



THE VALLEY PATRIOT

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NEW MAYOR TO FIRE CITY CLERK - SETS NEW TONE



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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

HERO IN OUR MIDST: SGT. Charles P. Sarantos, U.S. Army, 112th Allied Division

Helen Mooradkian
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

NORTHANDOVER - "We were the second largest convoy to leave for Europe—5,000 of us aboard the U.S. Army troopship George Washington—when we left New York in early 1944, bound for Liverpool, England. By the time we arrived in England in April, two months before the D-Day invasion of June 6, our ranks had swelled enormously," recalls Sergeant Charles P. Sarantos, 112th Allied Airborne division, then an 18-year old Lowell native who now lives in North Andover.

"On the way, we were attacked by a fleet of German warships, submarines, and aircraft. The cannons' deep boom reverberated non-stop. Bombs

exploded. Ships caught fire. We rescued a great many survivors from the ocean, bringing them on board our ship."

Charlie still remembers the thunderous booming of cannon that resonated deep in the bowels of the ship's galley, where he was on duty slicing huge slabs of bacon during that long voyage. His unit had been assigned to KP duty.

Once he reached England, Charlie advanced across Europe serving in five major campaigns of WWII. The 112th Allied Airborne Division—comprised of Americans, British, and French—saw combat at Rome-Arno in Italy... in southern France—where they repelled the German counteroffensive in the Battle of the Bulge (December 1944-Janu-

HERO: PAGE 35

Sergeant Charles P. Sarantos, 112th Allied Airborne Division, helped set up two-way radio communications that linked the Waco CG-4A combat gliders with the C-47 military transports that towed them across the skies during WWII. He served in five major campaigns in France, Italy, Germany, and Central Europe. Combat gliders, dubbed "flying coffins," went deep behind enemy lines to silently drop troops and equipment in remote areas. Sarantos was also part of the first U.S. troops to enter Berlin after Germany's unconditional surrender, as part of the Allied occupation of Berlin. During the Potsdam Conference in Berlin, July 16–August 2, 1945, he helped set up the communications system when the "Big Three" (President Truman, Prime Minister Churchill, and Premier Stalin), met to discuss postwar Europe.



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Our Callow President

Charles Ormsby
VALLEY PATRIOT ANDOVER COLUMNIST

It is sad that President Obama did not see fit recently to travel a mere seventy miles from the White House to Gettysburg to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's famous speech in honor of those who fought and died to end slavery and preserve the union. With the presidential helicopter it would have taken him less than two hours to put in an appearance.

Why did he not attend? There were over forty thousand casualties incurred during the three day battle of Gettysburg. It was the turning point in the Civil war.

The presidential calendar shows that Obama had no significant events on this anniversary to excuse his absence.

Does Obama not understand the importance of the Battle of Gettysburg or Lincoln's address? Does he not respect the sacrifices of the dead and wounded?

Or does Obama just not want to honor America and acknowledge the fact that over two million Union soldiers – almost ten percent of the Union population – fought to preserve the Union and end slavery? Over 600 thousand Americans died in the Civil War. This equals nearly half of all the deaths suffered by Americans in ALL our wars and more than one and a half times as many as in World War II – two and one half times as many on a percentage basis.

Bret Stephens, in a Wall Street Journal opinion piece, described Obama as callow. Callow is a perfect description of this president. Inexperienced, juvenile, naïve, immature, unsophisticated, and most of all – superficial.

Ignoring one of America's most meaningful anniversaries -- what else could we expect from an ideologically stunted socialist whose grandest achievement was being a community organizer?

But all of this begs the question: How did America ever end up with such an empty suit occupying the White House? Were we mad?

In his book "Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds," Charles MacKay described the tulip mania that occurred in Holland around 1637 in which rare tulip bulbs were bid up to enormous prices and then crashed precipitously. Tulipmania is a good example of crowd psychology embracing irrationality only to be yanked back to a more coherent state of mind.

Obama's candidacy was tailor made for a bout of national insanity. Americans wanted to believe.

We desperately wanted to see an African-American rise to fill our highest office and erase any remnants of past racial sins. When Obama ran for the presidency, America, with the help of the mainstream media, closed its eyes and bought his spiel about "hope and change" hook, line and sinker.

When Obama was elected, we wanted him to succeed so that Americans of all racial backgrounds could jointly celebrate our land of opportunity and thereby heal the wounds of past racial divisions.

Unfortunately, what we got was a disaster of monumental proportions.

Conservatives and libertarians predicted this disaster. To the extent that Obama's socialist/fascist policies were put into practice, disasters were inevitable.

We didn't hope for his failure because of his skin color. We knew he would fail because of his ideology.

Morality aside, and statism is immoral, it just doesn't work. It is just the nature of things. Failure follows statism just as night follows day.

The U.S. may now be in the initial stages of recovery from Obamamania: the irrational hero worship of a callow fellow with no record of accomplishing anything of value, yet elevated to the presidency of the greatest nation on earth.

Obama the emperor has no clothes. He is an empty suit making believe he has a clue. Obama is a modern day Wizard of Oz pulling levers and blowing smoke in a world he cannot comprehend and a country he despises.

Paraphrasing a column (Obama: The Affirmative Action President) by Matt Patterson, "Historians may regard the election of Barack Obama as a mass hysteria. How did a man so devoid of professional accomplishment convince so many that he could manage the world's largest economy and direct the world's most powerful military? Imagine a future historian examining Obama's pre-presidential life: passed through the Ivy League despite unremarkable grades and test scores; given a non-job as a 'community organizer'; a state legislator without legislative achievement; and finally an unaccomplished single term in the United States Senate. He had no academic and no legislative accomplishments."

Obama's lack of substance and his embrace of an irrational ideology is now exposed for all who are sighted to see. Only the ideologically blinded will continue to pretend that Obama or his ideology have merit.

Hopefully, we won't have a similar national bout of insanity in 2016 if the Democrats nominate a candidate having a similar level of competence, such as Alfred E. Neuman.



Dr. Charles Ormsby served two terms on the North Andover School Committee, co-founded of the North Andover Taxpayers Association, is a co-founder of and columnist for The Valley Patriot, broadcasts weekly opinion pieces for WCAP (980 AM) in Lowell, and is a faculty member in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Dr. Ormsby is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate degree from MIT. You can email him at cormsby@verizon.net

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Three Suggestions For Lawrence's New Mayor

Earlier this month former Lawrence City Councilor Dan Rivera was sworn in as Lawrence's new mayor after defeating the once-thought unbeatable, William Lantigua by 82 votes.

We know all too well the problems Lawrence faces and the long road ahead of Mayor Rivera just to get the city to stop moving backwards, before he can even begin to plot a course to prosperity.

With a school system in state receivership and a state appointed financial receiver running the city's budget, the challenges Rivera faces are monumental. He will need to spend every waking moment cleaning up the mess left behind by four years of Willie Lantigua's shenanigans, not to mention decades of the city's decline from failed state and federal social programs that has left Lawrence as the worst city in the state.

But there are a few things Rivera could do in his first thirty days as mayor which would take little effort on his part, but

would make a big difference.

#1 REHIRE TOM SAPIENZA

Last year at this time, The Valley Patriot was writing about fired DPW laborer Tom Sapienza. Sapienza had taken time off from work to care for his ailing wife, Heather.

Heather was dying of cancer and Tom was only asking Lantigua to let him take an *unpaid* leave of absence to be by her side as she lay dying. Before she died, Heather Sapienza said her biggest worry was that when she was finally gone, her husband would be able to keep his job so he could provide for himself after going so far in debt from medical and end of life expenses.

But Lawrence Mayor William Lantigua fired Tom Sapienza, notifying him of his termination through a courier who served Sapienza while he was trying to make his wife's final days as comfortable as possible. Mayor Rivera needs to make that right.

#2 FIX THE FOUNTAIN

In September of 2006, The Valley Patriot wrote an editorial calling out Lawrence DPW Director, Frank McCann and Lawrence Mayor Michael Sullivan for their neglect of one of Lawrence's most famous landmarks: The Vietnam Veterans' Fountain located at the gateway to the city on Winthrop Avenue and South Union Streets.

Since then, Sullivan and McCann have come and gone, yet the fountain still sits crumbling in disrepair.

What better way to make a statement that the City of Lawrence is under new management, welcoming people at the city's gateway, and at the same time restoring honor to the men and women who served us all in the Vietnam War and have had to watch that fountain sit in disrepair for two decades.

#3 MAKE PEOPLE WHOLE

Throughout the Lantigua Administration, many injustices occurred to many good people who refused to play along

with Willie Lantigua's shenanigans.

Whether they were police officers passed over for promotions, contractors who lost city business for refusing to play ball with Lantigua's private demands, city board members who were humiliated and removed, the list goes on and on. Rivera has the authority to right those wrongs and restore the public's faith in their city government.

It would send a strong message to those who work in Lawrence that there is someone who has their back if they do the right thing and are targeted for doing so.

While our suggestions seem small compared to the magnitude of problems facing the City of Lawrence, these small and immediate changes will make a huge difference in changing the city's image and begin to heal the festering wound left over from an administration that was hell bent on breaking the law and using municipal government to serve as their own personal weapons against anyone standing in their way.

What Would Pope Francis Do?

Jeff Katz

VOTED AP's BEST RADIO TALK SHOW HOST

I may be a Jewish guy but I notched a few credits at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, so I am familiar with the Jesuits' worldwide focus on helping the disabled. I'm only an Eagle by marriage, but I've got to weigh in on something happening at the Jesuit run Boston College.

For forty three years, BC has operated the "Campus School". The school's mission is to serve disabled students. By all accounts it has succeeded beyond every expectation. The education majors who

volunteer there have shared their enthusiasm with the disabled students who in turn have thrived. While the student body at the Campus School is not particularly large, they are well served and welcomed with open arms on the Chestnut Hill campus by BC students and faculty alike. The only folks who appear less than hospitable seem to be members of the college administration who are now planning to shutter the school and transfer the students to a hospital a few miles away.

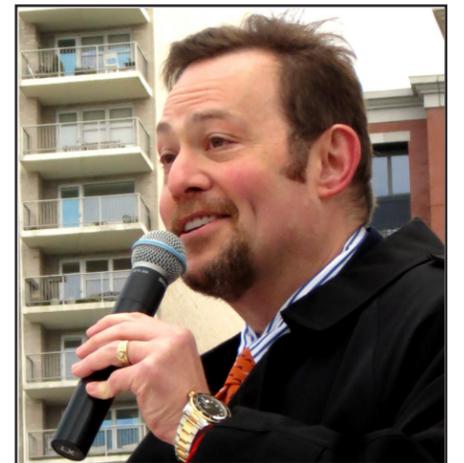
My ten year old daughter has a wide assortment of developmental delays and

disabilities. I know firsthand that the strength of any special education program comes from the heartfelt commitment of the staff. Teachers, therapists and social workers are more than cogs in the educational machine. They are loving and passionate advocates for the children in their care. They cheer each and every success no matter how small. Students and parents alike cherish this special relationship.

Many of us have tried to educate the larger population about our kids and their circumstances. These children have different abilities and a multitude of challenges, but they need to be in a supportive school with staff who see them as innately valuable individuals. What they don't need is to be shunted aside from the world of classrooms and playgrounds to a sterile, clinical hospital setting.

Pope Francis, the first Jesuit to ascend to the papacy has time and again talked about the need to embrace those with special needs. He specifically expressed his frustration with our society which, he said, works to "hide physical fragility." Who amongst us was not touched by the photo of Pope Francis warmly embracing Dominic Gondreau, an eight year old boy who has cerebral palsy?

I hope and pray that the real needs



Jeff Katz is a former police officer, former talk show host on Talk1200AM and won the Associated Press Award for Best Talk Show In Boston two years in a row. He is now an exclusive columnist for The Valley Patriot. WEBSITE: visionaccomplished.net

of the precious children at the Campus School are likewise embraced by the BC administration.

I wonder, would Pope Francis close the school? How about Ignatius of Loyola or Francis Xavier?

Follow Jeff Katz on twitter @jef-fkatzshow and facebook.com/radiokatz

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Nothing's worse than feeling great mentally, but physically feeling held back from life because your knee hurts and the pain just won't go away!



