though the Church simply recognizes the natural law that all non-Catholics with open minds recognize, like Ghandi who condemned contraception with no uncertain terms.

Rick Santorum possesses an insight that even most people on the religious right do not have – that the culture of death weakening this nation at its core has its root and foundation in contraception. None of the ills of society that rest

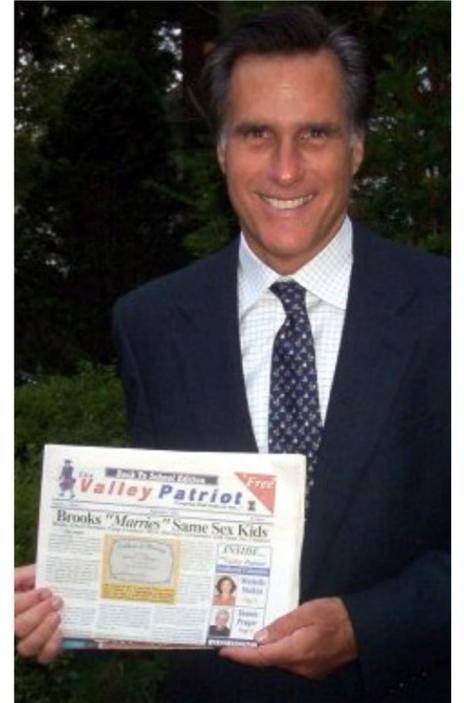


PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

upon it – including abortion, divorce, and the population implosion now threatening the western world – will ever wane until contraception is condemned. And that will never occur until many more like Santorum stand up and take the heat for challenging society's major addiction. Like anyone who is drug-dependent, if the message is communicated with consistency and love eventually the lashing out and ridicule of the masses will give way to resignation, repentance, and sobriety. But again, this would take courage from many more individuals like Santorum willing to take the inevitable heat.

If you want a presidential candidate that probably has the best shot at beating Barack Obama, vote for Mitt Romney. If you want someone who will articulately expose Obama and his agenda for what it really is but has less chance of winning, vote for Newt Gingrich. But if you want someone that has the insight of a Gingrich and the potential electability of a Romney, it is time to consider Rick Santorum as your candidate. But regardless of who occupies the White House, you are the most important person to influence your world. Keep planting seeds.



Paul Murano teaches philosophy at North Shore Community College and theology at the College of Saint Mary Magdalen. He is host of Beneath the Surface television show at Burlington Cable Access TV and is co-host of the Paying Attention Radio program. Paul is also chairman of Heartbeat Pregnancy Help center in Burlington and is a singer/songwriter/musician.

Rick Santorum possesses an insight that even most people on the religious right do not have – that the culture of death weakening this nation at its core has its root and foundation in contraception. None of the ills of society that rest

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It's all about looking forward and getting things done!

Christine Morabito
MERRIMACK VALLEY TEA PARTY

The New Year brings a host of new challenges for the Tea Party in Massachusetts and for me personally. It is with a mixture of humility and pride that I have accepted a 2-year position as president of the Greater Boston Tea Party.

What a tremendous honor it is to succeed Christen Varley, who has tirelessly dedicated the past 3 years to promoting the Tea Party message – simply, clearly and eloquently. Christen has been a mentor, an inspiration and a friend to me as I struggled to “come out” as a conservative and encourage others to proudly do the same.

I am both thrilled and relieved that Christen has agreed to serve as secretary, meaning she will remain an integral part of this important grass-roots organization. She is credited with making the Greater Boston Tea Party the go-to organization for information about candidates, legislation and public policy.

Stark contrasts exist between me and my predecessor. I consider myself a loner, and will have to part ways with my comfort zone, becoming less of a private citizen and more of a public one. This will, no doubt, leave me exposed to attacks from our political foes on the spectacularly intolerant left. But, my strong belief in the Tea Party principles fills me with the confidence to stretch beyond what I ever thought possible.

My biggest contribution to the movement thus far has been as a writer. However, writing is a secluded endeavor, which involves spending copious

amounts of time alone, with only a pen, paper and the voices in my head. I have had the luxury of time -- time to think till it hurts, time to make more coffee and time to consult my thesaurus in order to create the perfect combination of nouns, verbs and adjectives to make my point. As a newly elected spokesperson, I will be expected, at a moment's notice, to speak unrehearsed, at times into a camera or microphone. The prospect is daunting, but I am up for the challenge.

That said, this is not about me. I am simply a figurehead; someone to articulate a consistent message. I will have a tremendous organization behind me, filled with passionate and committed activists. I would like to think that the Tea Party is not about egos, power struggles or who gets the glory (if you can call it glory). It's about inspiring people to get off the couch and help save our republic, before it's demolished beyond all recognition.

The Greater Boston Tea Party will continue to collaborate with Tea Parties and liberty groups across Massachusetts, unifying for a common goal: to change the one-party system on Beacon Hill and beyond. With that accomplished, we have a greater chance for the representation we deserve and our forefathers fought for.

When we can clearly articulate the principles of limited government, free speech, free markets, individual liberty and personal responsibility – values sorely lacking in today's society – we will motivate others to join us.

We will right our country in 2012 by demonstrating that big government rarely



Valley Patriot Contributors Jeff Katz from Talk 1200AM and Christine Morabito New President of the Greater Boston Tea Party

delivers what it promises; that it is better to lift up those at the bottom than to tear down those at the top; that people, not government bureaucrats know what is best for themselves, their families and their communities; that we are more free when we take responsibility for our choices and our futures; that there is inherent dignity in work and that no one owes us a living, a mortgage or a college tuition.

For those of you still unsure about the Tea Party, I ask you to give us a second look. Even if you despise politics or have no interest in it, you need to know what your legislators are up to – both good and bad – and how they are spending your hard earned money.

Because when they waste your tax dollars or use it on things you are opposed to -- and then ask for more – they've got some 'splain' to do. The Tea Party will ask the questions and provide you with the answers.

I have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support since the announcement of my new position. So when the progressives inevitably discover their new Tea Party target and pounce on me like a puma, I know hundreds of people will come to my aid. That makes it all worth it.



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

Let's Make 2012 Happen!

Christen Varley
TEA PARTY ORGANIZER/ACTIVIST

“It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things.”

– Leonardo da Vinci

This quote turned up as a Facebook friend's post the other day. The timing could not have been more perfect. I love reading the quotes that people share. Quotes can be inspirational and motivational and educational. They can back up our position on an issue. They can prove us right – or wrong. They can illustrate our state of mind, our beliefs and our emotions. I love this quote because it perfectly encapsulates what the Tea Party movement has done for the political culture of our country over the last three years.

I got involved in the movement in early 2009 because I was exasperated by what was happening in DC and by seeing how intrusive government practices had trickled down to the state and local level. I was inspired by what I saw others saying and doing about it. I decided to make something happen!

Did I foresee in my future what I have done since then? Absolutely not. Did any of us think in mid-2008 we would be the political activists we are now? Of course not. Being that it is the beginning of a

new year the obvious question is what happens next?

Aside from the elections coming up in November, I don't see how 2012 will be much different from the previous three years. Our job as political activists is to continue to advocate for limited government. This year, that will also mean looking for and supporting candidates that advocate for the same. Then, of course, the challenge is to get those candidates elected. Again, not much different from previous years. We have to make things happen.

The people that worked together to found the Greater Boston Tea Party have many beliefs in common but our strongest link was and continues to be our status as newcomers to the world of political activism. While our enthusiasm was high, none of us had ever been this politically active before and we had no idea what we were doing. We were determined to create something unique and original. One of our biggest concerns was designing an organization that would last.

We wanted an organization that would always stand up for Constitutional principles and not get bogged down in the politics of personality. We wanted to avoid the difficulties political parties face when a candidate deviates from principles. We did not want to be tied to candidates at all. We wanted to be a source of informa-



tion and education. We wanted to teach people how to be activists, how to be an asset to a candidate or campaign and how to promote Constitutional principles. I think we did a pretty good job.

In the last two years, the Greater Boston Tea Party has been a great source of information, education and training to those interested in the Tea Party movement all across the commonwealth. Because we have been deliberate and consistent in our messaging, we have become a go to organization for the media. Elected officials approach us as a gateway to reach out to activists across the state. Candidates want the opportunity to meet with us and answer our questions. Because we have made things happen, we are seen as a welcome addition to the political culture in Massachusetts. I am proud of

what we have done. I am looking forward to accomplishing even more in the coming year.

The Greater Boston Tea Party has elected a new president, Christine Morabito. I am happy to pass on the role of spokesperson to her as well as I take a step away from the day to day operations of the organization. I know you will come to see her as I do – as a thoughtful, informed, passionate advocate for the Tea Party movement. The GBTP knows there is a lot of work to be done in 2012 as part of our mission to educate, inform and advocate. Christine has been at my side for nearly three years and she understands and embraces our mission. I am already inspired by her readiness to jump in and take lead. Under Christine's leadership, tea party activists in Massachusetts will continue to make things happen.

You can email Christen at: cvarley@greaterbostonteparty.com



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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Are you buying your puppy from a puppy mill?

Have you ever walked by a pet store at the mall and stopped in for a few minutes because you couldn't make it past the windows without being smitten by the adorable faces staring out at you?

I used to be like this. But not any more. After all the publicity regarding puppy mills, you will NEVER find me inside one of those horrible places. Yes, the dogs in the windows are cute and cuddly, and they seem to be right at home in those wire cages.

When you look into one of those dog's eyes, you can't help but see the pain and suffering they have been through during their short life.

If only they could talk.

If only they could tell you about being born into a barren, wire cage where food and water are scarce. Where love and human contact is rare and companionship is nonexistent. Where disease runs rampant. Where the stench of feces and ammonia from urine burns their noses.

If only they could tell us about their long journey from the mill to the pet store. And how the people at the pet store gave them shots to try and make them appear less sick than they were. And how they were groomed for hours until their once matted coats shined.

If only they could tell us this side of the story. It's up to us as dog lovers to realize that this is what goes on! This isn't something that people can say doesn't exist or is made up. There is proof. There is proof in the undercover videos and undercover sting operations that have rescued thousands of these poor dogs. (Did anyone watch that episode on Oprah a few months ago?)

Puppy mills are places where dogs are bred over and over again and are kept in the most inhumane conditions.

Obviously places that sell puppies from puppy mills don't advertise this fact, but be aware of pet stores, newspaper ads and Internet ads. Remember that no reputable breeder would ever sell a dog to someone they have never met.



Puppies that are sold in the ways mentioned above have one purpose in life. They aren't bred to be your best friend or

slobber you with kisses in the morning. They are bred and sold to make money. Puppies are a hot commodity and these puppy mills are paying top dollar for breeding dogs.

Every breed of dog can be found in puppy mills. Breeding dogs are sold and bought at an auction, very similar to a car or art auction. Each dog is presented to an audience and then goes to the puppy mill of the highest bidder.

Female dogs are forced to have litter after litter for as long as they will produce. I read an article about a breeding dog named "Millie" whose uterus had slipped out of place due to multiple pregnancies and deliveries, and was literally protruding outside her body.