My name is Dr. Jin Sung, owner of Functional Chiropractic, Inc.. Since we opened, we've seen many people with knee problems leave the office pain free.

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Could This Non-Invasive, Natural Treatment Be The Answer To Your Knee Pain?

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What does this offer include? Everything I normally do in my "Knee Pain Evaluation". Just call and here's what you'll get...

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- You'll see everything first hand and find out if this amazing treatment will be your pain solution, like it has been for so many other patients.

The First 25 Callers Only can get everything I've listed here for only \$60. The normal price for this type of evaluation is \$250, so you're saving a considerable amount by taking me up on this offer.

Remember what it was like before you had knee problems; when you were pain free and could enjoy everything life had to offer? It can be that way again. Don't neglect your problem any longer - don't wait until it's too late.

Here's what to do now:

Due to the expected demand for this special offer, I urge you to call our office at once. The phone number is **978-688-6999**.

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-Jaime N., Methuen, MA

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“North Andover’s Finest” K-9 Kyzer Passes Away

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

On December 30, 2013 I received a call from Lt. Gray of the North Andover Police dept. Lt. Gray went on to tell me that retired K-9 Kyzer had passed away. Shocked, I took a second before responding, took a deep breath and wiped the tears from my eyes. This was a call I knew eventually would happen but a call I hoped I wouldn’t receive for a long time.

Kyzer served North Andover for 6 1/2 years with his handler and partner then Sgt. Chuck Gray.

“He was a great dog,” Gray stated. “He handled any situation unbelievably well.”

Nearly ten years ago Kyzer and Lt. Chuck Gray were paired together after Gray’s first dog Eiko passed away from injuries he received while chasing a robbery suspect.

Kyzer and Lt. Gray attended the Boston Police K-9 Academy for several months to become certified in patrol/tracking and narcotics detection. Gray is a member of the International Police Work Dog Association and is also a certified Drug Recognition Expert and Drug Recognition Expert Instructor certified through the National Highway Traffic Safety Association and the International Chiefs of Police Association.

Not only did Kyzer search for missing people, hidden suspects or articles, help find evidence of a crime, and locate narcotics, he also assisted in the arrest and apprehension of felons and helped protect the public from serious injury. Kyzer was also quite the crowd pleaser and attended all town events. He would also visit students at the North Andover schools.



Kyzer’s claim to fame, locally and nationally was on Nov. 14, 2007. He accompanied his handler, Lt. Gray, when a call came in for a shooting at Independent Tire located next to the Lawrence municipal airport in North Andover. They arrived on the scene of a serial shooting situation. When Lt. Gray released the leash, Kyzer put his training into action - biting the shooter’s arm and knocking the gun away. Fortunately, Kyzer was 100 percent on and did exactly what he was trained to do. At that moment, although he did

“his job”, doing his job accurately saved the community of North Andover from a heartbreaking tragedy.

Kyzer became a role model in the K-9 community and a legend in North Andover. Even winning a National Working Dog Hero award. Since 2007, Kyzer had faced a few more challenges, including having his stomach twist and stapled on two separate occasions. Both times he made full recoveries and immediately returned to work.

Kyzer unofficially retired in 2012, when

Gray was promoted to Lieutenant. This was a very difficult decision for Gray, however when officers are promoted out of patrol they tend not to have K-9’s.

But anyone that ever met Kyzer, knew he was an extremely driven and passionate officer, and he would never officially retire. If there was an opportunity for Gray to use Kyzer he would. But he spent most of his retirement at home with Gray, his wife Melissa, their three boys and their two pet Labrador retrievers.

I am pleased and honored to have known Officer Kyzer. My very first article I wrote for the Valley Patriot was after an interview I did with Lt. Gray and Officer Brush about the NAPD/ATF K-9 unit: Kyzer and Iris.

Appropriately, my article from 2010 was titled “North Andover’s Finest”

Good Job, Well Done Kyzer, and now you are free to cross the rainbow bridge and play all day with Iris and Eiko.

Truly.. “North Andover’s Finest”



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 wiggleswalk@comcast.net. Become a fan on facebook at Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care.

Historic Homes in Andover

Ann Knowles

VALLEY PATRIOT ANDOVER COLUMNIST

Andover, Massachusetts is a very interesting New England town, with a wealth of opportunities to interest young and old alike. Visitors to Andover express amazement at the variety of home styles that are found throughout the town.

While residents of Andover may not realize just how they live with history all around, take a walk through the streets of the town to see a picture perfect New England town.

One of the ways to “see” Andover is to observe the changes in home styles since the first settlers made this town their home. Most of these homes are occupied, and care must be taken to respect their privacy.

Begin in the 17th century, and you will find an excellent example of an early American home on Andover Street. Built in 1685, the house is a large 2-story structure, once on the outskirts of Andover Center.

The next distinct colonial house style was Georgian, after King George III of England. These homes were built from about 1725-1775 and followed home styles of England.

An example of this property is a restored Georgian home on Central Street. Many homes built in the Georgian manner have been upgraded or restored.

Following the changes in America due to the successful break with England (Revolutionary War), this period was called Federalist, 1780-1830. There are several homes of this period built in Andover. One of the best is the Amos Blanchard House, on Main Street.

This property is now home to the

Andover Historical Society and can be seen during regular visiting hours. Check the programs and hours of operation by visiting the AHS website.

A feature of this home style is the palladian window on the second floor above an ornate front door with columns supporting a portico. Note that these homes had two chimneys on each end of the home.

The Greek Revival style became very popular from 1830-1860, due in part to the industry and wealth of the area. Benjamin Asher, a Massachusetts architect, became known for his house plans featuring paneled trim at the corners of the structure, more attention to the front entrance with side lights, the height of the door. This Greek Revival home can be seen on Central Street and Washington Street. The usual color scheme for the house was white with green shutters on the windows.

The next fashion in home construction would be the Gothic Revival, 1840-1880. The impressive John Dove House on North Main Street, built in 1847, is an outstanding example of this type of construction. This period, also known as Victorian, reflects many periods of history. The Gothic Revival could have cupolas, towers, covered porticos and barge boards (ornately carved boards that follow the gables of the house.)

The Italianate styled house came into fashion from 1850-1885. As the country became more affluent, great care was taken to build this house with all the features that distinguished it from previous house styles. An example of this style can be seen on Central Street.

Victorian period styled homes became



Memorial Hall Library

The Friends of Andover Memorial Hall Library will be holding a book sale at the library from January 24 until January 26, 2014. This event is held to raise funds for the library for special events, programs and activities to encourage and promote activities at the library.

Dates for the Book Sale are as follows: Preview night, January 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

January 24, 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., January 25, 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and January 26, 1-4:30 p.m.

Donations from the public may be made to the sale by placing the books,

DVD’s, and CD’s in special bins located at the lower level, near the children’s section. Donations are sorted and grouped according to subjects. The sale will be held on the top level of the library.

Volunteers are welcomed to help with this major fundraising effort. Anyone who would be interested in joining the Friends of Andover Memorial Hall Library may call 978-623-8401 ext. 49, or e-mail mailto: friends @ MHL.org. The Friends of Andover Memorial Hall Library is an important part of the success of the library. The staff and supporters at the library encourage participation in this worthy activity.

A New Day: Rivera to Fire Clerk, Says Changes are "Just the Beginning"

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Lawrence's new Mayor, Dan Rivera, wasted no time making personnel changes in Lawrence City Hall, firing the City Comptroller David Camasso on his first day, and telling the Valley Patriot in an exclusive interview that he also plans to fire City Clerk William Maloney.

Maloney's firing must be approved by the Lawrence City Council by a 2/3 vote.

"I have found that Billy Maloney is not doing the job of City Clerk at the level we need a city clerk to perform in a city like Lawrence," Rivera told the Valley Patriot.

Rivera said that he had other reasons and will release the official reason when Maloney's name is sent down to the City Council.

"It's not that I don't like him, but I have had some concerns about his job performance and what goes on in that office for a while now, and anyone who watched me on the city council knows what those concerns are."



City Clerk Maloney is in charge of the Election Department in Lawrence which has come under scrutiny and is under investigation by law enforcement

for election fraud, and signatures forged on nomination papers by election workers among other misdeeds.

During the mayoral election last November, Dan Rivera called in the Secretary of State's Office to oversee the election and monitor ballot counting, saying Maloney was "not strong enough to say no to Lantigua."

Rivera has long held that Maloney was doing Lantigua's bidding at the council table. Maloney also sits as chairman of the city's Board of Registrars, which is responsible for ruling on challenged ballots and overseeing election recounts.

During recount in Rivera vs. Lantigua, Maloney voted as Chairman of the Board to approve two ballots to be counted for Lantigua even though the ballots were from the primary election.

Maloney did not investigate how the primary ballots found their way into final

election ballots boxes for Lantigua.

The Board of Registrars has been cited for multiple violations of state law including; not keeping minutes of their meetings and violating the open meeting law, holding meetings and taking votes without notifying the public.

The board also took more than a year to investigate the city's bilingual coordinator forging names on State Representative Frank Moran's nomination papers, ignoring media reports and written complaints about the forgeries.

Maloney also was in charge when 400 absentee ballot envelopes went missing from the September mayoral primary. Sate Law dictates that all records must be maintained, but Maloney refused to comment on the missing envelopes or his legal obligation to keep them safe.

FIRED: DAVID CAMASSO

Less than twenty four hours after taking office as the new Mayor of Lawrence, Rivera fired Lawrence's City Comptroller David Camasso.

Camasso was appointed by Mayor Sullivan in 2005 and was involved in one of Lantigua's first controversies by refusing to pay former Planning Director Michael Sweeney and others what they were owed by the city after Lantigua illegally fired them.

Camasso sits as Chairman of the City's Retirement Board, which is currently \$204M in the red and is the third most underfunded pension system in the state. No reason was given for Camasso's termination, but Rivera did say that several times during the election that those city employees who went along with the misdeeds of the Lantigua administration needed to be removed.

HIRED: ABEL VARGAS

Mayor Rivera hired five people who will start to build his Administration.

Rivera hired Greater Lawrence Technical School Committee member, Abel Vargas as Business Development Director for the city.

Vargas was instrumental in Rivera's mayoral campaign and was involved with monitoring the recount that lead to Rivera winning by 82 votes over Willie Lantigua.

Rivera says that as Business Development Director, Abel Vargas will work closely with him to keep businesses from leaving the city, assist existing businesses in expanding, and attracting new business-



es to Lawrence. Rivera also wants Vargas to use the position as Business Development Director to "make Lawrence more business-friendly."

"It is critical that we attract businesses and jobs to Lawrence that can help put people to work," the mayor said.

"I am confident that Abel can effectively lead this effort, and make the strong case for Lawrence as a business-hub."

In a press release Mayor Rivera laid out Abel Vargas' qualifications.

"As a candidate for a Masters in Business Administration at Southern New Hampshire University, and with a professional background in Business and Marketing Analysis, Vargas brings experience that will enable him to facilitate growth of jobs and industry in the city. Vargas' city position is a modification of the Economic Development Director, and will be part of a larger restructuring of overall development and planning efforts that the Mayor plans to tackle in the coming months.

HIRED: WENDY LUZON

Wendy Luzon was hired as a Lawrence's Neighborhood Planner She will serve as a liaison between Mayor Rivera and the various neighborhood organizations throughout the city.

"Luzon has an extensive background in crisis intervention and neighborhood organization that will prove valuable as she develops new, innovative ways to unify the different districts of our city."

SPECIAL ASSISTANTS TO THE MAYOR

KATE REILLY

As Special Assistants to the Mayor, Delgado, Reilly, and Rosario will work in the Mayor's Office to deliver high-quality and responsive constituent services. "A number of issues come through Mayor's office, and we need a solid team who will help residents and businesses navigate through city government. All three Special Assistants have strong connections to the community, and bring local knowledge, exceptional organizational skills, and follow-through to the office."

"This team represents a group of leaders who truly care about the City of Lawrence," said Rivera. "We will work together to offer accountability, professionalism, and service to the people of this community. We are in the business of Making Lawrence Better."

Rivera said that all of the positions are "budget-neutral" meaning that there is no additional expense to the city above what has already been budgeted for.

Also on his first day in office, Rivera also demoted Deputy Chief Melix Bonilla back to the rank of Sergeant, his rank before Lantigua took office. The new mayor also made good on his promise to stop paying indicted police officers and city employees, putting Bonilla on unpaid leave of absence till the resolution of his

trial. The money Bonilla would be making will be held in an escrow account and paid to Bonilla if he is found not guilty and returns to work. Bonilla has been charged with embezzlement and extortion.

Rivera also said he will be demoting some superior officers promoted by Lantigua to swell the ranks of patrolmen saying he plans on putting ten more patrolmen on the streets.

A source close to Rivera said that he has already taken steps to demote Captain Scott McNamara back to Sergeant. McNamara is president of the Superior Officers Union. McNamara was initially anti-Lantigua and helped organize the recall petition against Lantigua last year.

But after the recall failed, McNamara endorsed Lantigua.

"Right now we have 2.4 superior officers per patrolman in the city," Rivera said. "That's way too many superior officers. We have more superior officers today than when we had 150 cops on street. We are top heavy. We need to change the way people think. This is not about going after superior officers it's about doing what is best for the city. I am happy to have a conversation with them and I will listen to them but at the end of the day, I have made decisions based on what is best for the people of Lawrence."

FIRED: JUSTO GARCIA

Rivera fired Justo Garcia who was on paid leave after being indicted for stealing money from the city's parking garages and depositing the money into then Mayor William Lantigua's campaign account. Garcia is awaiting trial.

FIRED RICHARD BERKE

Mayor Rivera fired Richard Berke who managed the city's real estate, and was a former aid to Lantigua when he was a State Representative.

Several Lantigua hires that Rivera says he expects to terminate are: Lorenza Ortega, reported to be Lantigua's current wife and is a confidential secretary in the city's Personnel Department; Andrys Castillo, who is the city's recycling coordinator, and Gilda Duran who worked in the city's Planning Department.

Rivera has not said whether he will fire Lantigua's first wife whom he helped get a job as Head Meter Maid for the police department and then used her hire to evade paying child support, telling a judge that he got her a city job and he considered that act as equal to "supporting my family"

Former Lawrence City Council President Patrick Blanchette who was Lantigua's confidant and Economic Development Director left his post prior to Rivera taking office.

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Rivera stopped short of saying he would terminate City Attorney Charlie Boddy, but did say that he was going to have the City

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We Hated 2013 Let's hope for better in 2014

Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

On December 30, 2013, at age 45, Georgetown Water Department employee and more importantly a friend to many, Scott Collin, lost a long courageous battle against scleroderma.

Just a short time before he slipped from our earthly community, the town had rallied to support Scott and his family, with a large fundraiser at the VFW. Large doesn't begin to truly describe the event. The admittance line outside the door arched nearly to the military tank at the roadside. Unprecedented. As for parking, volunteers stood watch on a busy 133, with cars lined on both sides. Inside, the shock on Scott's face was incredible as he gazed in shock at what seemed like a never-ending line of friends and neighbors pouring into the now cramped hall; Elbow-to-elbow, neighbor-to-neighbor.

Baskets, gifts, raffles, live Irish bagpipe musicians, DJ, auction, food that kept coming and coming... it was almost a never ending line of well wishers and supporters, all who showed up to help raise 'Lungs for Scott'.

The community then, and now, showed their hearts and tried to help. We can now but wish him peace, and strength for the family.

Knights of Columbus

Just as this paper hits the streets, the Knights of Columbus will be running the first-ever Georgetown Great Grand Sheep 'Pebbles' Land Rush at the Knights of Columbus Council Home on 87 E. Main Street. The event is simple: you buy a square of land, the sheep visit your spot,

and you win. Well, actually, the details are posted at www.SheepDEEDS.com. Alan and Maureen Aulson and their Great Rock Farm provided the fencing, sheep, and support for the upcoming event (and they also provided for a great grand live nativity scene which graced the Knights front lawn in December). The Knights make the use of their property free to non-profit and various town groups and families to hold gatherings, run events, have cookouts, etc., and perform a number of charity events and fun events throughout the year. The group is open to membership by all Catholic gentlemen.

Medical Mal Practice Author

The Friends of the Georgetown Peabody Library are hosting a return visit of Dr. Paul Janson on Wednesday, January 29th, from 6:30 - 8 pm. Janson has recently published a medical mystery titled Mal Practice. Drop on in. Should be a nice event.

Bowling in Georgetown

Believe it or not, there is a hidden bowling alley, open erratic hours or by special request by your group by calling the owner George Perkins to set up an event or start or join a league, (978) 352-9895. It's tucked in beside Georgetown Window and Door, behind the Georgetown Savings Bank. Don't look for a sign, because there isn't one, just an OPEN neon sign on the front window, sometimes on. George is a great guy and volunteers on many things in town. Give him a ring if you have a group and want to have a bowling alley to play in!

More details, as always, posted to www.GeorgetownTODAY.org.

Non-Compete Agreements

Attorney Timothy F. Stark, Esq.
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Covenants not to compete are contracts provided to an employee by an employer that are intended to limit and/or restrict an employee from working for competitors after the employment relationship is terminated. They are sometimes given to the employee at the time of the employment offer, but in other situations given to the employee after the employee has already started to work. The employer views these contracts as protecting legitimate business interests. Specifically, the employer is trying to protect themselves from former employees, using their knowledge of the company, to take some hard earned business away from them. Of course, the employee often has a different view of the contracts and thinks of them more as a restraint on their freedom to work. Consequently, Massachusetts Courts attempt to balance these legitimate, but sometimes conflicting, interests.

I think the best way to attempt to analyze these conflicting interests is to think of a filter, which the terms of the contract are required to pass through. The filter is composed of "reasonableness," and each of the terms of the agreement must pass through the filter in order for the courts to enforce the agreement. The terms in most these agreements are "duration," "scope," and "location." The term "duration" is pretty much self-explanatory, and simply means the length of time that the restrictions are in place. Typically, these lengths of time are periods between six months and two years, and prevent the employee from working for the competitor for the designated period. In order for the Court to find the duration of the restriction to be enforceable, the Court has to determine that within this specific situation the restriction is "reasonable." The definition of "reasonable," however, is clearly a task that keeps attorneys employed and often is hotly contested.

The second concept that has to pass the "reasonable" test is the size of the area the restriction applies to. A number of years ago, I had a case that provides a very simple example of this concept. It was a car dealership case and the restriction within the agreement was 15 miles. The judge was Judge Zobel. He was a colorful man who was known for always keeping fresh flowers on his bench. He initially ruled that the distance of 15 miles



was reasonable. He then went back into his chambers and came out with a map that had a legend that measured distance. On the spot, he then determined that the dealership that my client was working at was within the prohibited area. When we left the courtroom 5 minutes later, my client was unemployed. Oh well, you win some and lose some. Of note, with the development of internet sales this concept of geography has changed dramatically and is interpreted much more broadly than it used to be.

The third term that passes through the "reasonableness" filter is the concept of scope. An example of this is if a salesman works for a company that sells a particular product and leaves to work for a competitor, but in the new job his responsibilities do not include selling that particular product. In this case the restraint may not be enforceable since the company would have a difficult time attempting to show that they were protecting a legitimate business interest since, presumably, the salesman could not use inside information to unfairly compete if he were not selling the particular product.

Over the years, I have often had clients come in and indicate that they had heard that these contracts were not enforceable. Although the burden of proof is definitely on the side of the employer, courts do enforce these agreements if they are drafted using a "reasonable" filter. If you have, or are being asked to sign, a non-compete agreement, it is a good idea to check with an experienced employment attorney before doing so. Remember, the only person who has legal rights is the person who knows what their legal rights are.

Attorney Timothy F. Stark, Esq. has over 25 years of legal experience in Employment Law, Divorce Law, and Divorce Mediation, with backgrounds in both Human Resource Management and Psychology. Please feel free to contact him by calling (978) 685-8777 or e-mailing him at info@timfstark.com. His law office is located at 805 Turnpike Street, Suite 101, North Andover, MA 01845.



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Massachusetts House of Representatives: 2013 and 2014

Linda Dean Campbell
METHUEN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Last year was a very productive year for our Legislature and 2014 will bring forth necessary and spirited debate on some key issues to include ballot initiatives.

In 2013, the focus of the Legislature was upon the economy, transportation, welfare reform, regulating compounding pharmacies, election laws, and increasing local aid. Here are some highlights:

The Economy. The budget passed by the Legislature:

Increased funding for local communities (including public schools), prevented scheduled tuition hikes at UMASS, and provided increased support to community colleges;

Funded a hefty reserve thereby maintaining the highest bond rating in the history of the Commonwealth;

Funded the Manufacturing Futures Program, and the Mass Works Infrastructure Program – to foster job creation for those of all skill levels.

Transportation:

The House rejected the Governor's call to finance transportation expansion with a modest reduction in the sales tax and a large increase in the income tax rate that would have given Massachusetts the top income tax rate in the country;

While I understand that investment in new public transportation infrastructure

fuels growth, we have not been adequately maintaining our existing infrastructure. Road and bridge maintenance is a safety priority long neglected that must take precedence over new projects at this time;

The Legislature increased funding for local road repair.

Compounding Pharmacies: In response to the meningitis outbreak of 2012 linked to contaminated drugs, Massachusetts became the first state to pass comprehensive regulations governing specialty pharmacies.

Welfare Reform: Following EBT reforms in the last budget, a House Bill in 2013 expanded the scope of prohibited transactions including foreign transmittal

and increased funding for both electronic management and monitoring of welfare programs.

Housing and Heating: In response to the continued high levels of homelessness resulting from the recession, the House continues to fund policies that move the homeless from motel housing to less costly and better quality temporary shelter. The House also passed a bond bill for repairs in public housing across the state.

Veterans. The House passed two bills:

One provides increased property tax relief, enhanced employment opportunities, and improved access to educational and health care support services for our Veterans;



Team Zingales Helps Burned out Family

When Joe Zingales of Team Zingales at Remax Preferred in Methuen found out that Stephanie Santos and her children were burned out of their Monmouth Street home in Lawrence right before Christmas, and had lost everything, he did what Joe always does when there's someone in need, he decided to pitch in and help.

Joe immediately sprang into action with his sister Teresa Barcelos Zingales and started making phone calls to get his friends and business contacts to donate money and toys.

"I'm very fortunate, my family is very fortunate and when we hear about people who are in need, especially kids at Christmas time we always feel as though we have to do something to help," Zingales said.

Just a few days before Christmas, Joe invited Stephanie to his office and asked her to bring her children. When they walked into the real estate office on Pleasant Valley Street Joe, Theresa and their staff were waiting with toys in hand and a check to make their Christmas bright.

The second bill passed was a military bond bill that funds projects at our military installations across the state. Military installations and research are critical to our Massachusetts economy.

As I Look to 2014...

I anticipate healthy debate on two emerging ballot initiatives: the first pertaining to the gas tax; the second pertaining to casinos;

I will continue to advocate strongly for increased funding for the Gateway Cites program which greatly assists the communities of the Merrimack Valley.

We need more resources to treat substance abuse, especially closer to home, because it is the root cause of most of the

violent and non-violent crime in our area. This, along with increased funding for public safety, is very important to ensure our quality of life here in the Merrimack Valley.

Continued emphasis on local road improvement will remain a focus, along with continued support for many local school projects.

Also most important in my opinion is a continued priority in the reduction of people unemployed and policies, such as unemployment insurance reform, that help our small business continue to recover from the aftereffects of the recession as they struggle to adapt to changes in health care laws.

The Journey Continues in The City of Methuen

Ken Willette

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Having served as a Methuen City Councilor at Large for six years and as a School Committeeman for six years, I have been honored and humbled by the support entrusted to me by the voters of Methuen.

While not ultimately victorious on Election Day in the West District Council race, I want to thank everyone who expressed confidence in me on November 5th and helped in some way with my campaigns over the years. My opponents worked very hard and I wish them all the best as they serve the people's business. I am not sure what the future holds for me, but I am truly blessed by my family, my children and my many friends. Plus, the Red Sox and the Patriots are having a very special year!