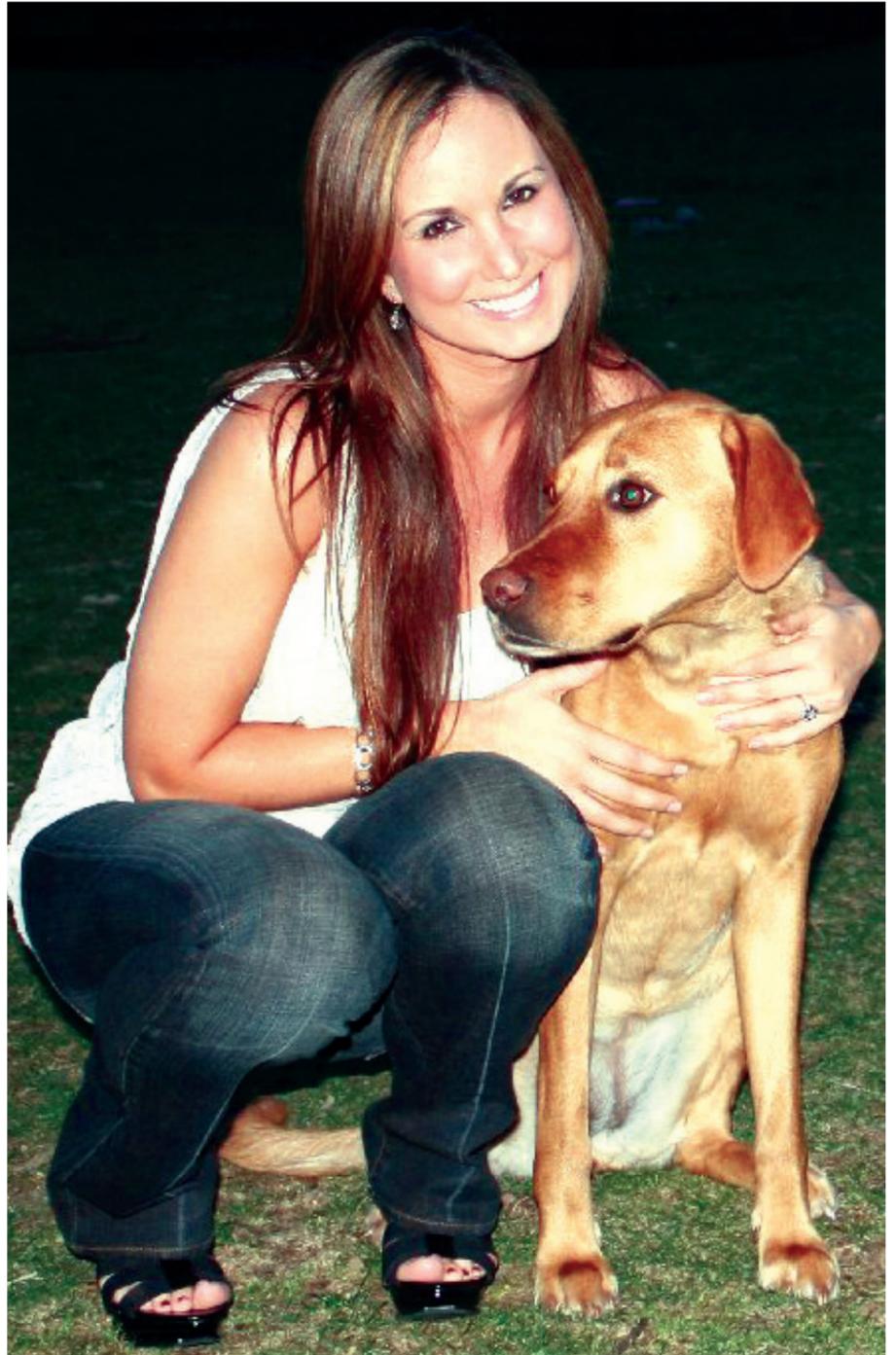
What a pleasant thought. Seriously, who does these things to these poor animals? After breeding females can no longer produce offspring, they are killed, abandoned or sold to another mill.

Please remember something. When you decide to get a new puppy or dog, please ADOPT! It's about time that we put an end to these disgusting puppy mills. Remember that many pet stores that buy from puppy mills will NEVER admit to this fact. They have been trained to make claims such as "our puppies are from reputable breeders and come with legitimate papers" or "we would never get puppies from a puppy mill." Don't be fooled.

Often there is a stigma that comes along with getting a dog from a shelter. But gone are the days when dogs at the pound are mangy and unruly.

You would be surprised at the beautiful, loving dogs who are just waiting to be adopted. My two dogs are a testament to how amazing shelter dogs are. Some people don't want to adopt because they

want a "purebred" and "healthy" dog. Just because you think you are buying from a reputable breeder or a popular pet store doesn't mean that is the type of dog you will get.



There have been documented reports of pet store puppies having horrible things wrong such as: Parvovirus, urinary infections, ear infections, roundworms, neurological problems, painful and severe dental infections, mange, kennel cough and pneumonia.

Not only are these things terrible for the dog, but they are very expensive to treat. Please don't fall into the trap of thinking that if you buy a dog from a pet store, you are getting a healthy, perfect dog.

It's time that these puppy stores are shut down!

Do me a favor and spread the word about puppy mills and about how important adoption is. Don't think that you are doing a good thing by buying from a pet store because you think you are "rescuing a puppy mill dog." As soon as one sick dog goes to a new home and a cage is empty, a new sick dog is rushed right in to replace it.

If you want to learn more about puppy mills and what you can do to put an end to them, just Google "puppy mills." There are hundreds of websites with literature and videos that will keep you occupied for

hours. I am going to end with a quote that I found on my rescue's (One Tail at a Time) page on Petfinder.com. Hopefully it will leave you as shocked as I was when I first read it. I think it does a good job of putting this issue into perspective.

"Every year in the United States an estimated 5 million animals lose their lives in shelters because they are homeless. That is one pet life lost every 6.5 seconds. The pet overpopulation epidemic is so staggering that for every animal born in the United States to have a home... each and every human being would have to own 6 dogs and 9 cats.

So, in actuality a family of four... 2 parents and 2 small children would have to own 24 dogs and 36 cats. It costs U.S. taxpayers an estimated 2 billion each year to round up, house, kill and dispose of homeless animals." — Source: Ryan Newman Foundation website

If you are interested in adopting a puppy or becoming a foster parent to a puppy waiting for a home you can email Kate at Kwswingrite@aol.com

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Why License Your Dog?

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

It's the first of the year and chances are your town will be mailing you your dog license bill. People ask me all the time, "Why do I even need to do this?" or "Why is the town making money off of my dog?"

This isn't about a town collecting revenue off of your family pet. It is about protecting the community.

WHY DO DOGS HAVE TO BE LICENSED? Massachusetts law requires that all dogs over the age of four months be licensed as a rabies control measure. The dog license also lets the town know if your pet is currently vaccinated against rabies. Rabies? With the amount of wildlife moving inward to our communities this is another protective measure to ensure the safety and health of your dog. (Just last week there was a case in Southern Mass of a man infected with rabies and becoming very ill.) Also, making sure your dog has its current license attached to its collar will help greatly to having your dog returned to you in case he becomes lost, or gets out of your yard.

MY DOG NEVER LEAVES MY PROPERTY WHY DO I HAVE TO BUY A LICENSE?

Massachusetts law requires that every dog four months of age or older must have a current license attached to its collar. Even dogs that "never leave the house" or are "indoor only dogs" must be licensed.

Dogs have a way of getting out through accidentally opened gates, sneaking out the door or human error where people forget to turn on those electric fences. Although natural disasters are not the norm in our area, if we do have a hurricane, earthquake, major snowstorm or flood, your dog may flee for his safety and leave your property. Having a dog license on his collar will help reunite your lost pooch to you.

WHERE DO I GO TO PURCHASE MY LICENSE? The Town of North Andover sells licenses Monday thru Friday 8:30 to 4:30 at the Town Hall. Other towns and cities please check on your town websites for times and locations. Your dog must be up to date on his rabies shots before obtaining a license. Please bring this paperwork with you when you apply for your dog license. If this is a renewal, your Vet has probably already sent your updated information to your town and all you will need to do is mail in your check to receive your new license.

DOG LICENSE FEES: North Andover is \$20.00 please refer to your town website for your local fees.

DUE DATE: North Andover is February 1, 2012 and once again for your town please refer to your town website

OTHER QUESTIONS? If you have other questions about licensing, please contact North Andover Town Hall 978-688-9500 or your town offices and they would be more than happy to answer your questions.



How About Some Canine Funtime?

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

Winter blues...getting too dark to walk your dog at night...a little too cold? Don't even worry about it because hidden in the Ward Hill Industrial Park in Haverhill MA is a nice little treat for your dog.

An indoor dog park! That's right it is the first of its kind in Massachusetts. Located in a 15,000 sq ft spot there is plenty of room for your dog to run around and burn off all that extra energy. I attended the open house in October and was quite impressed with the cleanliness of this location. Although it took quite a long time to finally open, I believe it may have been worth the wait.

When you visit Canine Funtime, you'll have access to:

- Safety amenities which include 15,000 square ft of anti-bacterial shock absorbing rubber flooring
- Special K-9 anti-bacterial turf with irrigation to promote a clean and fresh potty area

- Social, sports and educational events
- Adoption events
- Staff "Park Rangers" consisting of dog lovers and trainers who are certified in canine first aid, CPR and tail wagging fun

Accurate planning and research really went into this location. Because it is indoors, not only is it a nice alternative for those cold and wintery days, it is

FUNTIME, page 32



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Dog Talk with Uncle Matty Margolis

Matthew Margolis

SYNDICATED PET COLUMNIST

With any new puppy come certain predictable realities. There may not be blood, but there will be challenges:

1) There will be chewing.

Puppies, like babies, teethe. It's a painful process that most of us have zapped from our bank of childhood memories. But in search of relief from the intense pressure of new teeth forcing their way out, puppies chew and gnaw — on furniture, on shoes, on anything that feels good to their aching mouths.

The solution is to provide your pup with something that feels good but isn't potentially harmful and doesn't cost hundreds of dollars to replace. The perfect chew toy for a teething dog? A frozen washcloth.

Soak several washcloths and store them in your freezer. Whenever your puppy puts his teeth to anything you'd rather he not, take the item away and immediately sub in a frozen washcloth. His sore gums will feel immediate relief, and the previous item will fade from memory like so many forgotten baby teeth. Ice cubes also do the trick.

The pain of teething also brings nipping and mouthing. Nipping is a diminutive bite. Mouthing is the constant placement of the dog's mouth on some part of you — hand, leg, ankle, arm. Both habits can lead to biting if not corrected, so keep the washcloths coming.

2) There will be elimination.

Eliminating bodily waste is an act of nature — like breathing. We as dog owners

must understand that he doesn't care where he goes — we care. Thus, it is our job to teach him what we want. And so we must first make a choice: outside or inside?

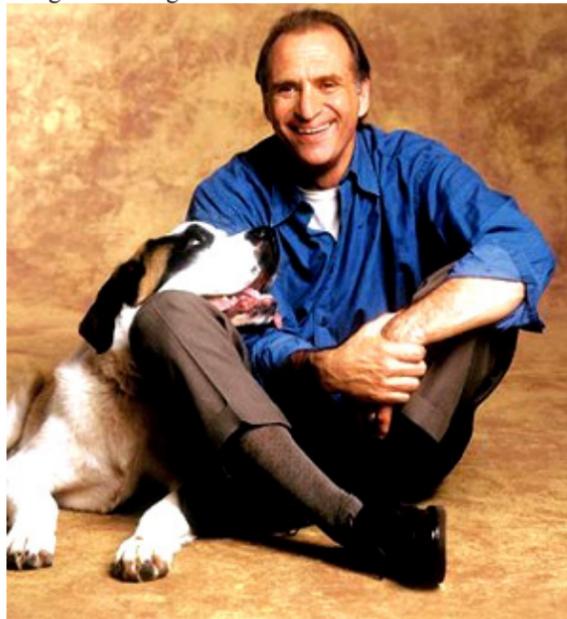
Housebreaking your puppy means he goes outside and only outside. Paper training entails teaching him to go inside the house, in a specific area. I strongly recommend housebreaking. Once a dog gets the go ahead to eliminate inside, it's difficult to switch gears.

Once you and your vet have determined the proper diet for your pup, you'll want to establish a consistent feed-water-walk schedule: He eats according to schedule, drinks according to schedule and is taken outside on the heels of either activity.

Should an accident occur, clean the area

thoroughly, and immediately take the dog outside and praise him.

Accidents are not cause for punishment.



They are opportunities for learning. Rather than accentuating your displeasure when he gets something wrong during the early leaning stages, focus on demonstrating how pleased you are with his corrected behavior.

3) There will be leash resistance.

Most of us know better than to throw a saddle on a horse that's never worn one and hop on. A leash to a dog is no more natural. Dogs don't come with diplomas. We must be patient with them as they adjust to all our wacky expectations.

The best way to gently introduce the leash to your pooch is to fasten a lightweight model to his collar and supervise as he wears it around the house. This allows him to get used to the weight around

his neck. Play fetch with him, have him walk to his food bowl and eat, and do any number of normal activities; however, do not ever leave him alone with the leash on.

Once he's had time to warm to the idea, take him on a walk. Allow him to pull you. Tugging on the leash while it's attached to his neck is no way to make him enjoy wearing one. He'll learn to stop pulling once he begins obedience training and learns "heel." Until then, cut the little guy some slack and have fun.

For more information on creating and implementing a feed-water-walk schedule, housebreaking, chewing, mouthing, nipping or leash training, read "I Just Got a Puppy. What Do I Do?" or "When Good Dogs Do Bad Things," or visit www.unclematty.com.

Woof!

Dog trainer Matthew "Uncle Matty" Margolis is the co-author of 18 books about dogs, a behaviorist, a popular radio and television guest, and the host of the PBS series "WOOF! It's a Dog's Life!" Read all of Uncle Matty's columns at www.creators.com, and visit him at www.unclematty.com. Send your questions to dearuncle.gazette@unclematty.com or by mail to Uncle Matty at P.O. Box 3300, Diamond Springs, CA 95619.

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THE DOCTOR IS 

How to deal with Hip Pain

Rami Rustum, M.D.
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

Hip pain is a common complaint that can be caused by a wide variety of problems. The precise location of your hip pain can provide valuable clues about the underlying cause.

Problems within the hip joint itself tend to result in pain on the inside of your hip or your groin. Hip pain on the outside of your hip, upper thigh or outer buttock is usually caused by problems with muscles, ligaments, tendons and other soft tissues that surround your hip joint.

Hip pain can sometimes be caused by diseases and conditions in other areas of your body, such as your lower back or your knees. This type of pain is called referred pain. Most hip pain can be controlled with self-care at home.

Causes: Hip fractures are a major and serious cause of sudden hip pain. Hip fractures become more common as people age because falls are more likely and bones become thinner. People with osteoporosis can get a fracture from simple, everyday activities, not just from a big fall or injury.

A hip fracture can change your quality of life significantly. Fewer than 50% of people with a hip fracture return to their former level of activity. While you recover from a hip fracture, several possible complications can be life-threatening. These include pneumonia and a blood clot in the leg, which can break loose and travel to cause a clot in the lungs. Both are due to lack of movement after a hip fracture and hip surgery.

Other possible causes of hip pain include:

- Arthritis -- often felt in the front part of your thigh or in your groin
- Bursitis -- it hurts when you get up from a chair, walk, climb stairs, and drive
- Infection
- Low-back pain such as sciatica
- Osteonecrosis of the hip
- Strain or sprain
- Tendinitis from repetitive or strenuous activity

Symptoms: Hip pain is often difficult to describe, and patients may complain that the hip just hurts. The location, description, intensity of pain, what makes it bet-



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!

ter, and what makes it worse depend upon what structure is involved and the exact cause of the inflammation and injury.

Pain from the hip joint may be felt anteriorly (in front of the hip) as groin

pain, laterally over the greater trochanter, or posteriorly in the buttock. Sometimes the patient may complain of knee pain which has been referred from the hip.

Trauma to the hip: With a fall, direct blow, twist, or stretch, the pain is felt almost immediately.

Overuse injury: The onset of pain may be delayed by minutes or hours as inflamed muscles surrounding the hip joint go into spasm or joint surfaces inflame, causing fluid accumulation.

Pain: Most often pain is felt in the

front of the hip, but the joint is three-dimensional. Pain may be also felt along the outside part of the hip or even in the buttock area.

Limp: Limping is the body's way of

compensating for pain by trying to minimize the amount of weight the hip has to support while walking. Limping produces abnormal stresses on other joints, including the back, knees, and ankles and if the limp persists, these areas may also

become inflamed and cause further symptoms.

Fracture: With a hip fracture, there is an acute onset of constant pain after the injury that usually is made worse with almost any movement. The muscles that attach to

the hip cause the fracture to displace, or move and the leg may appear shortened and rotated outward. If no displacement occurs, the leg may appear normal. Pelvic fractures may have pain similar to a hip fracture but the leg appears normal.

Sciatica pain: Pain from sciatica tends to start in the back and radiate to the buttocks and to the front or side of the hip. It may be described in different ways because of nerve inflammation. Some typical descriptive terms used for the pain of sciatica include sharp, stabbing, or burning. The pain of sciatica may be made worse with straightening the knee, which stretches the sciatic nerve and may make it difficult to stand from a sitting position, or walk with a full stride. There may be associated numbness and tingling. Loss of bowel and bladder function associated with the pain may signal a neurosurgical emergency and the presence of cauda equina syndrome. If not recognized and treated with immediate surgery, there is risk for permanent damage to the spinal cord.

Arthritis: If arthritis narrows the hip joint or impinges on the way the femoral head can glide in the acetabulum, or if there is a cartilage or labrum tear, the pain may be associated with a "catch," or a feeling like there is something impeding hip movement.

Pain from arthritis tends to be worse after a period of inactivity and gets better as the joint "warms up" with use. But as activity increases, the pain will return.

Diagnosis: Making the diagnosis of the cause of hip pain begins with the health-care practitioner talking with the patient and taking a careful history of the what, where, and when of the pain as well as reviewing any other underlying complaints. By factoring in the past medical history of the patient, the health-care practitioner can make a differential diagnosis or list of what potential causes might be considered. The physical examination helps refine that list, and tests may be done to confirm a specific diagnosis.

Sometimes the diagnosis is evident. The patient fell, hurt their hip, can't bear weight, and X-rays show a fractured hip. Sometimes the diagnosis requires more searching and may take time and repeat visits to find the source of the hip pain.

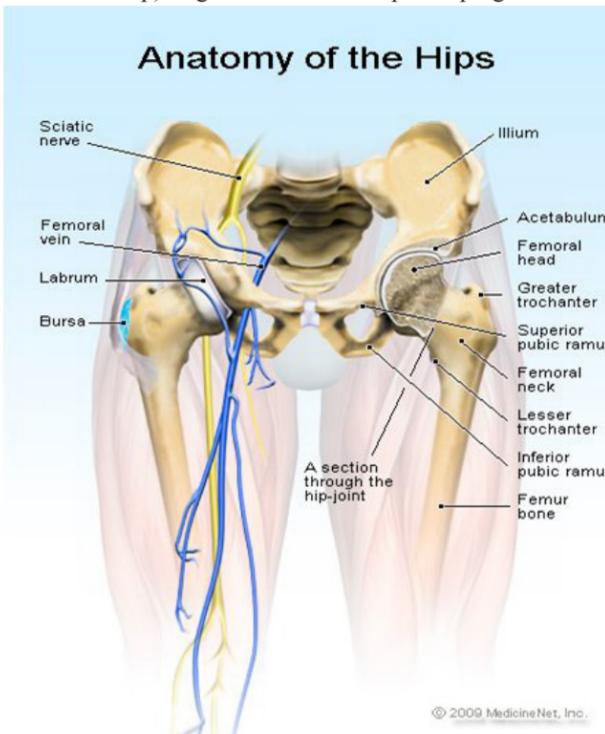
The history may involve many questions regarding everything from the onset of the hip pain to what makes it better or worse. The goal is for the provider to understand the frequency, duration, and context of the pain in relationship to the daily activities of the patient.

Aside from the history of the pain, other information looking for a systemic illness may be helpful in finding the cause of pain. Has there been an injury? Has there been a history of fever or chills? Weight loss? Abdominal pain? Diarrhea? Do other joints hurt or swell? While the questions may seem unrelated to the hip, it is necessary for the health-care practitioner to consider all possibilities.

Physical Examination: Physical examination for hip pain will focus on the hip, leg, and back, however, the rest of the body will not be ignored; looking for associated findings may help explain the patient's complaints.

Observation of the hip at rest and while standing or walking, palpation (or feeling) of the hip and surrounding structures, testing for range of motion and strength, and checking for sensation and pulses all may be appropriate.

Imaging: Many times plain X-rays of the hip and pelvis are done to look at



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Live the WOW!

Grrrrrr! Stop Getting So FRUSTRATED! It Will Ruin the Start to a Perfectly Wonderful New Year and Every Day Thereafter. Keep Your FRUSTRATION in Check Like People Living the WOW!

Thomas Connors
VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Life can be one great Big FRUSTRATING moment after another if you let it. Even more Frustrating is the fact that it affects every aspect of your life; no area is immune.

For example, you get all jeepee-up about your New Year's Resolutions; only to throw them out the window within days. Oh-so-good intentions gone awry.

Take a look at the patterns you have formed. Not even knowing you I can tell you what happens. Day after day throughout the year you find yourself making commitments and promises only to give up on them soon thereafter. You have every intention of following through.

Frustration beats you to the punch. It does not discriminate. It attacks without regard to race, color, social background or levels of wealth. Even Our Lord on earth grew Frustrated at various times; both with His Disciples and even His Heavenly Father.

Never ignore the damage Frustration is capable of doing throughout your lifetime. From simply taking you off track to ruining your life to the very core.

Frustration causes us to give in and give up just when we are ready to overcome its debilitating ways. It blinds us to Living the WOW!

You work extremely hard on a difficult project. You are almost finished.

Then, Wham!!!! You get blind sided by some quirk that throws your whole plan into question. Just when you thought you made it, when success seemed so close, something blocks your path and you get Frustrated.

People Living the WOW! discovered long ago that these nuances will appear. They are a fact of life ... sort of a "law of nature". You need to be aware of this fact and accept it. Then, you can devise a plan of action that is right for you. You will be able to have your defenses waiting in the wings. Force yourself if you must to maintain your composure when something throws you off stride and turn right around and pick up right where you left off. Don't allow your Frustration to derail your progress and eventual plans.

You are going to discover that Frustration kills more New Year's Resolutions than any other challenge in your life. Now that you know that, start today to protect all that you can be in your life this 2012.

If Persistence is one of the known secrets to life-long success in Living the WOW!, then FRUSTRATION is Poison to making it real.

You cannot begin to imagine how poisonous Frustration can be to your peace of mind, well-being and eventual success. It is sneaky. It strikes when you least expect it. And it is so debilitating that it knocks all energy out of you. Instead of fighting on, you simply throw in the towel and

give up.

I have seen this pattern repeat itself over and over again amongst our Guests at American Training's WorkChoice and StarWorks Branches. Due to a particular disability a Guest may give up because it is taking what seems like forever to learn a new skill. My Colleagues' job is to show that progress is happening steadily and surely. By sticking to the plan and seeing progress, it makes Frustration virtually powerless.

Use this lesson to acknowledge that there is one thing that you can do to stunt Frustration's powerful grasp once it appears. Focus on changing your attitude to accept the fact that feelings of Frustration will surface throughout life. Also recognize that no matter how much it tries to derail your efforts to succeed you can do exactly what people Living the WOW! do and always be prepared to block its effects. That way you will not find yourself overwhelmed and overtaken to the point of giving up.

If you want to beat back Frustration every time it raises its ugly head, you have to be ready for it in advance.

And being ready will take an attitude adjustment. Realize it WILL visit you. It is unavoidable. Don't kid yourself.