However, I will remain vigilant in expressing my viewpoints periodically in The Valley Patriot about fiscal, educational, public safety and quality of life matters involving the community I deeply cherish. I will also not rule out a future run in the event that property taxes continue to rise astronomically, the municipal health care system continues to drain resources from the budget and unfairly targets workers, and unnecessary administrative positions

are approved.

For instance, I would encourage the newly sworn-in council in 2014 to proceed very carefully and lightly into any substantial and dramatic changes to the City Charter. I really thought the outstanding charter issues surrounding the length of

the mayor's term of office, the composition of the city council, and the length of a councilor's term of office were thoroughly vetted, debated and voted upon by the duly elected charter commission.

Although I personally spoke in favor of permanent term limits being a major component of any charter reform package at a public hearing, the majority of the charter commission decided otherwise and forwarded

their recommendations to the people, who then resoundingly defeated the resolution at the ballot box. I would imagine the absence of a permanent term limits provision played a key factor in that demise. Therefore, the most expedient action that the council could immediately entertain would



be a Home Rule Petition authorizing permanent term limits, which I advocated during this past campaign.

While there were calls for management audits highlighted by the charter commission that I would support and encourage the new

council to adopt, under no circumstances would I ever support extending the term of office of mayor to three or four years. All we really have to do is look to the adjacent community of Haverhill, which has a simi-

lar two-year term of office for both mayor and city council. Although their elected officials are not subject to term limits, they are nevertheless accountable on the same ballot at the same time. Their system is working fine. Our system works fine and gives direct accountability to the voter every two years. If the system isn't broken, why fix it?

By the same token, I would never advocate any efforts to stagger or extend the duration of a councilor's term of office. I would also oppose changing the overall composition of the council, especially if God forbid, a councilor has a long-term disability or sickness preventing that individual from attending meetings and voting. The end result could easily be a 2-2 tie vote stalling important council business. The voters of Methuen spoke loud and clear about all facets of the charter over the course of numerous televised public meetings, hearings and competing reports and publications.

It's to be hoped that the councilors, serving as a co-equal branch in Methuen's local government, won't merely serve as an advisory board to the mayor on addressing our local constitution. In closing, I pledge to observe and comment in the months ahead on this and other items of interest.

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Christmas at Fenway

Shawn Hansen

VALLEY PATRIOT SPORTS COLUMNIST

In the first month of the fourteenth year of the new millennium (2014) reflecting on this past month, Fenway Park held their 11th annual Christmas at Fenway on December 14, 2013. ... at Fenway Park.

Walking around the park to enter the 101-year old stadium at Gate B, a mascot named Big League Brian (Brian Dwyer) who was dressed in a Red Sox uniform on stilts was greeting fans hanging out near a Christmas tree placed outside the Royal Rooters club.

Stating the fact that he has been on stilts since 2002 and did some balancing and juggling acts a few times a year before that, Dwyer said he is roughly 10-feet tall on stilts as he is typically 5'8.

"I have played basketball in these stilts," said Dwyer. "It's the only way I can dunk. I'm still a better baseball player on stilts than a basketball player. Football is not bad either but baseball is probably the best sport I can play on stilts."

Growing up in Somerville, Dwyer said he is a big fan of the Red Sox as it would be nice to see them win back-to-back titles. Reminiscing about the time he caught a foul ball off of Gary Ward of the New York Yankees in his teenage years, he said everyone was clapping and cheering really loud. Looking around at what everyone was all excited about, Dwyer

Talking about who the Red Sox should acquire in the off season, Dwyer said, "I hear Robert De Niro is a good actor, Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman, I think they could do a really good job." Telling Big League Brian that De Niro could play in the infield he said, "De Niro would just stand at the plate and say, 'Are you throwing at me, are you throwing at me, are you throwing at me? I don't see anybody else here, are you throwing at me?'" Pulling off De Niro's voice really well, Dwyer laughed and said it would be a great strategy because everyone would walk him.

Christmas at Fenway is an event that brings Red Sox personnel, fans and players together before the holiday season actually takes place. It is a time to reflect on the season that just wound up to bring another World Championship to Boston coming off a haunted 2012 season. ...



PHOTO: SHAWN HANSEN

Burlington resident Mark Volpe said he felt Big League Brian was A LOT taller than Bill Walton.

"From Worst to First" as everyone calls it is what it is.

As Red Sox side line reporter Jenny Dell interviewed Red Sox pitcher Craig Breslow, Pitching Coach Juan Nieves, 3B Coach Brian Butterfield among others, fans were able to step up to the microphone to ask questions as well.

Asking Nieves what he feels of his transition from being a Pitching Coach with the Chicago White Sox to the Boston Red Sox he said it was only a matter of changing his sox as he said, "Boston is a great city and I was proud to have the opportunity of joining the Red Sox."

Bringing up the career he had as a pitcher with the Milwaukee Brewers from 1986-88, Nieves said, "Andrew Miller resembles me as a player the most." He chipped in that Miller is a little bigger than he was back in his playing days but

Shawn Hansen is a Real Estate Agent at Century 21 Advance Realty in Medford, MA. If you are looking to list your home, sell your house or buy a house call him at 1-781-395-2121 extension 227 or send an email to shawnhansen@c21advance.com. Along with The Valley Patriot, Hansen also writes for the Tewksbury & Wilmington Advocate newspapers.

Letter from the Tomaselli Sisters

Letter to Tom Duggan, Editor of the Valley Patriot,

We thank you for your quest to report the truth to your readers. You have devoted an enormous amount of time researching and reviewing government and court documents relating to the Town of Salisbury and their corruption scheme.

After people read the August 2013 edition of the Valley Patriot, many people wondered who in the world are the "Valley Patriot Sleuth Sisters" in Salisbury. We are proud to say that it is us. Your informative and compelling September 2013 column "An \$80 Million Lie: Sisters Discover Sewer Project 100% Paid for with Grant Money" and your subsequent columns expose the corruption and cover-up in Salisbury.

Although what happened started many years ago, it is ongoing.

This is a basis of what transpired. We had a dream to open our restaurant. In March 1991 we bought restaurant property in Salisbury. The Town delayed us from opening for 18 months resulting in loss of business income for two summer seasons, due to the town's extensive and many unnecessary permitting demands. On September 12, 1992 Mangia... a Caf -Restaurant opened; it was beautiful, full of warmth, delicious food and lots of love. We received rave reviews.

On December 30, 1994, without notice, the Town revoked all our business licenses because they claimed we "violated the bylaw" because of taxes due. Contrary to what the town has stated, the truth is the town unlawfully revoked all our restaurant licenses. The Town violated their own bylaw, as we complied with the by-law as we paid 11 payments amounting to \$4,775 in real estate taxes in the prior 12 month period and did not refuse or neglect to pay taxes in 1994. The Town halted all our earned income overnight, destroyed our livelihood and restaurant business investment. They impoverished us.

It has been 19 years this month that we were forced to close our wonderful restaurant. We pled with the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager in January 1995 to please allow us to continue to operate our restaurant. They refused.

The amounts they claimed we owed didn't seem accurate. We started asking questions and checked to see where our tax payments were applied. We discovered that our tax payments were misapplied, our sewer user bills were calculated improperly with thousands of dollars in errors and were charged a sewer for the marsh lot and there was no lien at the Registry of Deeds when we bought our property. It was years later that we discovered our \$18 million sewer project was paid

100% by Federal and State grant funds!!! We asked the Town to correct our tax bills, they wouldn't and we had to go to court.

Here we are 19 years later, this is what is going on: the Town won in all the courts and in Land Court because they continued with the \$80 Million Lie and gave the Court the wrong relevant dates.

Even though Land Court Judge Gordon Piper knew there was no lien, which is a mandatory requirement to collect for an assessment, knew there was no project cost to recover, and knew there was no basis for the \$7.8, the Town still won and with NO PAPERWORK to support their claims. Judge Piper actually wrote that he had "...plausible doubt on the propriety of those assessments for betterments" and admitted he had competing views of the chronology that unfolded...and could not rule if the Town had a valid betterment lien.

So instead of allowing us a rehearing that we requested so we could clear the issues, he decided to deny our requests and ordered us to pay by September 30, 2013, \$250,000 which was mostly the incorrect bills, interest while the case was in Land Court for years and although it took the Judge almost 3 years to make a decision, and for the Town's legal fees.

These are the same attorneys who gave the wrong information to the Courts! It makes one wonder??? We ask how can a Town win with no documents to support their claims? The Town has since admitted that they have no records for \$80 Million, never received \$72 Million from Federal and State grants, yet they continue with the \$7.8M story now to the Bankruptcy Court Judge.

Years after the EPA/DEP grant funded project had been completed in 1989, the figure of \$7.8 Million suddenly materialized in 1992, yet had no basis in reality and was never related to any sewer project of any kind. In 1989 the Sewer Commissioners hired the law firm Kopelman and Paige as their financial advisors, they allowed the \$7.8 million and told the Federal Judge that the sewer project was \$80 Million rather than the truth which is \$18 Million!

Because of our case, new owners, will now be liable for assessment even though when there is a title search, and there is no lien at the Registry of Deeds, they will no longer have the protection given to them by law. Municipalities can collect for costs, when no local share cost exists.

The only option to save our home and property was to file for Bankruptcy. Grace-marie filed on September 30, 2013.

Other people in Salisbury lost businesses and property for costs that never existed.

Gracemarie and Joyce Tomaselli
Salisbury



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The Dragons Nest, The Place that Brings Smiles to all Ages

Rebecca Pearson
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The Dragons Nest, located at Market Square in Newburyport, has been bringing smiles to children of all ages since 1982. The Seim Family has owned and operated the Dragons Nest, continuing their family traditions of well thought gifts for all occasions with a simple logic: "I love kids, and toys, and believe in the power of play", says owner Kristen Seim. "Owning the Dragon's Nest, a place that incorporates all three, is a dream. Toys can be such a part of a child's learning, and social experience. I love selecting the toys to carry in the store, and helping customers select the perfect gift. My customers and employees make this my dream job!"

At the Dragon's Nest, they encourage their customers to play in-store with demos including a train table, Calico Critter house, game demo table, and Lego play table. They offer a wide selection of games, arts & crafts, science, Lego, Playmobil, children's books, plush and novelty items. Bringing joy to everyone that passes through the doors of

the Dragons Nest, you will find their staff as friendly as your family, helping you find that special little someone a gift that they will continue to enjoy for many years to come.

In 2006, Kristen Seim took the reins of the Dragons Nest from her father and brought the store to the 21st century, but still kept the original allure that has brought many people in there for generations. The Dragon's Nest toy store in downtown Newburyport is a magical and creative retail establishment that enjoys customers and children with our warm and friendly staff of trained toyologists with the longest employee of 20 years, and continues to provide a positive shopping experience and welcome all to enjoy what the Dragon's Nest has to offer.

With only the very best quality of products, the Dragon's Nest offers toys that stimulate the imagination, challenge the mind, increase and hone motor skills, and promote creativity and fun. Our toys range from classic and timeless, to modern and totally cool. The Dragon's Nest has a wide collection of toys that will enrich a childhood no matter what age.

Their motto is: Toys, Games and Wonders for all ages. The focus has been to provide toys, and help engage children to use imaginative toys. In doing so, the Dragon's Nest has many favorites including Calico Critters, Lego's, Kites, Science Kits, Bath Toys, T.Y. Gund, Corolle Dolls, Thomas the Train, Picture Books, Magnets, Night Figures, Cars, Trucks, Children's Music, Hello Kitty and much more!

With two shopping levels, the first level is surrounded by novelty items, and younger children's collectables including soft plush animals, princess dresses and accessories. The second level is 4+ with games, arts and crafts, and things to do inside and out! The Dragon's Nest also continues to touch the community with generous support to local non-profits, and the Newburyport Educational Foundation, and Dare House.

Come shop the best little toy store in Newburyport and find that perfect little treasure that you know your little one will love! - The Dragons Nest, 31 Market Square in Newburyport, MA, 978-462-8802.