But by being ready and ignoring the temptation to give in gives you the edge. YOU end up controlling your own results not the other way around. You can then dictate and determine your level of achievement. You can decide whether you Live the WOW! for the rest of your life or not.

Timing is everything! So, always be alert to the possibilities that success is much closer than you might think.

Sure, attaining success in a particular venture may actually be way off. Maybe, years away. On the other hand, Living the WOW! may be right around the corner. Keep going, keep plugging away. Avoid letting Frustration get the best of you. It will mean the difference between living an ordinary, uneventful life and Living the WOW!

In other words, be patient. You may have only one more mile to run. One more call to make that big sale. Maybe just one more hour studying will make the difference in whether or not you pass that exam. Those are the times when you sit on the cusp of making success happen or turning back.

When you are ready, willing and able to put all your Frustrations aside and determine the Life you want to live, then you can say ...

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 ... TomConnors-ThinkPad.blogspot.com

Tiffany Johnson Performs In Annual Free Holiday Concert For Merrimack Valley School Children

Tiffany Kira Johnson knows better than most what a great feeling it is bringing

holiday joy to the hearts of children. For the past seven years the Brandies University junior has performed in a December concert for the children of the Merrimack Valley. The events originated in a grammar school in Lawrence and have grown large enough to now be held in the Lowell Memorial Auditorium.

This year twenty eight hundred kids from Dracut, Lawrence and Lowell enjoyed the sold out event. Ms. Johnson says, "The show is the highlight of my year. I have been lucky enough to perform for some of these kids all through their grade school years. I love them!"

The concerts have become a holiday institution in the region. And while the shows may have originated in a grade school auditorium they is nothing amateur about them. Both the sound and light systems are used by arena level national acts and the crew that works the show all work at the areas largest concert facilities.

The band members have belonged to and performed with some of the most successful acts in music history.

Nearly one hundred schools vied for the coveted tickets to the show.

Students from Lawrence's Parthum School, Wetherbee School, Robert Frost Elementary, and James F. Hennessey

School, Dracut's Lakeview Jr. High School and Lowell's Moody Elementary,

Washington Elementary, Pyne Arts School were the lucky children in attendance.

Principal Robert Fitzgerald of Dracut's Lakeview Junior High School said, "We felt lucky to have been one of the selected schools. My students had a great time. Tiffany put on a show that was simply amazing."

As for Tiffany, she could not be happier about the events' success and in continuing the tradition. She says, "Making and performing music is my passion. Being able to share the passion with these great kids and brighten up their holiday makes this concert one of the most special days of

the year for me."

Beverly MA based entertainment company, Ron Bellanti Concert Productions, produced the event.

Bellanti, a native of Lawrence says "I began promoting this concert to show the kids in my hometown that people actually care about them. I think all kids deserve to be exposed to wonderful music...especially at this time of year."

You can find photos from this year's event at:

www.tiffanykirajohnson.com/lma



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Methuen Chiropractor Donates Kidney

The holiday season is a bit brighter, merrier and healthier this season for a Plaistow woman thanks to her good friend giving her a gift that is truly generous. While some appreciate a good gesture of wine, gift cards or jewelry, one Methuen Chiropractor has gone beyond materialistic gifts and has given the gift of life.

Dr. Deborah Fudge has been serving the Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire for 25 years helping patients of all ages achieve their health and wellness goals. She is located at Perrault Chiropractic Office 76 Woodland Street in Methuen. For the past 3 years she has been on a personal mission to end Childhood Obesity. Dr. Fudge is a Certified Transitions Lifestyle Coach and conducts weekly classes to educate kids and adults about how to live a healthier life naturally. She is a member of the Massachusetts Chiropractic Society (a non-profit professional service organization of chiropractic physicians in this state) and President of the Merrimack Valley Chiropractic Society.

She is used to helping people with their healthcare decisions and made the biggest decision a few months ago to help one of her best friends and donate her kidney. Her friend Vanessa Underwood of Plaistow, NH is functioning at 100% and could not be happier thanks to Deborah. She will be celebrating her health this holiday season with the addition of her first grandchild due right around Christmas.

"Three years ago I was told that my sisters Kidney of 22 years was failing due to chemo and radiation five years earlier.. They told me I would not make it 6 months. That was nearly 4 years ago," says Vanessa.

"When Deb heard that I would need a kidney she went right to Boston and was tested. I am truly blessed, as there were several friends who were very close to donating and many others who stepped up to the plate. Deb stood in the background saying: 'It will be me. I just know it.' As time passed and others were tested, Deb

stood steady and strong in her belief. My good friend Beverly and I were scheduled for surgery and the operation was a go. At the last minute they found an aneurysm in Beverly and would not proceed with surgery. Deb stepped in and as she had said, it was going to be her after all! So here you have it. Miracles, Faith, the power of prayer, and angels abound. The only difference is I can see my angel! Words will never express my love and gratitude to my soul sister for her generous spirit in giving the gift of life she is one special person, my hero, my friend."

Thanks to Deborah's family and friends and their support during the time she was glad she was able to help someone in their time of need.

"I had no doubt that I would be Vanessa's match. We always have said we were like "sistas" and now we call each other "soul sistas" says Dr. Fudge. "Vanessa is one of the most remarkable persons I have ever met and she has helped thousands of people, as a fitness expert and wellness consultant, learn the benefits of exercise in terms of quality and longevity of life. She has lived this prescription her entire life and has been an inspiration to everyone she meets. Her Motto is Reach for the moon the worst you can do is fall among the stars! She never quits and in spite of health challenges, she has used these challenges to inspire and educate others on becoming healthy and using a positive lifestyle to overcome obstacles. She never uses her health issues as an excuse not to PERSEVERE NO MATTER WHAT COMES HER WAY ESPECIALLY LIVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE. God has a lot in store for her still and the rest of us will do everything in our power to keep up with her!"

You can follow Deborah's health care on her Facebook page as well as her blog at

<http://www.facebook.com/drdebefudge>

Let's talk about Food

Pennie Hale

VALLEY PATRIOT FOOD COLUMNIST

Happy New Year!

Was your New Year's resolution to lose weight? Personally, I don't make resolutions but I do understand those who do. The first day of a new year seems like the perfect time to start a weight-loss diet, to exercise more, to work on food-related issues or to perhaps weigh yourself for the first time in a long time.

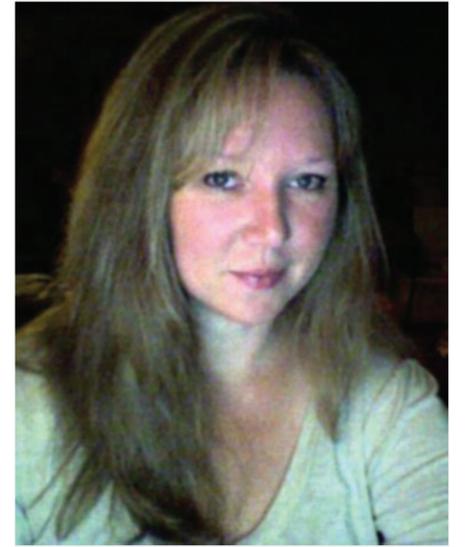
If you are overweight and decide that you want to lose weight, please consult with your physician before starting any weight-loss routine or program. It's important to know if you have any medical issues before you increase your activity level or weight-loss diet.

I know that when I went to see my personal physician over two years ago and discovered that I had borderline high cholesterol and my doctor told me my actual weight, I was surprised and worried. It took a year but I did lose 75 pounds. My cholesterol number decreased by over thirty. I never had high blood pressure but that number also improved.

Since that time, my weight has fluctuated ten to fifteen pounds. I continue to try to manage my carb addiction. But I also know that I honestly cannot completely cut carbs out of my diet. It is a delicate balance when I am faced with tempting foods when I am trying to keep those foods to a minimum. Like I've said before, it's hard to have "just a little".

If you do decide to diet, watch out! It is inevitable that the minute you decide to eat a more nutritious, well-balanced diet, sugary treats will start to magically appear all around you! There will be people who think you shouldn't diet and will start to try to change your mind. Or some may try to sabotage your success. How willing will you be to set boundaries and have tough discussions with people? It's better to prevent problems, be open and honest about your plan, and to ask people to support you.

After you have seen your doctor you may need help deciding where to start. Your physician should be a good resource.



PENNIE HALE

I am not an expert. I came up with my own weight-loss plan which may or may not work for you. And I still have not achieved my ultimate weight-loss goal. I found a lot of information online. I calculated my BMI and BMR. I calculated how many calories I could consume in a day and figured out the correct portions of the foods I like to eat. I don't like thinking a lot about food and laboring over food choices. For that reason, I did eat a lot of microwave meals. I like and still continue to eat steam bowls for lunch and dinner. I still like to eat oatmeal, fruit and whole-grain waffles for breakfast.

This year, I would like to learn more about food preparation and cooking. I admire people who can take any recipe, substitute healthier ingredients and turn a high-calorie meal into a tasty reduced-calorie meal. I don't know how to do that. But I would like to discover how to be a better cook.

Being overweight isn't healthy. It doesn't feel good. It can lead to heart disease and other illnesses. I believe that there is a genetic factor to obesity. If you look at families, you may see common factors regarding weight. Is that based on genetics, lifestyle or both? I think it's both.

I would like to encourage you to share
FOOD, PAGE 32

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Road to the White House... New Hampshire



PHOTO: ALEX TALCOTT

Left to Right: Valley Patriot Board Member Ralph Wilbur, President of the Greater Boston Tea Party Christine Morabito, Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan, Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and candidate for President Newt Gingrich, and Valley Patriot Board Member Dr. Chuck Ormsby (All Tea Party Members). The Valley Patriot board was on hand at Salem High School where Gingrich held a town hall meeting three days before the New Hampshire Primary.

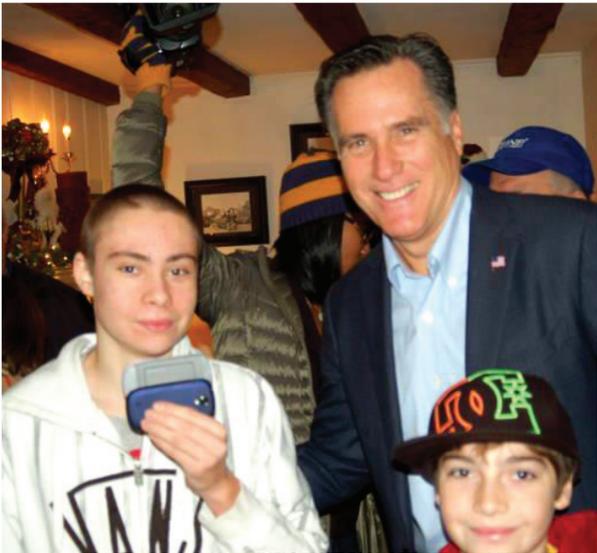


PHOTO: MICHAEL BRANTMULLER



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN



PHOTO: ALEX TALCOTT

Devon and Corbin Brantmuller of Methuen with Former Mass. Governor Mitt Romney in Londonderry. Senator Rick Santorum speaks at Windham High School. Former Speaker Newt Gingrich with Methuen Resident Pennie Hale showing her autographed copy of last months Valley Patriot.

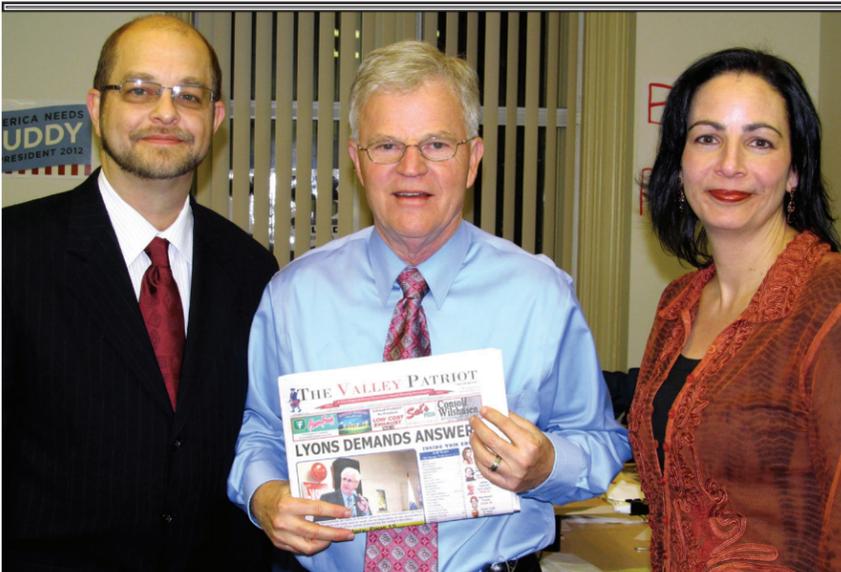


PHOTO: CHRIS BUCK



PHOTO: DAVID C. DALRYMPLE

Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan with former Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer and Greater Boston Tea Party President Christine Morabito at Roemer's presidential campaign headquarters in Manchester NH. Senator and former Republican Nominee for President, John McCain at his endorsement announcement of Mitt Romney at the Boys and Girls Club in Derry.

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PHOTO: CECILIA CALABRESE

14 year old Michaela Calabrese looks on as Former Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer shakes hands at the 2011 summer picnic of Western Mass. Republicans held in West Springfield.

PAYING ATTENTION! with TOM DUGGAN

Cousins Puts Public At Risk

Prisoners in "Sober House" on Crack Corner Have No Supervision - Escapes Continue with No Accountability

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

The intersection of Oxford and Lowell Street is known as "crack corner" by Lawrence Police because the amount of drugs and drug dealers in the neighborhood is staggering. The intersection is also the site of the 1983 riots in Lawrence and by far the most economically depressed neighborhood in the state.

Lawrence police say that at least two or three times a night they get a call to that area for violence, gunshots, prostitution, armed robbery or drug sales.

The area, and those who frequent it, are so widely known for crime and drugs that police officers looking for a shoplifting suspect from the Market Basket Plaza on Haverhill Street, only needed to park their cruisers at Oxford and Lowell and wait for her to show up to sell the items to buy drugs.

So, when the Valley Patriot began to get calls about Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins' lack of supervision at a prisoner 'sober house' (a halfway house for inmates with substance abuse problems) and that the sober house was located at Oxford and Lowell Streets we had to go

there and see for ourselves what was going on.

What our undercover surveillance team found during our ongoing investigation was Sheriff Frank Cousins' lack of supervision over prisoners in his care. There was no security, prisoners having sex in the alley behind the building, and drug dealers coming and going from the property. We observed prisoners being dropped off in Sheriff's vans late at night, who would go into the building, emerge later and leave the premises for hours at a time. Lawrence Police cruisers have been called to the building multiple times for disturbances with no Sheriff's Deputy on the property.

On most of the evenings that we conducted surveillance of the old Lawrence fire station (now being leased by the Essex County Sheriff's Department) we observed a Sheriff's Department van parked outside the building, giving the impression that a Deputy was on the premises. But the deception was obvious when, night after night, our reporters witnessed the van being parked at the "sober house" on crack corner and a Deputy getting into another vehicle and leaving.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

The Valley Patriot's surveillance team witnesses Sheriff's Deputies and Lawrence Police at the "sober house" (for prisoners with drug abuse problems) on Oxford and Lowell Streets in Lawrence (known as "crack corner"). Deputies had to take an inmate back to "The Farm" after he was caught by Lawrence Police having sex in a car behind the building. Two days later, the same prisoner was sent back at the 'sober house' on crack corner and was seen being dropped off by sheriff's deputies.

Under state law and sheriff's department policy the prisoners at the "sober house" are supposed to have 24-7 supervision by a deputy, as the prisoners with substance abuse problems are either on an electronic monitoring bracelet, on parole or on probation.

CARE CUSTODY AND CONTROL?

In the late hours of December 13th our photographer was on hand as Lawrence Police were crisscrossing the neighborhood looking for a suspect who fled to that area. During the process of their search for the suspect one Lawrence cop found an Essex County prisoner who resides at the "sober house" in a car behind the building having sex.

For ten to fifteen minutes police held on to the prisoner while awaiting a Sheriff's Deputy to arrive and take him into custody. According to Sheriff Cousins' own internal policies anyone at a "sober house" caught breaking the rules is supposed to be brought back to Middleton for such violations.

But the prisoner we observed was taken from 'crack corner' back to the minimum security facility on Marston Street in Lawrence.

What's more, that same prisoner (whose name we are withholding), was seen being dropped off again two nights later at the Oxford Street 'sober house' as if nothing had ever happened.

The owners of the "sober house" are contributors to Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins' political campaign. Prisoners are charged \$125 a week to rent the rooms and are transported to and from their mandated jobs by a Sheriff's Deputy. They are not allowed to leave the building nor are they allowed to be in any vehicle other than a Sheriff's vehicle for transport.

According to our sources in the Sheriff's department, Sheriff Frank Cousins leases the building owned by his campaign contributor for thousands of dollars a month.

"We get called here all the time," one Lawrence Police officer told the Valley Patriot asking not be identified because, as he said "this guy (Sheriff Cousins) is in Mayor Lantigua's pocket and I don't want to lose my job".

Despite the fact that Frank Cousins is a Republican, Mayor William Lantigua endorses and campaigns for Cousins

CRACK CORNER, page 39



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Our Valley Patriot undercover surveillance team took photos of Lawrence Police on multiple occasions (over a four month period) arriving at Sheriff Cousins' "sober house" on crack corner to deal with violence, drug or prostitution issues involving unsupervised prisoners. On each occasion police had to call in Sheriff Deputies to give them access to the building or remove an unruly prisoner.

Police Misconduct Still the Focus in West Newbury

The ongoing saga in West Newbury continues as an adjunct to the much publicized story of L'Esperance, the disgraced Police Chief of Salisbury, stripped of his badge and gun after allegations of trading drugs for sex, and stealing from crime scenes. Many other criminal activities and abuses of power were revealed in a scathing report that can be viewed here: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/47494016/Report>. L'Esperance was a police officer in West Newbury for 20 years before his four year stint as Chief in Salisbury alerted officials to alleged criminal propensities almost upon his arrival. West Newbury citizens had requested an independent investigation into their police department long before then, but more recent complaints from individuals of continuing police misconduct in West Newbury under the current chief, who was L'Esperance's supervisor, is forcing the issue to the forefront.

West Newbury Board of Selectmen finally agreed to a report concerning police misconduct that was due to be presented at the Dec. 28th Board of Selectman's meeting. On that date, Chairman Knowles

disclosed that the report was not ready and rescheduled its release to their January 11, 2012 meeting. While the scope of this investigation is not clear, it was ascertained that the report is being done by Mike McCarron who serves as both the Town Clerk and Town Counsel for West Newbury. It has been suggested, and is hoped this report will lead to the long overdue independent investigation citizens have been calling for.

The germination of this report stemmed from a previous Selectmen's meeting when resident Cailin Kreuser refused to have her grievance against the police discussed in closed executive session. She asserted that, since Chief Lisa Holmes claims she has nothing to hide, any discussion should be held in open forum. Kreuser previously voiced concern over police retaliation against her for publicly complaining to Selectmen, and accused police of attempting to falsely arrest her, committing character assassination and altering reports. Holmes has strongly denied all charges, however, when given the choice, which was her right under the law to be examined in either open meeting or closed executive session, she

declined the former and, through her attorney, insisted on closed session. The public was then excluded from the meeting as the Board went into executive session.

Meanwhile, outside the meeting room Kreuser gave a prepared statement reiterating her charges and extended her plea for more transparency in handling such matters. Kristi Devine, a long standing critic of the department, and a long time outspoken critic of L'Esperance's conduct over the last decade, insists it is incumbent upon Selectmen to conduct an independent investigation of the West Newbury police department in light of what the investigation in Salisbury has revealed. In view of current local police department behavior, she contends that nothing has changed to preclude that police misconduct in West Newbury does not continue. She further accused Selectmen of tolerating and fueling an environment where citizens live in fear of their police, being prevented from coming forward about police misconduct due to the retaliation she says they know her to have endured for speaking out. Knowles said that issue is being addressed in the

report.

On other related business, Selectman Tom Atwood expressed concerns for what he described as a discrepancy in the reasons Chief Holmes gave for why she could not provide an answer to his question relative to why Devine continues to face the same charges that have twice been dismissed in the courts. Holmes stated in writing that upon consulting the District Attorney, she could not discuss the pending matter due to cori confidentiality concerns. (Devine immediately waived all rights so that the Chief could answer). Atwood's understanding, after speaking with Maura Bailey from the DA's office, was that Holmes had been told that the matter should be decided at the local level, and that Holmes should seek Town Counsel's advice. Atwood's original attempt to seek answers from the Chief, specific to these charges being dismissed and yet still going forward again, was back in October of 2011, but an attempt to sit down with Devine and the Chief in March of 2011 was scuttled at the last minute when the Chief became unavailable. The meeting had been scheduled subject to the chief's availability.

TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK: FROM 19

affairs, the division of humanities and social sciences, the English department, and the service learning committee.

TREBLE CHORUS - The Treble Chorus of New England is holding Spring auditions on the evening of Monday, January 16th, 2011 at the West Parish Church, 129 Reservation Road, Andover, MA. Please contact Anna S. Choi at tcnmanager@treblechorusne.org or call 978.794.4600 to schedule an audition. More information can be found at www.treblechorusne.org under the "audition" link.

The Treble Chorus of New England is made up of three choirs; Training, age 7-9, Concert, age 9-13 and Schola, age 13-18. Our mission is to educate children and young adults by providing vocal training and performance experience that inspires a life-long passion for choral music from around the world. Over its thirty six year history, TCNE has performed a rich diversity of choral music with programming that includes opera and professional collaborations. Serving young people from over 35 diverse communities, TCNE has achieved many significant artistic milestones.

MERRIMACK VALLEY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP Project Genesis - Home Buyer Training Seminars Learn about the home buying process. Each series consists of four sessions. Topics include an overview of the home buying process, the mortgage application process, legal aspects, home inspections, household budgeting and down payment assistance programs. The next series will be held on January 24, 25, 31 and February 1 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Another series will begin on February 14. The fee is \$60.00 per household which includes all materials. To register, visit our website www.mvhp.org or call our office at 978-459-8490

BUSINESS FORUMS

Personal Finances for Business Owners Tuesday, January 17, 2012 / 6:00 -7:30 pm -This workshop is offered in partnership with Family Finance Solutions of Community Teamwork, Inc. and NMTW Community Credit Union. Learn how to better keep your personal finances separate from your business. COST: \$10. LOCATION: The Center, 88 Middle St., 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852 RSVP: shargis@comteam.org, 978-322-8400

The Essential IT Infrastructure for Small Businesses Monday, January 23, 2012 / 6 - 8 pm As a small business

owner the last thing you may want to deal with is the technological jargon and increasing complexity of information technology. This seminar will provide you with an overview of the essential IT infrastructure you need to start and run a business. COST: \$10 LOCATION: The Center, 88 Middle St., 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852 RSVP: shargis@comteam.org, 978-322-8400

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dates: Friday, January 20, 2012 / 10am -12pm, Monday, February 13, 2012 / 1:00 -3:00 pm

This workshop is offered in partnership with the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce and Lowell Telecommunications Corporation. "The Times, They Are A-Changin'", and we know that social media marketing now plays a vital role in the success of businesses and organizations. This seminar provides an overview of various online marketing tools including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. If you are a beginner or intermediate user, you will benefit from this workshop taught by Danielle Bergeron, President and CEO of the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, who has years of experience promoting her own business through social media. COST: no fee. LOCATION: Lowell Telecommunications Corporation (LTC) studios, 246 Market Street, Lowell, MA 01852 RSVP: shargis@comteam.org, 978-322-8400

Unlocking Profitability with Accounting Comprehensive 2-night Workshop Wed, Feb 8th & Thurs, Feb. 9th / 6 -9pm

There are some basic business metrics that every business person should know by heart when discussing their business. Here's a list: What are my sales? What are my goals and budgets? What are my fixed costs? What are my variable costs? What is my breakeven point? What is the aging of my receivables? What is the cost of goods sold percentage? What are my top 10 best sellers? How much do I have tied up in inventory? What does my cash flow look like for the next three months? Don't

ary 22, 2012 & Thurs., Feb. 23 - 6 - 8pm

The first night of this workshop will emphasize understanding your market and how to target specific product and services to solve their problems. This workshop also addresses the importance of integrating functions within the business to insure productivity and profitability. The second night will emphasize the need to develop an operating plan that is aligned to achieve defined strategies within the business. In addition, it will help you to define how you measure performance.