Arts and Entertainment in Newburyport for January, 2013

Rebecca Pearson
VALLEY PATRIOT NEWBURYPORT COLUMNIST

Firehouse Center for the Arts: Market Square in Newburyport MA 01950
www.firehouse.org

New Works Festival 2014: Fri & Sat, Jan 24 & 25 / Fri & Sat, Jan 31 & Feb 1

Since 2002, The Firehouse Center for the Arts and the New Works Festival have fostered the development of New England writers, directors, and actors. Providing insight on the play-writing process from conception to presentation, this festival allows us to share with the community a rare and special look at the abundant talent that surrounds us. Submitted plays are judged by an indepen-



dent panel of theater professionals in blind readings. This past year's panel consisted of five members of the theatrical community. Full-length plays are performed as staged readings, and ten-minute and one-act plays are memorized.

17 State Street Café: 17 State Street in Newburyport MA 01950
www.17StateStreetCafe.com

Joe Hanley Live Music Jan. 17 @ 7pm - 9pm

Beats, burgers and brews present Joe Hanley. After spending the past 20 years

playing around New England in his bands Beyond The Pale and more recently The Foggy Duo, Joe Hanley is getting back to his solo acoustic roots once again. Joe plays a diverse mix of tunes including original material, "deep cuts", and classic favorites. "I'm excited about reconnecting with folks in the solo setting. The band and duo are still active and fun so this format will just fill out my musical palette. It's been fun learning some great tunes people love but may not hear very often. And playing solo will facilitate pulling out some of my original tunes.

Altered Trio Live Music January 18 @ 7 pm - 9 pm

Beats, Burgers and Brews present the Altered Trio. Altered Trio features three of the best-kept secrets of the North Shore, Drummer Yuriana Sobrino, Bassist Andy Dow, and Guitarist Dan Searl. Yuri, Andy, and Dan together use their improvisational skill to maneuver their way through jazz classics, showing the audience a new approach to jazz improvisation along the way. All three members have a strong background in jazz and are also all Berklee College of Music alumni. Sobrino graduated on a full scholarship from Berklee College of Music where she had the opportunity to work with jazz masters Danilo Perez, Gene Perla, and Jerry Bergonzi. Born in Veracruz, Mexico, Yuri's playing transcends all genres and shows her immense knowledge of world and jazz rhythms. Dow, also a Berklee Alumni, has spent the past years sharing the stage with some of Boston's best jazz musicians such as Nat Mugavero, Jeff Galindo, Phil Grenadier, Jerry Sabatini, Chris Veilleux and Shawn Berry. Searl, a 2012 finalist in Lee Ritenour's Six String Theory Guitar Competition and 2013 Berklee Graduate, has worked with Boston greats such as George Garzone and

guitar virtuoso Tim Miller.

Artty Raynes Live Music January 24 @ 7 pm - 9 pm

Carl Cacho Live Music January 25 @ 7 pm - 9 pm

Beats, burgers and brews welcomes back Carl Cacho. "Blessed with a poet's insight and a soothing, expressive voice, Cacho touches on elements of country-blues and Harry Chapin style story-telling. Honest, emotive and finely crafted." Northeast Performer Carl Cacho has firmly established himself as one of the most talented and respected singer/songwriters in New England. Boston Music Award Nominee for Outstanding New Singer/Songwriter, winner of the Rose Garden Coffeehouse Singer/Songwriter Competition and finalist in both the Telluride Troubadour and Sierra Songwriter's Festival songwriting contests, his songs and disarming performing style have made him a favorite at venues across the Northeast. Folk legend Tom Rush personally selected Carl to perform with him at a "Club 47" show at Harvard University's Sanders Theater and Carl was invited to participate in the Fifth Annual Martha's Vineyard Singer/Songwriter Retreat, started by Christine Lavin.

Carl got his start among the open stages of the fertile New England folk scene while still a teenager in the late 1980's. He developed his unique brand of songwriting throughout his early 20's, while working as a social worker and living in Colorado, New York, Michigan and Massachusetts. It was as a graduate student of social work in Ann Arbor, Michigan, that Carl began performing professionally, becoming a regular at the world-renowned venue, "The Ark." With encouragement from two of his earliest heroes, Ellis Paul and Catie Curtis, he decided to return to New England to further hone his craft. He has since become a featured performer at some of the most prestigious venues in the area, including Club Passim, The Muse at the Grey Goose, Johnny D's and dozens of others.




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<http://www.newburyportguide.com/Parker-River-National-Wildlife-Refuge-Newburyport-Guide.html>

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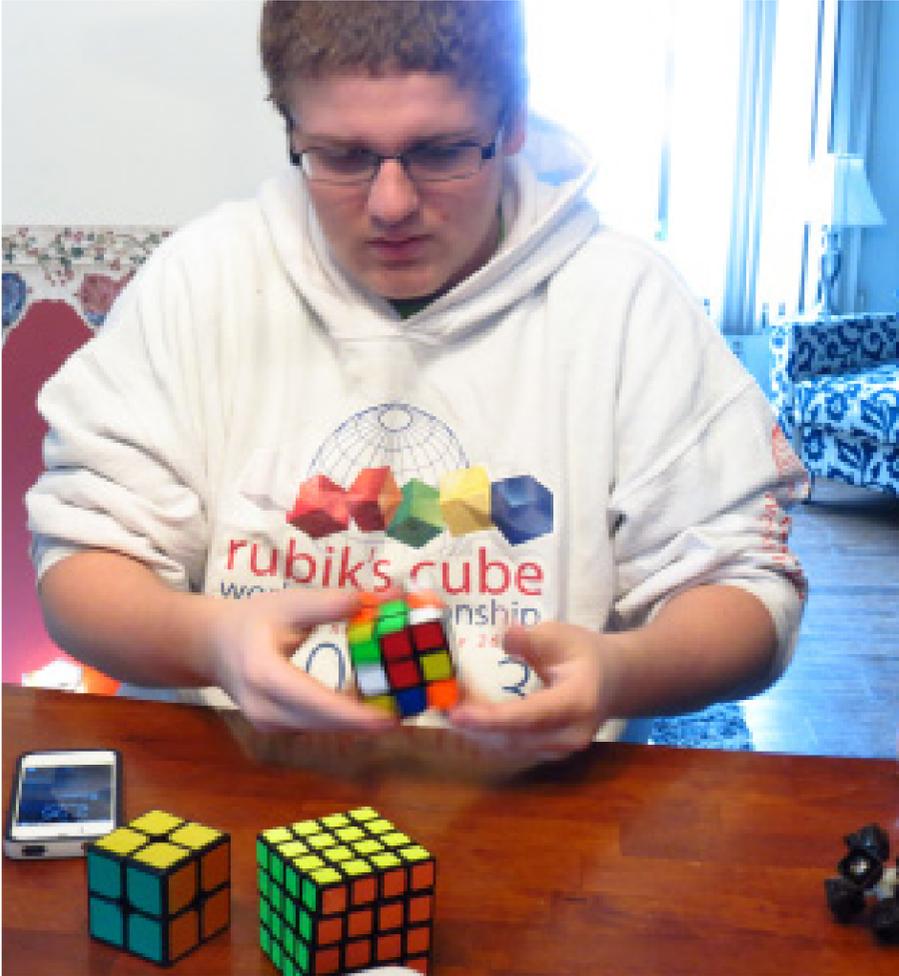
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Methuen Teen Josh Flagg Vying for National Rubix Cube Champ

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Methuen teenager Josh Flagg entered his first Rubix Cube contest in April of 2011 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His second competition was at Harvard where he competed in a four by four Rubix Cube. In total, Josh has competed in 26 Rubix Cube tournaments across the country including the "worlds" competition at the Rivera in Las Vegas last summer, placing 42nd out of 650 competitors from across the globe.

Of the 650 competitors, Josh was one of only sixteen Americans to compete. Thirty-seven countries were represented at the "Worlds" competition.

The biggest competition prior to that was about 210 people," Josh said. "in the second round at 'worlds' there were about 250 people. It was enormous!"

Josh placed 42nd in the first round,

47th in the second round and 55th in the third round and placed 45th overall.

In the competition, each person gets the same scrambled pattern to solve in order to make it fair.

Josh said that he watched a tutorial online once about how to solve the cube and was fascinated with solving it.

Once he mastered the normal three by three Rubix Cube, he started to practice on four-by-four cubes and then graduated to twelve-by-twelve cubes and even bigger puzzles of various shapes.

"He has practiced so much I'd say he has done at least a million solves since he started," Josh's father Scott said beaming with pride. "He's a smart kid and he has this ability to look at things and solve them in his head."

"He will just sit there and do a hundred solves because it only takes him about ten second a piece," his mother Judy added.

RUBIX CUBE: PAGE 28



Please Help Mitch and His Family

ROB YOUNG

My nephew, Mitch Wilson, suffered devastating injuries at the beginning of October 2013. While up at University of New Hampshire, enjoying his junior year as a pre-med student, he consumed some type of caustic poison that severely burned his mouth, trachea, stomach and large intestine, he also suffered a collapsed lung. He was in Massachusetts General Hospital for 8 weeks and in that time he had been admitted to Surgical ICU on three different occasions totaling almost three weeks. He had a tracheotomy procedure shortly after arriving at the hospital to give his trachea time to heal. He also had a feeding tube inserted due to the extensive damage caused by this horrible incident. While at Mass General he underwent an operation where the surgeons had to remove a portion of his stomach due to the extensive damage it sustained. The surgeons tried to avoid the total removal of his stomach, hopefully it won't come to that. During his stay in the hospital Mitch had many different scope procedures on his trachea and bronchial airways. During one of the trachea procedures the doctors did not know that Mitch actually had pneumonia at the time. While under general anesthesia Mitch's blood pressure dropped (due to the pneumonia) and he went into cardiac arrest. The doctors revived him but he ended up back in the Surgical ICU for a week. It was a devastating set back and one of the scariest moments in our family's history.

Mitchell is a great kid and a true fighter. Even with everything that was going on, and all his medical issues, he still greeted everyone who came to visit him with a smile. Due to having a tracheostomy in place, and the extensive damage to his tra-

chea, he is still unable to speak. Communication is difficult because he is limited to a writing his thoughts on a white board or having his visitors read his lips. Before this accident happened he was a happy and healthy 20 year old college student, living his life away at college and enjoying every moment. At this point he is staying positive and has a great attitude, the doctors and nurses love him and refer to him as their "best patient". He never complains, he never feels sorry for himself, he just does what the doctors and nurses need him to do to recover. That is just how he is, always positive and very determined. A few weeks ago Mitch was finally released from the hospital and is healing at home. He still has a long road ahead of him and the healing process will take a long time.

I am reaching out to everyone because his family needs your help. My sister Deb, Mitchell's mom, had spent every possible waking moment with Mitch while he was in the hospital. Because of this she was unable to work and her income, and her family, are suffering. We are happy that Mitch is home now but he needs constant care and my sister is still unable to work. Every week Mitch is seen by a visiting nurse and a physical therapist, he also needs special food (since he is still on a feeding tube), medication, medical equipment, etc, and all these costs add up.

Please find it in your heart to help Mitchell and his family. He is fighting daily, and hourly battles trying to recover from his injuries. The last thing his family needs to worry about are financial issues.

Thank you for reading his story and please pray for his health.

To donate go to www.gofundme.com/mitchfund

DAN RIVERA: FROM PAGE 6

Attorney's Office fully staffed to handle lawsuits against the city and collective bargaining negotiations.

Instead of spending all this money on outside law firms to represent the city, I think we need to stop that and bring on enough attorneys to handle those issues in-house. I don't mind paying an outside firm for something special like certain collective bargaining issues, but we need to cut back on that," Rivera said.

Rivera did not say whether he would retain the Law Firm of DiAdamo and DiAdamo which handles the city's worker's compensation claims and was initially fired by Lawrence Mayor Mike Sullivan after losing the Andrea Traficanti case, but was rehired by Lantigua shortly after taking office.

JUST THE BEGINNING

"Right now I am trying not to bite off more than I can chew," Rivera told The Valley Patriot.

"I want to proceed in a very progressive manner. I don't want to do everything in one shot and then have a mess on my

hands where I have to go back and fix things later on."

Rivera says that having State Receiver Jeff Riley running the city schools and Financial Receiver Robert Nunes running the city's finances "makes my job easier, actually."