This workshop is taught by Michael Salach, a results-oriented executive who has a unique blend of entrepreneurial business development skills. Michael founded The Bay State Consulting Group, Inc., which provides an array of management, coaching and business consulting services. Michael is also an instructor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Northern Essex Community College where he teaches marketing and sales, strategic & business planning, organizational design & franchising and a variety of entrepreneurial seminars. COST: \$20 for both nights

LOCATION: The Center, 88 Middle St., 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852 RSVP: shargis@comteam.org, 978-322-8400

American Red Cross Holds Blood Drive at the Hilton Senior Center in Salisbury. The American Red Cross and the Salisbury Lions are holding a blood drive to support the community blood supply for patients in need. Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs blood, and every pint donated could save up to three lives. The Red Cross is urging the public to make an appointment to donate blood at the below location by calling 1-800-RedCross (1-800-733-2767) or visit www.redcrossblood.org WHEN: Friday, January 13th, from 1p.m. - 6p.m. at 3 Lafayette Road, Salisbury Free Pizza for All Presenting Donors!!! *prizes not redeemable for cash and non-transferable

The American Red Cross Blood Services - Northeast Division must distribute approximately 3,000 units of blood each day just to meet the basic needs of area patients. Individuals who are at least 17 years of age (16 with parental permission), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements. Please bring your Red Cross blood donor card or other form of positive ID when you come to donate.

know these numbers? Then this 2-night workshop will help you transform from running a business to managing a business and getting the most profit out of it. In this workshop, you will learn how to:

Increase profitability by monitoring and managing your cost of goods sold; Increase sales and profits through effective inventory management;

How to reduce inventory while increasing customer satisfaction and sales: How to make your business more resilient in challenging economies;

How to survive and, perhaps, even prosper in difficult times; Learn how to get ready to borrow. Cost: \$20 for both nights LOCATION: The Center, 88 Middle St., 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852 RSVP: shargis@comteam.org, 978-322-8400

Building a Successful Business by Defining, Executing & Measuring Performance Comprehensive 2-night Workshop Offered the following dates: Wed., Febru-

CANINE FUNTIME: FROM 25

safe! The floor was designed for safety by eliminating the danger of escape or exposure to rain, snow and extreme temperatures. The off-leash park is continually disinfected and mud-free so your dog comes home clean, well exercised and socialized.

In addition to 15,000 square feet of roaming freedom, Canine Funtime provides an "All under one Woof" experience by offering Dog Daycare, Dog Training, free Wi-Fi Lounge and a Retail store offering natural foods and treats. Once things get all settled Canine Funtime would love to offer grooming services too. If you are a groomer and would like to start your own business this may be the perfect opportunity for you.

Dog Daycare- if you work long hours and your dog is an active pooch dog daycare may be a nice option to help break up the day. Check out Canine Funtime package plans and see if one works for

you.

Interested in Training? January is "National Dog Training Month". Canine Funtime also offers a variety of training classes from Puppy training to Advanced level and Canine Good Citizen.

Canine Funtime is located at 179 Ward Hill Rd, Haverhill MA and you may contact them at 978-521-4800 or check out their website at www.canine-funtime.com

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 www.facebook.com/wigglesjigglespetcare

your story with me.

I am genuinely interested in knowing how other people handle their weight. If you have always been at a healthy weight, how do you maintain it? Did you gain weight after having children? Did you lose it or are you having trouble?

If you are plus-size, are you happy? If you are a size zero, are you happy? What do you see when you look in the mirror? How do you feel about your body? Do you enjoy looking in the mirror or do you avoid it? Have you ever attended a food addiction program? Have you ever lost weight and gained it back?

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

What I know for sure is that several things help me with my struggles with weight. Talking about it is at the top of

that list. Talking about food addictions, disorders, obsessions and unhealthy thoughts about food is a common daily occurrence for me.

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

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

Police Fatalities Rise Sharply for 2nd Straight Year

68 police officers killed by gunfire in 2011—near decade high

Craig Floyd

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial

Washington, DC — For the second straight year, law enforcement fatalities nationwide rose sharply with 173 federal, state and local officers killed in the line of duty during 2011, according to preliminary data compiled and released today by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF).

This represents a 13 percent increase over the 153 officers killed in 2010 and an alarming 42 percent spike when compared to the 122 officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2009. The primary cause of death in 2011 was gunfire, which claimed the lives of 68 officers and nearly matched the decade-long high of 69 firearms-related deaths in 2007.

For the past 13 years in a row, traffic-related incidents had been the primary cause of law enforcement fatalities. In 2011, though, the number of officers killed on the roadway dropped by 10 percent. There were 64 traffic-related deaths among officers in 2011, which matched 2005 for the second-lowest total in the past 15 years. Of that total, 44 died in automobile crashes, 11 were struck and killed while outside of their vehicles, seven died in motorcycle crashes and two were killed when their car was struck by a train.

“Drastic budget cuts affecting law enforcement agencies across the country have put our officers at grave risk,” declared NLEOMF Chairman Craig W. Floyd. “At a time when officers are facing

a more cold-blooded criminal element and fighting a war on terror, we are cutting vital resources necessary to ensure their safety and the safety of the innocent citizens they protect.” Mr. Floyd also noted that the NLEOMF is partnering with the U.S. Department of Justice and the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, among others, on a number of law enforcement safety initiatives to combat this growing problem.

Mr. Floyd cited a recent survey by the International Association of Chiefs of Police that found 60 percent of responding law enforcement agencies had cut back on training, 64 percent had cut back on buying or upgrading major equipment, and 58 percent had cut back on buying or upgrading technology. A report issued in October by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, stated that by year’s end, it is expected that nearly 12,000 police officers and sheriff’s deputies will have been laid off.

In addition to the officers killed by

firearms or traffic-related incidents, 27 officers died as a result of job-related illnesses, four died as a result of falls, two drowned and two were stabbed. One officer died due to each of the following causes: aircraft accident; beating; bomb-related incident; struck by a falling object; electrocution; and strangulation.

During the past year, more officers were killed in Florida, 14, than in any other state; followed by Texas with 13; New York with 11; and California and Georgia with 10 each. Ten of the officers killed nationwide in 2011 served with federal law enforcement agencies. Seven of the officers who died during the past year served with correctional agencies. Eleven of the 173 fatalities were women. On average, the officers who died in 2011 were 41 years old and had served for 13 years.

The preliminary 2011 law enforcement fatality report was released by the NLEOMF in conjunction with Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.), a non-

profit organization that provides critical assistance to the surviving family members and loved ones of officers killed in the line of duty.

“The hard fact is that for the first time in 2011, more officers were killed in firearms-related incidents than traffic-related incidents,” said Linda Moon Gregory, National President of Concerns of Police Survivors.

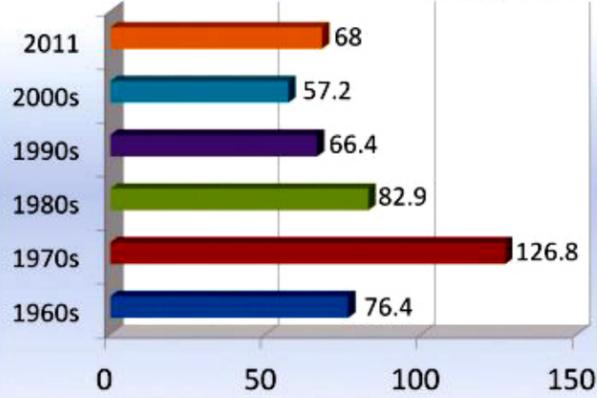
“I’m deeply concerned that budget constraints may be compromising the safety of our remaining law enforcement officers due to cuts in personnel and reduced affordability of life saving equipment. At a time when criminals have the latest technology and weapons, we must ensure that our peace officers are adequately equipped and protected,” she stated. Her brother, Officer James Homer Moon from the Jacksonville (FL) Sheriff’s Office, was shot and killed in the line of duty in September 1971 and Mrs. Gregory’s family continues to deal with parole issues related to her brother’s death.

The statistics released by the NLEOMF and C.O.P.S. are based on preliminary data compiled and do not represent a final or complete list of individual officers who will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in 2011.

The report, “Law Enforcement Officer Deaths: Preliminary 2011 Report,” is available at www.LawMemorial.org/ResearchBulletin.

Average Firearms-related Incidents Per Decade

Source: NLEOMF



CHESTER: FROM PAGE 13 HIP PAIN: FROM PAGE 26

all well know this isn't the first intervention by Governor Patrick into the governance of Lawrence. He has his appointed Fiscal Overseer Mr. Robert Nunes in Lawrence to make sure that the City's Fiscal house stays in the order. So the City of Lawrence has its Overseer and now the Public Schools of Lawrence will have their State appointed Receiver/Superintendent. Does anyone else see a pattern here? It seems that whenever our wonderful Mayor Lantigua gets in over his head he calls in the Calvary in the form of Governor Patrick. So with the state now in on both sides of Lawrence's Governance, why then do we have a Mayor? Why then do we have a City Council or School Committee? Why did the former City Council along with the former School Committee just lie down and hand over their responsibilities without any substantial fight? Why did our State Delegation sign onto this as well? Why is the Teacher's Union President welcoming the take over with open arms? Oh there were little speeches given and letters to the editor in other local papers written, but in the end, The State is here in Lawrence indefinitely with little opposition. Then there are those who live outside of Lawrence who have expressed how happy they are that the State has finally taken over to keep a closer watch on their tax money. Most of Lawrence's School Budget is paid by way of State aid in the form of Chapter 70 money. Don't be fooled, this Takeover will not change this!

This brings me back to the common denominator in this scenario which begins and ends with our Democrat Governor Deval Patrick. All that you see taken place here in the City of Lawrence will all play an important part of the Governor's run for the Presidency of the United States of America in 2016. Who by the way is following in the steps of his BFF and a former Demo-

crat Senator from Illinois and now President of the United States, Barack Obama! The Democrat Governor has set the stage already by writing his book and going on a country wide book signing tour and making television appearances on the Sunday talk/news shows. If Governor Patrick were to be successful in turning around Lawrence, this would be a good accomplishment to boast about in his run for President. Imaging the jobs that could be handed out, beginning with Secretary of Education being the former Commissioner of Education of Massachusetts, Mr. Mitchell Chester. Why not, President Obama appointed Chicago's CEO of Public Schools Arne Duncan as his Secretary of Education. How does Treasury Secretary Mr. Nunes sound? What position could Senator Finegold fill in a Patrick administration? What about Representative Devers? The list of possibilities goes on and on, so it would make sense to not make big waves just in case the future becomes promising. I don't think that there is a place for Mayor Lantigua, but that is okay because from what I'm hearing he has aspirations outside of the United States. So let's keep in mind that this takeover by the State of Massachusetts is all being done by a One Party State ruled by Democrats, under the goal of improving Education in Lawrence Massachusetts.