He said he thinks Jeff Riley is doing a good job running the schools and that "he is making progress. What he is doing is working and I want to support him in any way I can. Having the receivers here doesn't deter me from leading. At the end of my term, in fact by the middle of my term I want people to be able to look at Lawrence and say, 'Hey, Lawrence is being governed appropriately and we do not need a state receiver here anymore.'"

"Either way, the people of Lawrence and the state taxpayers need to know that it's a new day in Lawrence and we are here to serve the people, not ourselves."

Rivera concluded by saying that he is giving up Mayor Lantigua's parking space next to city hall and will be letting his employees of the month use that spot.

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Jobs, Internships, and Volunteer Opportunities Wanted

Northern Essex Community College has a new career website for its students and alumni, and the college is inviting local businesses and nonprofits to create an account and add their jobs, internships, and volunteer positions to the site.

Once employers open an account, which is free and a simple process, they can manage posts for open positions and view student applicants' profiles, resumes, and cover letters. Employers can access the site 24 hours a day.

"We have over 7000 current students and tens of thousands of alumni," said Ashley Bragger, staff associate, Northern Essex Career Connections. "NECCLink, our new site, is the perfect way for employers to reach Northern Essex students and alumni."

In addition to having benefits for employers, the site also addresses the needs of students and alumni, who can create profiles, build resumes and cover letters, research careers and industries, apply for jobs and

volunteer opportunities, and network with employers. Students can also connect their NECCLink account with LinkedIn and other social media.

Deborah Andrews, of Opportunity Works, and a member of the college's Occupational Advisory Board, was one of the first to create a NECCLink account, and she describes the process as "easy."

"NECCLink is a convenient way to advertise jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities, as it is available at your convenience, 24/7. The best part is the confidence we can feel knowing that these are NECC students and alumni, people who work hard and persevere to accomplish their goals," said Andrews.

To open an account or for more information, visit <http://www.necc.mass.edu/necclink-employers>

If you have questions, contact Ashley Bragger at 978 556-3946 or abragger@necc.mass.edu.



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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

The Importance of Training Your Puppy

Kate Whitney
VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY GIRL

With 2014 fresh upon us, I want to wish all of you good health and much happiness this year. Like me, I'm sure many of you have a list of resolutions. If I may, I'd like to ask you to add a few things to your list: help out at a local shelter, become a foster home, donate to a LOCAL shelter or rescue, and ADOPT your next pet. I didn't ask you to go the gym five times a week or eat more salads. My list for you was easy stuff. If you do just one, I promise you will feel really good about yourself.

As many of you know, my "real" job is to run my golf and baseball training aid company called SwingRite. My "moonlight" job in dog rescue is a passion and writing this column is a hobby and an outlet for me to share ideas with my faithful readers. One of my resolutions is to volunteer more. My friends and family might think I'm crazy. How can I possibly volunteer more than I already do? Well it's easy and everyone can do it. Try putting it on your list this year. Here's an example of what I mean.

A few months ago, I took a business trip to Columbus, Georgia to attend a golf convention. I was done setting up my booth at the venue and there was nothing else scheduled until the show started the next day. Instead of relaxing out by the pool or going shopping, I decided to head back to my hotel room and do a computer search for local dog shelters.

Several search results popped up and said they were only a few miles away. The first place I went to was Russel County Animal Shelter (aka the local pound) located just outside the Georgia border in Alabama. Upon arriving to the concrete, square, plain

building, I began introducing myself without a real idea of why I was there exactly. I guess I just wanted to see first-hand a southern local pound.

I've heard about them, and I've saved a lot of dogs from them, but I've never stepped foot in one before. I told the woman that I had some free time and that I would love to volunteer and help do anything that was needed: clean cages, walk dogs, help feed. She explained to me that the city didn't allow "volunteers" but she could give me a tour. She showed me the cats and the kittens and then took me out back to my cup of tea: the dogs. There were about 40 cages inside almost all of them were filled with dogs. Some contained mother dogs and her new puppies. Outside there were about 20 open air cages all FILLED with dogs; mostly black lab mixes (my favorite). Most of the dogs came to the front of their cage, tails wagging.

Others stayed laying down, the flies covering their faces so bad I couldn't even see their eyes. There was a large stone pen that a few dogs were running around in. The shelter workers (inmates of the local jail) alternate the dogs from the cages to the pen so they can stretch their legs and have play-time. When any new person walks through a shelter, the dogs go crazy, so of course I set them all off.

I was greeted with the sound I now dream about; the barks of dogs begging for a home; begging for me to save them. Surprisingly, I left the pound that day empty handed, but with a heavy heart.

I'm not sure what happened to the dogs I met that day. Most of them probably didn't make it out alive. But seeing this first hand reminded me why I do what I do with regard to rescue and why I'm so passionate



in wanting to teach people the importance of adoption. After my tour here, I asked the front desk if there was a shelter around that did welcome volunteers and they told me about East Alabama Humane Society (EAHS), about 5 minutes up the road.

PuppyWhen I arrived at EAHS, I went inside and was greeted by a friendly woman named Nichole Recktenwald who was out back cleaning dog cages. I told her where I had just come from and why I was there. She was one of the fulltime employees. She gave me a tour and told me about EAHS; they had just acquired the building (which was beautiful by dog shelter standards) and already had a great presence in the community. They had a lot of great dogs and puppies there.

Every run and cage was full. You might be wondering how a place like this gets so full. In a nutshell, they would be the ones to go to the local pound – like the one I had just come from (a kill shelter), pull dogs from there, bring them back to EAHS (a no-kill shelter) and find them homes OR people dump dogs there. That's why it's so important for people to go to EAHS when they are looking for their new best friend. The more empty cages they have, the more dogs facing death, they can save.

This is a perfect example of the phrase "adopt one, save two" that you might often hear rescue people say. When you adopt a dog, you are not only saving that dog, but you opened up a space in the shelter so another dog can now be taken in and saved. If there is anyone out there who still doesn't get it, doesn't understand what this means, or why rescue is so important, please email me so I can try and explain it better. It's time that people GET IT. Okay, back to me at the shelter. Nicole wasted no time and

put me to work.

I was assigned the job of spraying down the dog cots with soap and water. After this job, I went around to most of the kennels and took pictures of the gorgeous dogs that came to the front of their cells to greet me with wagging tails. I posted the pictures on my Facebook page. No sooner that they were posted, comments about how beautiful they were came flooding in. If only this shelter was closer to home; all these dogs would have found homes in a heartbeat.

I went back to the shelter twice more after my initial visit. The next time I went back, I met Carolyn Lipford Harrelson, the founder of EAHS. She was so warm and welcoming; your typical sweet, southern hospitality. A few of us sat around outside in the hot Alabama sun, unwrapping donated dog treats and putting them in airtight containers so bugs wouldn't spoil them. I also met another friend that day, Nancy Odom. She was a volunteer who takes pictures of the dogs at EAHS, significantly increasing the adoption rate. I was surrounded by my new friends, Alabama accents and all. It's funny how quickly people in dog rescue become friends. We were from totally different parts of the country and had just met, but one thing united us: saving dogs. The sun went down and it was time for me to head back to my hotel, I had a business dinner to attend to. I couldn't lose focus of why I was there in the first place.

SwingRite comes first, dog rescue second. Although sometimes I wish it was the other way around...shhh!!

The next morning came and I was up early, excited to get my work done so I could head to EAHS. I looked at my schedule and noticed I didn't have to do anything

PUPPYGIRL: PAGE 30

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

DOES CONGRESSMAN JOHN TIERNEY REALLY CARE ABOUT WOMEN?

Congressman John Tierney is always on script while on the campaign trail. His script, written by the DNC, always starts and ends with the "War on Women" saying that he is the only candidate who cares about women and will represent women's concerns in congress. This is odd for a rich, old, white guy who knows nothing about being a woman. While many have questioned Congressman Tierney's commitment to "women" in past elections this year we are going to finally get an answer to their questions. You see, Tierney has a primary opponent this year named Marisa DeFranco who, as it happens, is an actual woman! If Congressman John Tierney has not been lying all these years about how critical it is to him that "women's concerns be represented in Congress" he would walk the walk, put his money where his mouth is, drop out of the race and endorse Marissa DeFranco so that women in Massachusetts will have a real representative for their issues and concerns. Anyone think Tierney is going to do that? NO? Then why would any woman vote for this guy when everything he has said on the campaign trail for the last ten years has been a lie. Here's the real question, will women in the Democrat party let him get away with it and vote for Tierney anyway, or will they take Tierney's advice over the last ten years and "elect the candidate that will best represents women" by nominating Marisa DeFranco for congress? Ok we know Tierney is a hypocrite on the subject of women, are you democrat women hypocrites too? We will see on primary day, 2014 when the results come in and the Democrats choose their nominee.

- TOP READ STORIES ON VALLEYPATRIOT.COM IN 2013
- #13 TIE - Armed Standoff in Methuen ends Peacefully
 - #13 TIE - Massachusetts Law Enforcement and FBI Seek "Merrimack Valley Bandit", Armed and Dangerous
 - #12 - Lantigua Spends \$32,178 of Taxpayers Money to Fight \$61 Public Records Request
 - #11 - Mayor Fires City Worker, Denies Unpaid Leave Time for Dying Wife
 - #10 - An \$80 Million Lie: Sisters Discover Sewer Project 100% Paid for with Grant Money
 - #9 - Rivera Calls for Hiring Freeze, Will Stop Paying Indicted Police Officers
 - #8 -BREAKING..... ELECTION MACHINE "MISHAP" ERASES DATA ON ELECTION MACHINES IN LAWRENCE....
 - #7 - Lawrence's Mayor Lantigua Pushes Candidate on Ballot Against Her Will - Will File Complaints with AG Coakley
 - #6 - Armed Robbery Suspects are Lantigua Employees in Lawrence DPW
 - #5 - Malden Taxi Driver Says he Drove Tsarnaev Brothers With Backpacks

METHUEN LIONS CLUB



Pictured Left To Right Are Jim Angelone (Methuen 1st VP) Massachusetts Lions District 33N 1st Vice District Governor Joan Baptiste (Guest Speaker) Mark Danskin (Dracut President) Sherry Hubbard (Tewksbury President)..... Held Their Yearly Meeting At The Of Italy Hall In Methuen

#4 - Fraud, Forgeries and Illegal Signatures Found on Mayor Lantigua's Nomination Papers, All approved By Lawrence Election Department

#3 - BREAKING... UPDATED ... Medical Examiner Identifies Body Found in Methuen River

#2 - Methuen Police Arrest High School Student on Terrorism Charges

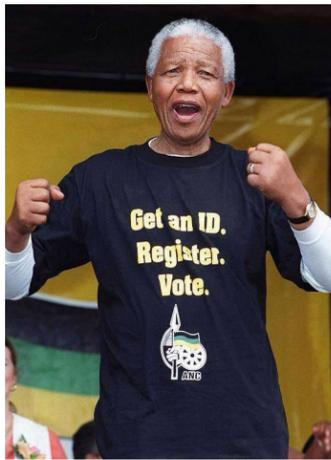
TIE #1 - BREAKING.... Erin Cox Does Not Appear in Court for Possession of Alcohol, Attorney Says Family Not Authorizing Any Money to be Raised

TIE #1 - Erin Cox Confesses to Drinking at Underage Party That Gained National Attention - The History of a Bogus Media Story That Never Happened.

NELSON MANDELA THE RACIST?

In this country, anyone who supports Voter-ID is called a "racist" by the media and the leadership of the Democrat party. Yet this photo (above) of Nelson Mandela, a hero of the Democrats and the media, was widely ignored by both groups as they lamented his passing as a hero and spent three days talking about Mandela's political positions and accomplishments. Nelson Mandela supported Voter-ID, and that's good enough for me!

SOME PEOPLE NEVER LEARN -



LAWRENCE AWARDED \$240,000 TO "COMBAT YOUTH VIOLENCE" AFTER "YOUTHS" IN THE PROGRAM COMMIT CRIMES ON DUTY.

Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick's administration through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security announced once again that Lawrence will

be receiving a \$264,000 grant. The grant is supposedly aimed to combat high levels of youth violence and gang problems.

You might think that state and local elected officials would have learned their lesson after three armed robbery suspects were arrested last January for invading a convenience store on Boxford and South Union Streets with Halloween masks and guns, resulting in an armed standoff with police that ended peacefully. All three "troubled youths" were hired by Mayor William Lantigua in the Department of Public Works.

Then there was murder suspect, Ismael Calixto of Lawrence, who was also working for the City of Lawrence under an \$800,000 "Anti-Violence" grant called "The Safe and Successful Youth Initiative grant" to take criminal youths and give them city jobs. Calixto was on duty with the city back in November of 2012 when

Lawrence Police stormed the cemetery of offices with guns drawn and arrested Calixto on the spot.

The Senator Charles E. Shannon Community Safety Initiative is a state grant program that is billed as a program to combat gang violence "through coordinated programs for prevention and intervention."

But not only did state officials not cancel this program in Lawrence given the violence committed by these poor "troubled" teens who had bad childhoods, this year our insane politicians decided to give Lawrence an additional \$24,000 over last year's grant.

"I am pleased to see the City of Lawrence awarded this grant through the Senator Charles E. Shannon Community Safety Initiative. This is funding necessary for the city to sufficiently address youth violence and crime." Representative Diana DiZoglio said.

DiZoglio was not in office when the murderer and armed robbers were arrested last year and The Valley Patriot exposed the stories of how this grant actually gives criminals more opportunities to commit crimes.

According to a press release, "The initiative known as the Shannon Grant supports a coordinated approach to anti-gang task forces, targets enforcement resources through the use of crime mapping, focuses prosecution efforts, and assists programs aimed at successful reintegration of youth from juvenile detention. The grant also helps to fund programs that provide youth with supervised out-of-school activities.

"The Shannon Grant funds great work every year to reduce levels of youth violence and gang problems." Said Representative Frank A. Moran (D-Lawrence) who certainly should have known better,

So, at least our faithful readers at The Valley Patriot know what's coming next. You can bet within a few months we will be breaking another story of how a "poor troubled teen" on the city payroll killed, raped or robbed another poor victim, given the opportunity to do so by this "Shannon Grant". And for those who don't want to believe what I am telling you here in the January 2014 notebook, all I can say is, just wait.

SENATOR IVES OFFICE HOURS

Friday, January 17th, Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives will be hosting office hours in Haverhill between 1PM and 2PM pm. Office hours will be held at the Haverhill Public Library, Milhender Room.

Sen. Kathleen O'Connor Ives' upcoming office hours in Methuen - Senator Ives will be hosting office hours in Methuen on Friday, January 17 between 3PM and 4PM. Office hours will be held at the Nevins Memorial Library, Trustee's Room. Appointments are not required. For any questions, please contact her office at (617) 722-1604, or by emailing Christopher.

TOP OF NEXT PAGE

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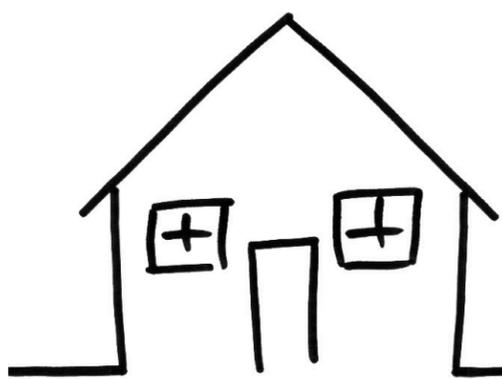
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Woburn Police Officer Jack Maguire's brother Chuck Maguire, wife Desire Maguire and family friend Sue Schneider Sullivan at the Christmas Tree dedicated in Jack's memory during the candle light vigil.

Remembering Slain Woburn Police Officer Jack Maguire

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Dozens of friends, family and former colleagues of slain Woburn Police Officer Jack Maguire gathered for a candlelight vigil in the Kohl's parking lot Thursday evening, on the spot where Jack lost his life three years to the day.

A procession of Woburn Police cruisers traveled down Washington Street with lights flashing, as they have for the past two years. The procession drove into the Jack Maguire Post Office and past the gathering of shivering bodies glowing by the flickering candles quietly honoring the man they knew and loved.

Maguire's wife Desire, friend Sue Schneider Sullivan, and his brother Chuck Maguire were surrounded by on and off duty police officers on the spot

where Maguire lost his life.

"Tonight kind of reminds us of that night with the snow and the cold," Maguire's brother Chuck told the gatherers referencing the night Jack was shot and killed.

"We really miss Jack, and it's a great tribute, everyone remembers Jack ..." he said choking up. "It's really important to us, thank you everybody for coming."

On December 26, 2010, Officer Maguire responded to robbery at the Kohl's department store where he was met by Dominic Cinelli, a man who had been given three life sentences and was out on parole. Cinelli shot Maguire after robbing the jewelry department at Kohl's. Before Maguire succumbed to his injuries, he managed to fire at Cinelli, killing the man who would become his murderer.



Essex Heritage Announces Winners of 2013 Photo Contest

Essex Heritage is pleased to announce the winners of the 2013 Essex National Heritage Area Photo Contest. The annual photo contest encourages amateur photographers to "capture" the living landscapes, unique places and interesting people of Essex County, MA. The contest is presented by Essex Heritage in partnership with Hunt's Photo & Video, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, and the National Park Service at Salem Maritime & Saugus Iron Works National Historic Sites.

From rocky coasts and harbors, to rural farms and historic downtowns, photographers of all ages vividly captured a variety of Essex County's historic, cultural and natural resources for their award-winning submissions to this year's contest.

The fourteen Photo Contest winners were selected by a panel of judges that included representatives from Essex

Heritage and the National Park Service, as well as Mr. Roy Haddock, President, Merrimack Valley Camera Club and Mr. Kevin Griffin, Treasurer, Merrimack Valley Camera Club. All of the photographs were taken within the Essex National Heritage Area and represent one of four contest categories: Images of the Essex National Heritage Area; The Merrimack Valley; People and Places; and the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway. Area youth, ages 5-16, were also encouraged to enter the Photo Contest to win a "Youth Entry" prize in any of the contest categories.

2013 Essex National Heritage Area Photo Contest Winners

Grand Prize Winner - Rockport Dock, Rockport by Ken Jordan of Lynn

Category: Images of the Essex National Heritage Area

CONTEST: PAGE 30

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Lawrence Councilor Laplante on Ride-Alongs with Police, Fire, DPW

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Last week Lawrence City Councilor Mark Laplante went on a "ride along" with the Lawrence police, fire, and DPW snow plows to get a better understanding about how city services are delivered to Lawrence residents.

In Part Two, we will explore what he learned while riding with the Fire Department and DPW.

This was not the first time Laplante has gone along with city workers to observe how they do their jobs and what is happening on the city streets. Two summers ago, The Valley Patriot caught Laplante riding along with Lawrence police, running into him at gun and drug calls, domestic violence incidents and motor vehicle accidents.

"Obviously, one of the most important functions of city government is public safety," Laplante said.

"Having an opportunity to see first hand what they [city workers] do, gives me better insights into the decisions that are being made and what they do day to day. I think it helps me become a better decision

maker at the council level when I need to take a vote on the budgets or policies in these departments."

How Lawrence Police Dispatch Works "The first thing I did was spend some time at the 911 call center at the Lawrence Police Department," Laplante says.

"It was interesting because I get complaints from time to time about rudeness, call takers being short with people or lack of professionalism by 911 call takers. So, I wanted to observe the conditions for myself to see what they were dealing with everyday."

"When I was there they were very professional," Laplante added. "It gave me a real sense of how well our citizens are served."

Laplante said that even though it was a relatively slow night for the Lawrence Police, watching the amount of work 911 call takers do every day was inspiring."

On any given shift there are three people working 911 dispatch at the Lawrence police department. Lawrence police have one person taking calls while another person runs license plate numbers, conducts warrant checks and previous arrest

records, while a police officer does the dispatching of calls to cars on the road.

"I think people need to understand that these professionals are working 8 hours with no breaks. They have to balance real high priority calls like shots fired, rapes, domestic assaults and the frustrating quality of life issue calls that come in on 911. My sense is that they were very professional and straight forward with the people they interacted with. And one thing I want to stress is that they really tried to be helpful with people, they weren't just going through the motions doing a job."

"One person called 911 about something that probably wasn't a 911 emergency. For whatever reason this person seemed emotional and really vulnerable. The dispatchers took the time to talk to the person and work through their issue knowing the person was in a bad spot. You know, they don't have to do that but, they did and things like that make all the difference in our city."

"One thing that struck me is that people inappropriately use 911," he continued. "While I was there calls came in to 911 from someone upset that a car was parked in front of their driveway."

Laplante says that these kinds of calls, while important, take up valuable resources from real 911 emergencies.

"We have to do a better job educating the public that you only call 911 when you have a real emergency."

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT?

The Valley Patriot asked councilor Laplante if there were any areas where the dispatch centers could use improvement. After some hesitation, he said there was a need to change the city's hiring policy going forward to require incoming call takers to be bilingual.

"One of the few things I saw that I think we could probably improve is the language capabilities of the dispatchers. Not all of them speak Spanish. When we hire people going forward we should probably make fluency in English and Spanish a



requirement for the job. I don't want to take anything away from the dedicated, professional dispatchers that we have now, but I think it better serves our population to have someone who can communicate without getting assistance. That saves valuable seconds in an emergency."

Laplante said that there is currently a system in place where dispatchers can bring in a third party translator on the phone through a service the city subscribes to.

"They can push a button and have a translator there on the line with them in seconds to help translate. The officers and dispatchers I spoke to said that the system works really well, and it probably does. My concern is that in an emergency situation seconds could mean lives and we really need to save every second we can when people are dialing 911 in the City of Lawrence."

RIDING ALONG WITH LAWRENCE POLICE

Laplante spent an evening riding along with Sgt. Mangan on a night that was slower than usual, something Laplante says gave him an opportunity to talk to

LAPLANTE: PAGE 29

Now the Real Healing Begins!

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Never to be Repeated Again!

Just because you can doesn't necessarily mean that you should unless there is undisputed cause to do so!

I am of the opinion that no mayor should mess with the leadership infrastructure within a Public Safety Department like was performed in the City of Lawrence four years ago. Shortly after former Mayor Lantigua, (I sure do love saying former Mayor Lantigua), was sworn in, he demoted Deputy Police Chief Michael Driscoll to Captain and promoted his campaign manager, Sergeant Melix Bonilla to Deputy Police Chief. I believe the only person who should be promoting or demoting should be the department heads, in this case that would be the Chief of Police! I also do not believe that these positions should be used by any mayor as political ponds to be pushed around like on a chest board.

I tip my hat to newly sworn in Mayor of Lawrence, Daniel Rivera, who recently righted this wrong by demoting Bonilla back to Sergeant. He didn't stop there, many of you know that Bonilla was indicted and is awaiting trial. Former Mayor Lantigua placed him on paid leave, which also came to an abrupt end. Mayor Daniel Rivera has suspended his pay until after the outcome of his trial. I love justice when it is done right, don't you?

But I am still not all the way happy.

I am of the thought that Mayor Rivera should put back Captain Michael Driscoll as Deputy Chief of Police, completing the righting of the wrong made by former Mayor Lantigua and let the new Police Chief once he is hired, take it from there! This would send the right message to the entire Police Department that there is a new mayor in town and he means to do right by them! They will not be used or pushed around or intimidated by his administration.

I also see some pink slips have arrived at City Hall with more on the way, a cleansing move by the new Mayor that places the building back in the hands of the citizens of Lawrence, a long overdue house cleaning!

I also see on the school side of things that James Blatchford has been made Vice-Chairman of the Lawrence School Committee. With Mr. Blatchford as Vice Chair and Mayor Rivera as Chairman, I see hope for our kids! Maybe we can get our schools back quicker than originally thought with these two gentlemen at the helm. We will just have to wait and see. So much good news, don't you think?????

God Bless you,
Peter Larocque



Peter Larocque is a former member of the Lawrence School Committee and is a regular columnist for The Valley Patriot. You can email him at: peterlarocque@hotmail.com



Lawrence City Councilor Marc Laplante two summers ago, during his ride-along with Lawrence Police Sgt. Quaglietta.