In conclusion, of course I could be all wrong and the education system in Lawrence will improve with MCAS scores moving to the top on the State's list. We will just have to wait and see and pray that the children who attend Lawrence's Public Schools are not ill affected by the politics in this situation.

God Bless you all and Happy New Year and may God continue to protect and keep the children in Lawrence's Public Schools safe!

the bones and the joint spaces. In a fall, this may diagnose an acute fracture, but occasionally, the break cannot be seen on routine films. If the suspicion for fracture is high, computerized tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance (MRI) imaging may be considered to confirm or disprove that a fracture exists.

Narrowed joint spaces and arthritis can be seen on plain X-rays and help confirm the diagnosis of osteoarthritis and degenerative joint disease.

A bone scan may be performed to look for inflammation. Radioactive dye is injected intravenously and the whole body is scanned. The radiologist looks for abnormal accumulations of the dye that may help establish a diagnosis.

Blood Tests: Some markers for inflammation include an elevated white blood cell count or elevated erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) and C-reactive protein (CRP). These are nonspecific tests but can help direct further testing that can be done based upon the clinical situation. A white blood cell count may also be helpful as a screening test for infection and inflammation.

Treatment: The treatment of hip pain depends upon the diagnosis and any underlying illness that may be present.

You may not need to see a doctor if your hip pain is minor. Try these self-care tips:

others), aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, others) and naproxen sodium (Aleve) may help ease your hip pain.

- Rest. Stay off your feet as much as possible.

- Ice. Use ice cubes or a bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel to apply cold treatments to your hip.

If self-care treatments don't help, make an appointment with your doctor.

Seek immediate medical attention

Ask someone to drive you to urgent care or the emergency room if your hip pain is caused by an injury and is accompanied by:

- A joint that appears deformed
- Inability to move your leg or hip
- Inability to bear weight on the affected leg

- Intense pain

- Sudden swelling

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Part 2 of 2

Michael Salach

PRESIDENT, THE BAY STATE CONSULTING GROUP, INC.
& THE PRESIDENTS ROUNDTABLE

STEP 1: Exit Objectives

Issues Addressed

Determined your primary planning objectives in leaving the business, such as:

1. Your desired departure date?
2. The income you need to achieve your financial objectives?
3. The person to whom you want to leave the business?

Benefits to the Owner

1. Clarifies priorities
2. Facilitates progress by identifying a desired outcome
3. Focuses energy on most urgent concerns

STEP 2: Valuation and Cash Flow

Issues Addressed

1. Do you know how much your business is worth?
2. Do you know what the business's future cash flow is likely to be after you leave it?

Benefits to the Owner

1. Provides a baseline value by projecting cash flow.
2. Measures business and personal resources both today and as a basis for future projections.
3. Allows you to monitor progress toward the stated objectives.

STEP 3: Making the Business More Valuable

Issues Addressed

1. Do you know how to increase the value of your ownership interest?

Benefits to the Owner

1. Grow business value and intangible value of the business.
2. Reduce income taxes upon sale of business.
3. Protect assets from potential business and personal creditors.
4. Create ability to sell the business.
5. Motivate and keep Key Employees.

STEP 4: Sale to Third Party

Issues Addressed

1. Do you know how to sell your business to a third party in a way that will maximize your cash and minimize your tax liability?

Benefits to the Owner

1. Cash at closing.
2. Eliminate financial risk.
3. No family succession issues.
4. Speed of exit.

STEP 6: Business Continuity Upon Death or Disability

Issues Addressed

1. Have you implemented all necessary steps to ensure that the business continues if you don't?

Benefits to the Owner

1. Objectives can still be achieved if you don't survive until exit.
2. Retains ownership and control of company if co-owner departs.
3. Can force non-contributing owners to leave the business.
4. Provides consistency between lifetime and death objectives.
5. Ensures survival of the business for the benefit of others.
6. Results in family receiving value of owner's interest, in cash.

STEP 7: Wealth Preservation Plan

Issues Addressed

1. Have you provided for your family's financial well-being and continuity should you die or become incapacitated?

Benefits to the Owner

1. Preserve wealth; minimize taxes using both lifetime and death planning tools.
2. Coordinates and integrates lifetime exit objectives wishes with estate plan.

LOWELL TEACHER: FROM PAGE 6

four days, the educators were treated like "real" Marine recruits going through Marine training. They had to walk in formation wherever they went on base. Whether they were going to lunch or to a training site they were to be in formation. They were required to answer their drill sergeant with "yes, sir"; "no, sir"; etc.

The highlight of Mary's experience was having lunch with a Lowell High School graduate of the Class of 2011, Elia Bloise. Bloise enlisted in the Marine's following high school and was in her fourth week of training. Mary was able to sit with Bloise and chat with her about her experience. "It was a very emotional meeting" Mary explained.

When Mary asked Bloise what the most difficult part of her whole experience was for her, she replied "I miss my mom".

Mary got permission to take a picture of Bloise, and sent it to Bloise's mom in Lowell, who called Mary ecstatically immediately upon receiving the photo.

Mary Payne highly recommends this program at Parris Island to other educators. "I have always admired people who are in the military but I have a renewed appreciation and respect for what the men and women must endure in basic training to be successful. This experience is one I will never forget". Mary concludes. OOH-RAH, Mary!



Cecilia Calabrese was recently sworn in as a member of the Agawam City Council. She is a lawyer and small business owner. you can email her at cececalabrese@yahoo.com

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News from the American Legion

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

It is hard to believe that another calendar year has passed. All the purchasing, cooking, cleaning, wrapping gifts, visiting friends and family gone with another Christmas, Hanukkah or whatever you believe in has past again. And the New Year holiday for some it is a time to reflect on the past year and the upcoming year. For others it is a time or excuse to party and some see it as another day off with pay. Like many of you, I will make my traditional New Year's commitments. Spend less, save more, lose weight and exercise more. How long these will last this time around remains to be seen!

What will 2012 bring to us? We will

have a say in terms of weight loss (or gain!), exercise but not in many areas.

We all know the economy is still in serious trouble. Congress seems to be too focused on the November elections and this trickles down to state and local governments. It is in the newspapers and on television and the internet daily. What can we do about it? Most days it feels like nothing at all.

But there is something we can do. We can exercise our



right to vote, first in the primary elections (January 10 in NH, March 6 in MA) and then in the general election on November 6, 2012. The primaries are just around the corner. Then, as we know, it will heat up this summer as November looms closer. We have seen in recent elections at both the national and local level the every vote does in fact count! Are you happy with the way the country is going? How is it

being run? Either way, you should get out there and vote. Men and women in other countries are literally dying so that their country can follow democratic principles. Yet in America we take it for granted. Witness the poor turnout this last November in local elections.

I know that I will be watching the candidates and what they stand for. I will be looking at how our current elected representatives vote. And I will vote for those who most align with what I believe in. Will you join me in making our voices

heard? I hope so. Many complain but few take action and exercise their rights. This is a theme you will hear from me from now to November. This election is one of the more important ones we have seen.

One final note. We also see in the news about the troops coming out of Iraq and the joy of their families welcoming them home. Yet not so much in the general news is the fact that as the troops are getting home they are being told of a new deployment in six months to Afghanistan. And let us not forget that service men and women are in over 100 locations across the globe. For example, did you know under a 1979 Treaty between Egypt and Israel, we have troops in the Sinai as part of an international peacekeeping force. Many were not able to celebrate this holiday season with their families.

May God bless our troops and their families as they continue to protect us from those who would do us harm and take away our freedoms.



John Lenotte is the American Legion, Commander, Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4 Haverhill and Vice Commander, Dept. of Massachusetts. You can Email him at JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net

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Mood-Boosting Strategies to Beat the Post-Holiday Blues

Celeste Begley

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

The holiday season is a festive time of year, when family and friends get together, gifts are exchanged, delicious treats are shared and music and laughter fill the air. However, following New Year's Day, the cheerful mood may turn into the doldrums. Loved ones return to their homes thousands of miles away, the credit card bill arrives, decorations are back in boxes and the scale reveals that too many treats were eaten.

So how can you fight the post-holiday blues? Enlist Right at Home of Right At Home Boston North to help boost your spirit in the following ways:

- **Exercise:** When you exercise, the brain's executive functions (planning, organizing and multitasking, among others) can improve and dementia is less likely to occur, so take an exercise class or join a walking group to add spark to your step. "Right at Home of Right At Home Boston North can provide assistance with a light exercise program," said Rosaleen Doherty, Co- Owner. "It is one of the many services we provide our clients."
- **Eat healthy foods:** You feel better when you eat a healthy diet; therefore, substitute junk food with fruits, vegetables

and healthy fats like fish, nuts and seeds. "Right at Home can plan and prepare healthy meals for you if you find cooking difficult," Doherty said.

- **Get out of the house:** Don't stay cooped up at home all day; engage in an outdoor activity that will make you feel alive and happy. Go to the park or take a trip to the hairdresser. "If you cannot drive or a bus stop or subway station isn't near your home, Right at Home can transport you to where you want to go, so you are not homebound," Doherty said.

- **Socialize:** The human touch releases uplifting endorphins like serotonin, and reduces blood pressure and heart rate, making you more relaxed and content. "Participate in social activities as often as you can," Doherty said. "Have lunch or go to a movie with a friend. By getting out and meeting people, you will keep your mind sharp and give yourself something to look forward to regularly. If you can't leave the house, Right at Home caregivers can provide companionship by playing games, helping with a craft project or simply engaging in conversation - all in the comfort of the senior's home."

There are many other ways you can enhance your mood. For example:

- **Volunteer:** Taking time to help others is one of the best ways to feel better about yourself and regain perspective.

- **Listen to music:** Music entertains, distracts you from negative thoughts and encourages daydreaming. It can soothe patients with dementia, treat anxiety and insomnia, and lower blood pressure.

- **Start a hobby or learn a skill:** Take up painting, scrapbooking or chess. Challenge yourself by trying something you've always wanted to learn or that stimulates your creativity.

- **Get a pet:** Petting a dog or playing with a cat enhances your mood and lowers stress, so keep yourself company with a furry friend.
- **Laugh:** Follow the adage "laughter is the best medicine"; watch a comedy movie or TV show, read a funny book or swap humorous jokes and stories with a loved one.

By following one of more of these methods, you'll chase those blues away in no time. And remember, Right at Home is always available to provide assistance. However, if you cannot shake your gloomy feeling after trying some of these suggestions, you may be suffering from depression. Contact a professional therapist for help.

About Right at Home of the North Shore, Merrimack Valley, Wakefield/Melrose and our new location Colonial Gardens in Beverly (Boston North)

Right at Home is an award winning family owned and operated private home health agency. It was started by Jay Kenney and Rosaleen Doherty on the North Shore in 2002. Since that time, they have expanded to three offices serving almost 500 families per week with senior home care services.

Right at Home offers in-home companionship, personal care and nursing care to seniors and disabled adults who want to continue to live independently. They directly employ and supervise all caregiving staff, each of whom are thoroughly screened, trained, bonded and insured prior to entering a client's home. A

Right at Home serves all of Essex County and cities and towns North of Boston in Middlesex and Suffolk Counties. For more information on Right at Home, visit www.rightathomemass.net or read the Rosaleen Doherty's caregiving blog at www.rightathomemass.net and click BLOG.

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HERO IN OUR MIDST, LIEUTENANT MCCLARY: FROM PAGE 1

couraging them and directing their fire. Until he fell to the ground, unconscious.

For his inspiring leadership and bravery, McClary was awarded three Purple Hearts, the Silver Star and the Bronze Star.

Before that fateful night had ended, Clebe McClary was to cheat death three more times. At the end, a Navy corpsman refused to leave him for dead. Risking his own life, he dragged Clebe 50 yards into an awaiting chopper then held onto him, legs dangled outside, as the chopper took off. A moment later 150 North Vietnamese stormed Hill #46...

Broken body but spirit strong

As traumatic as that night and his combat wounds were, McClary was severely tested even more during his recovery. He spent more than two years in military hospitals, going through 30 to 40 critical surgeries, followed by intensive rounds of physical therapy that never ended.

"When I returned home from Vietnam, I faced at least 40 major surgeries. The doctors told me I would never walk again. I could not feed or dress myself, and my mental wounds were even more serious than my physical wounds."

At times he got discouraged. At times he got depressed. And yes, he thought, "Why me, Lord?" Yet he never stopped there. He always looked beyond his limitations to what he had the ability to do. Most of all, he grew impatient. A former athlete, he never lost his will to overcome adversity. And he never

became bitter.

His faith played a key role in his recovery. As he writes in his book "Living Proof" (foreword by Tom Landry), he persevered, believing that God had a purpose for his life. Miraculously, he recovered from his injuries. Although doctors had told him he would never stand up or walk on his own, McClary was able to recover full use of his legs—and walk.

"I never thought I'd be hit in Vietnam. It wasn't arrogance but rather confidence in myself, my men, and in God who had seen us safely through danger time and time again."

"While in Nam, I sensed that God was leading me and my men for a special reason. When our chopper safely straddled mines that should have blown us away, I knew we were in divine custody. Family and friends bombarded Heaven with prayers for my safekeeping. More than one church had me on its prayer list.

"I did what was expected of a Christian—attended chapel services when near the base, filled in if a chaplain was unavailable." But later, during his time of severe testing, he

realized something was missing. There was something more to life.

Two life-changing moments

Two key events changed the course of his life. The first occurred just after he had begun coaching football at the University of South Carolina, a long-standing dream. One day he witnessed student demonstrators on a college campus burn the American flag to protest



Decorated Vietnam War Hero Clebe McClary, U.S. Marines, lives by the motto FIDO—"Forget It and Drive On." He has given more than 7,500 inspirational talks.

2nd Lieutenant Clebe McClary, U.S. Marines (ret.) and his wife Deanna minister together to returning combat veterans and their families at a center they have established in Pawleys Island, SC, to bring healing and hope to lives torn apart by the traumas of war.



the Vietnam War. Deeply angered by this desecration, McClary immediately resigned his coaching position and enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps.

The second occurred during his recovery. While on leave from a hospital in South Carolina, he attended an evangelistic crusade at the football stadium where he had starred in many games and coached several teams. It was sponsored by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and featured former New York Yankee second baseman Bobby Richardson, who gave his testimony.

Deeply touched by both the message and Richardson's testimony, McClary suddenly realized he was doing all the "right things" for the "wrong reasons." He writes, "I never drank or smoked in order to become a good athlete and impress people. I was a good person, playing the role people expected of me. I grew up in the church and believed in the Bible, tithing, good morals but I had never invited Jesus Christ into my heart as Savior and the Lord of my life." That night, both Clebe and his wife went forward to make their commitment.

"Now," he says, "I've joined the greatest Army that has ever marched, the Army of Jesus Christ. God's purpose for my life has now become clear."

Adversity births new beginning Today Lieutenant Clebe McClary, U.S. Marine Corps (ret.) has a whole new career as one of the nation's most sought-after motivational speakers. He is using his powerful story of courage, determination and inner strength to inspire audiences around the world. His more than 7,500 speaking engagements have taken him to all 50 states and 30 nations.

He has addressed professional athletes, corporations, military bases and professional associations. Baseball teams include: Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees, Atlanta Braves, Cincinnati Reds, Houston Astros, San Diego Padres, San Francisco Giants, Los Angeles Dodgers, Cleveland Indians, and Milwaukee Brewers. Football teams include: New England Patriots, Dallas Cowboys, Miami Dolphins, Atlanta Falcons, Buffalo Bills and Minnesota Vikings.

Through his Wounded Warrior Ministry, part of the Clebe McClary Evangelistic Association, he ministers to combat veterans and their families, at a beautiful facility he built in Pawleys Island, SC.

From nightmares to hope

"The nightmare of Vietnam is not easily forgotten," he says. "The horror of that midnight on Hill #46 will never be erased." Yet three mottos help him. FIDO: "Forget It and Drive On." PRIDE: "Personal Responsibility in Daily Effort." PATCH: "Positive Attitude that Characterizes Hope."

"Life's tough. Are you going to get bitter, or are you going to get better?"

"Remember, God has a purpose and plan for your life." As it is written: "He will transform the Valley of Trouble into a gateway of hope."



Helen Mooradkian is our new Valley Patriot Hero columnist and a former business writer. She is also a member of the Merrimack Valley Tea Party, You can

email her at hsmoor@verizon.net

—Tracey Zysk

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CRACK CORNER SOBER HOUSE: FROM PAGE 31

whenever he runs, showing up at his fund raisers and lending him Lantigua volunteers for his campaign.

The Lawrence police officers we spoke to regarding the 'sober house' located at 'crack corner' told us that the lack of Sheriff Department's presence on the site has made their jobs that much harder and puts the public at risk.

"We could be out dealing with criminals who we haven't locked up already instead of coming here all the time," one officer said. "They are supposed to have someone here at all times to deal with these issues but, look at the time we waste while we answer calls on this stuff and then sit around waiting for a Deputy to come and handle a problem like this."

"If the public only knew that their safety was being put at risk over there, even more than it already is given the neighborhood, because the sheriff isn't doing his job" another police officer told us.

NO SUPERVISION AT OTHER SOBER HOUSES

According to police reports, and other

documents obtained and viewed by Valley Patriot Staff, a prisoner housed at a different 'sober house' in Lawrence (located behind the Claddagh pub on Essex and Amesbury Streets) overdosed on drugs while in his room. His life was saved when his girlfriend (who was not supposed to be in the building) noticed he had passed out on the bed. She notified another prisoner who called Sheriff's Deputies. Deputies, in turn, had no choice but to call 911.

The Valley Patriot spoke with several family members of prisoners (and former prisoners) being held at sober houses across Essex County and in particular one woman whose boyfriend was housed on Oxford and Lowell Streets last year.

"My boyfriend has a drug problem, the judge ordered him to get treatment, go into a program for his addiction and stay away from a certain element. Then the Sheriff puts him at Oxford and Lowell Street where he had access to all the drugs he wanted. All he had to do was tell the courts and the councilors what they wanted to hear and he was released early.

What kind of Law Enforcement official puts people with drug abuse problems in a drug neighborhood in Lawrence to get "sober?" she asked.

"It's not just the people of Lawrence that are being put at risk having a sober house on Oxford Street it puts the prisoners at risk too."

The woman also admitted that the entire time her husband was at the 'crack corner sober house', "...only once or twice was there a guard in the building overnight." He was assaulted more

than once but nobody saw it, nobody was there."

SHERIFF COUSINS ALWAYS GETS HIS MAN ...BUT HOW MANY TIMES DOES HE HAVE TO GET HIM?

Last September, The Valley Patriot published a story of an inmate named James Walsh who had 43 felonies (most of them violent) on his record and was placed at the CAC (The Farm) in Lawrence. But when Walsh was recaptured, Cousin's office put him back at the CAC only to have him escape again on his first day back there. In Walsh's case the public was never notified of his escape and his danger to the public. In fact, the Sheriff's Office complained that when they recaptured the prisoner, the press never covered the story of his recapture.

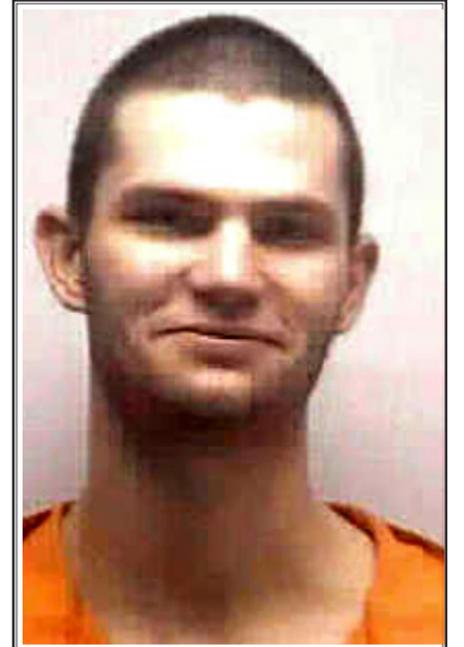
Despite the publicity in the Valley Patriot over the last few months detailing escapes, lack of public notification and lack of supervision of prisoners in Lawrence; Sheriff Cousins' Office again last month, put another escape risk in minimum security at "The Farm" ... only to have him walk away again on his first day.

The Sheriff's Department failed to tell the public that Hinkson had escaped and also failed to report that this was Hinkson's second escape. The first occurring only eight months earlier.

Hinkson's file at the Sheriff's Department has the words "Escape Risk" on page one.

"What is supposed to happen," one former Deputy told The Valley Patriot, "is that a review board is supposed to evaluate each prisoner in custody and assess if they are violent or are deemed an escape risk, or they have been a discipline problem in the past. If that's the case, they are supposed to deny the prisoners' transfer to a 'sober house' or the CAC. Yet, time and time again prisoners who have walked away before are put back at the CAC."

Sheriff Cousins has begun an internal investigation into how The Valley Patriot has obtained prisoner information and who might be "leaking" information to the press.



Devon Hinkson escaped from Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins' custody and control after being housed at the Marston St. C.A.C. (The Farm) last month. Hinkson had escaped eight months earlier and the words "escape risk" appear on the first page of his record. He was recaptured soon after by the brave men of the Sheriff's Fugitive apprehension unit.

There is no word as to whether or not Cousins is investigating the spate of escapes, why prisoners have no supervision at 'sober houses', or why prisoners who had previously escaped were even placed back at the CAC in the first place.



Tom Duggan is publisher of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, former political director for Mass Citizens Alliance, a Police Survivor and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program from 10-noon on WCAP every Saturday.

You can email him valleypatriot@aol.com.

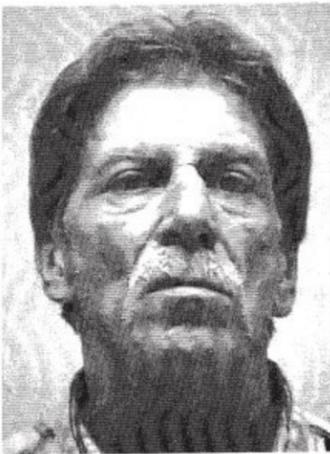
JAMES WALSH NOT STILL AT LARGE

RAP SHEET - Assault and battery, armed robbery, operating a motor vehicle after revocation, conspiracy to violate drug laws, counterfeiting, multiple charges for driving after license suspension, insurance violations, forging registry documents, possession of a hypodermic needle, shoplifting, possession of a class "A" substance, distribution of class "A" substances, forgery, larceny, knowingly receiving stolen property, possession of a class "B" substance, failure to pay child support, using invalid license plates, several property violations, and operating a motor vehicle to endanger the lives of others.

James Walsh was also arrested in Rhode Island for shoplifting, receiving stolen goods, and other charges. He was on probation when he committed his latest crimes and ordered held without bail.

Yet Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousin assigned Walsh to the pre-release, minimum security facility on Marston Street in Lawrence, where he simply walked away last month. He was scheduled to appear in court on September 21st of this year.

Sheriff Cousins never notified the public of Walsh's escape.



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