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Greater Boston Tea Party President Steps Down, Humphries Elected Successor

Looks Back at Two Years of Fighting the Status-Quo, Internal Friction, Media Bias

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

After two years leading the Greater Boston Tea Party (GBTP), Christine Morabito says she is stepping down from her post, paving the way for Patrick Humphries to be elected president of the anti-tax group. Humphries will serve a two-year term starting January 1st.

The president coordinates meetings, speaks for the organization in the media, and pulls together the dozens of tea party groups in the state to educate people on the political process and “community organize.”

Both Morabito and Humphries are founders of the Greater Boston Tea Party.

Morabito said that the incoming president Patrick Humphries is more than capable of leading the organization and his knowledge of the health care system is an asset to the Tea Party’s efforts in fighting Obamacare.

“Patrick has been an excellent representative and tirelessly dedicated member of the Greater Boston Tea Party since its founding. He has many strengths which will serve him well, most important among them is his ability to build and maintain relationships.”

“This is vital in a role where his predecessors have found it difficult to make certain people happy. He has far more patience than I when it comes to dealing with such issues. He has been an excellent asset to the movement and tirelessly dedicated member of the organization since its founding. I have no doubt he will excel in his new role.”

With the recent fractioning of the tea party over what Morabito calls “non-tea party issues” like abortion and gay marriage, we asked Morabito if there is

any hope of lowering taxes in the current political environment.

“Yes” she said surprisingly. “If the Tea Party can put aside individual egos and stick to its mission to educate and advocate for limited government, free markets, free speech, individual liberty and personal responsibility, we will continue to grow in size and influence.”

“Over the years, this position has been fiercely challenged by individuals who feel we should include social issues. This only succeeds in keeping the Tea Party small and exclusive, which has never been my goal. We also need to avoid the circular firing squad where candidates are attacked for not being conservative enough. We have to take the small wins where we can get them, especially in Massachusetts.”

Morabito says that the biggest boost the Tea Party has had in the last two years is President Obama himself when he was caught being dishonest saying, “If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor, PERIOD”!

“The Obamacare debate is the very thing that got people off the couch in the first place. Now even ‘non-believers’ are starting to admit that the Tea Party was right all along. I believe the country has never needed the Tea Party more. With a few exceptions, we cannot count on our elected officials to look out for the taxpayers.”

“They are entrenched and beholden to the special interest groups who get them reelected. Someone has fight for the middle class,” she said.

She added that with Obamacare slated to be a major issue in the coming two election cycles, Patrick Humphries is the perfect choice to lead the movement.

As President of the Tea Party Morabito



Reaching across the aisle: (l to r) Then Democrat candidate for State Senate Katie Ives chats with Christine Morabito after Morabito moderated a 2012 Senate debate in the Democrat primary sponsored by The Valley Patriot.

took a bold stand defending gays, something that was ignored by the media which consistently paints the Tea Party as anti-gay.

In 2012, a splinter group of the tea party hijacked the annual “Tax Day” rally on Boston Common by pulling a permit before Morabito had a chance to. The group had anti gay marriage and some anti-gay speakers which touched off a firestorm resulting in Morabito calling for a boycott.

Greater Boston joined forces with the Worcester Tea Party, holding a tax-day rally together in Worcester on the same day. Morabito took the WCAP radio airwaves slamming what she called the “anti-gay” group.

On the day of the opposing rallies, Morabito said that she was proud of boycotting the Boston rally saying “the tea party is not about gay bashing, fighting gay marriage or abortion. That feeds into the media created propaganda of who and what we are. I think it is my job to make

sure we don’t become that. What is happening today in Boston only feeds into the news media and Hollywood’s fabricated image of what we are all about. “

“I do not condone, and our members should not condone tea party rallies that are anti-gay or stray from the mission of lowering taxes, smaller government and personal liberties. The people rallying on the common today do not represent the Tea Party; they represent a disgruntled minority that has infiltrated the tea party and made it that much harder for us to lower taxes. We should be welcoming gays, people who are pro-abortion, people who are pro and anti-death penalty, anyone who wants to help us root out corruption in government and lower the tax burden on our children’s future.”

We asked Morabito if she was shocked by the controversy and that other tea party members had hijacked her rally on

MORABITO: PAGE 29




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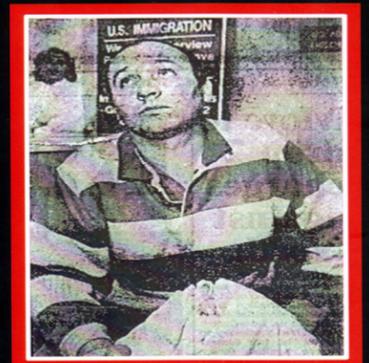
An Amazing Story About One Man’s Daring Escape From Communism

Almost 25 years ago, on January 5, 1989, 12 sailors jumped ship in Boston Harbor in order to escape Communist Poland and receive political asylum. It was an event widely covered in the media. Boston Herald photographer Arthur Pollock captured a dazed Ed Polonka, the first to jump ship, as he sat in the US immigration office awaiting processing. Polonka left the office with a pat on the back, a “Good Luck,” a few belongings in a duffle bag, and \$15 in his pocket. With no English, no home and no contacts, he began his life in this country. The recently published “A Leap to Freedom: Boston Harbor 1989” is the novelized account of his life’s journey in Communist Poland and answers the question Why? Why would someone risk everything to have nothing...for American Freedom?

Today, Ed (Edziu) Polonka is a proud US Citizen and Lion’s Club member. He lives in Atkinson, NH, with his wife Christine and daughters Katherine and Diana, who are currently college students. Ed says: “With my strong resolve, hard work and faith, I have built the wonder-

A LEAP TO FREEDOM

BOSTON HARBOR 1989



Based on a True Story
Lynda M. Healey

ful life I have today. I am as proud of my family as I am of my accomplishments. I have built my ‘American Dream.’”

“Build-A-Garden” Program Brings Five New Vegetable Gardens to Lowell

Lowell Housing Authority, Stoklosa School, Robinson School, Pawtucket Congregational Church, and UTEC to Install Garden Beds in April

Mill City Grows, an initiative that fosters food justice by creating urban food production, food access, and food education in Lowell, has just announced its 2014 “Build-A-Garden” partner organizations. This spring, the Lowell Housing Authority at North Common Village, the Stoklosa School, the Robinson & McAuliffe Schools, the Pawtucket Congregational Church, and the United Teen Equality Center, Inc (UTEC) will install raised-bed vegetable gardens for production by residents, students, and community members.

The “Build-A-Garden” program is the newest among Mill City Grows’ varied approaches to increasing wellness and community resilience in Lowell through the creation of fresh food production sites and fresh food access points. With funding from a Community Development Block Grant, Mill City Grows will create custom designs for raised-bed vegetable gardens at each site, as well as the materials to construct up to five raised garden beds. In addition, Mill City Grows staff will work with each organization to recruit volunteers to build each site and will also offer an on-site training workshop to gardeners and technical assistance throughout the first season.

The new “Build-A-Garden” projects are expected to have far-reaching effects. “Installing gardens at organizations’ sites will not only change the physical space, they will also change community mentality, environmental health, and low-income residents’ access to healthy forms of food and activities,” explained Francey Slater, Co-Director of Mill City Grows.

Ruth Richards, the pastor of Pawtucket Congregational Church on Mammoth Road, looks forward to engaging the church and surrounding community in the new garden. “We are a very small congregation, so a community garden is something we could not do on our own, but Mill City Grows offers training and expertise and lots of resources, which makes it possible for us to share what we have with others.”

At North Common Village, Michelle Richter, the Director of Family Self-Sufficiency, sees much potential in the creation of a small garden on Lowell Housing Authority property. “The establishment of a community garden within our North Common Village Housing Development will provide a valuable, hands-on learning tool as well as the provision of fresh, local produce for our residents. We look forward to involving our Learning Zone After-School Program, Summer Youth Activities Program and NCV residents in both the care and harvest of the garden.” Volunteers from the Merrimack Valley Food Bank will support the garden at NCV, and make sure produce gets distributed to households in need.

Mill City Grows has designed this program to be self-sustaining. “‘Build-A-Garden’ is truly a partnership between Mill City Grows and these community organizations,” explained Ms. Slater. “Our goal is for the gardens to be maintained by volunteers of the organizations themselves, which is why a leader from each organization will also be provided with in-depth training at the Garden Coordinator Institute this winter.”

Mill City Grows’ Garden Coordinator Institute (GCI) is a 6-session leadership program that will prepare the “Build-A-Garden” partners, as well as community gardeners from across the city, to maintain their new gardens. Participants will learn techniques for growing organic produce in urban spaces, and will practice community leadership skills to build strong participation of gardeners in the upkeep and development of the gardens.

By the end of April, Lowellians will enjoy five new green spaces around the city, and lots of organic vegetables. “We are excited to support these five organizations as they pollinate the city with safe spaces to grow food and build healthy communities,” said Ms. Slater.

Now is the Time for the University of New Hampshire to Bring Back Baseball

D.J. Bettencourt

VALLEY PATRIOT NEW HAMPSHIRE COLUMNIST

The founder of the modern Olympics, Pierre de Fredey, once observed that, “those who find themselves first in physical exercises are also first in their studies because serious commitment in one area promotes the desire to be first throughout.” By first eliminating the national sport of baseball from its athletic program and continuing to vehemently resist its return, administrators at the University of New Hampshire seem to have lost their way in bringing a well-balanced education, based on athletic and academic excellence, to our young adults.

In 1997, UNH dashed the dreams of some of its finest student athletes, and the aspirations of hundreds of high school athletes throughout New Hampshire, when it made the decision to eliminate its baseball program. Citing Title IX and “insurmountable” budget issues, the University reached a decision that few other state universities in New England found necessary.

Since that time, a large percentage of our state’s high school student athletes have faced the wrenching dilemma - attend one of the finest educational institutions in the nation while abandoning the hopes of being a college baseball player, or attend a different institution because they wish to continue their baseball career.

Baseball is one of the most frequently offered sports programs at the high school level in the state of New Hampshire. As a result, hundreds of students are attracted to the sport. However, the very first day that youngsters across New Hampshire sign up to play high school baseball, any dream they may have of playing and representing their state in that sport at the flagship university in New Hampshire have been taken away. From day one, our youngsters know they will never have the same opportunity or the awesome honor held out to youngsters in Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut or Rhode Island: to represent their home state university in baseball or softball at the Division I level. This is a misfortune, compounded into a tragedy by the fact that it is so unnecessary.

The UNH mission statement states that “The University of New Hampshire has a long tradition of meeting the evolving educational needs of New Hampshire, and its citizens.” If you look at the state universities in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Maine, their baseball programs promote that mission for their high school students, because at least 40% of the participants in each program are

in-state students. Baseball programs keep in-state students better than any other sport. Is UNH being true to its mission statement’s promise to serve New Hampshire’s needs by not having a program that overwhelmingly service in-state kids?

Invariably the money issue always arises. However, baseball at UNH would be one of the friendliest to taxpayers and the university, not only now but also in the future. I know this because since 1997, private groups and alumni groups have raised upwards of 5 million dollars in private funds to bring baseball back to UNH, a sum that is well above the actual start up cost for the programs. This is 5 million dollars that was offered to UNH, meaning that UNH would not have to spend any of its existing budget resources. So if the issue of money has been addressed, than why does UNH continue to hold out?

I truly believe that UNH is doing what is easy but not what is right. Athletics is major part of any university. It helps provide many life lessons for the athletes as well as build pride in the school community. UNH’s administrators continue to cut athletic programs and in the process are turning away in-state students who would participate in these programs.

There are some who have suggested that this is a fruitless fight. UNH has already stated that even with a fairly new university president in Mark Huddleston taking the helm in 2008, baseball is not “on the radar screen” and no money has been considered for a baseball program in UNH’s 2013-2014 budget. So why continue fighting? Because being a former athlete myself one of the lessons that I learned is that sometimes you must pursue dreams that others tell you do not exist. I will not tire until the dream bringing back baseball and implementing softball program at UNH is fulfilled.

To all alumni and friends of UNH baseball, let’s continue to seek what is right for the students at UNH. Speak out and write to your legislators, UNH administrators, and Governor Hassan. Hopefully, the powers at UNH will finally catch on.



D.J. Bettencourt served as a State Representative in the New Hampshire House of Representatives from 2005 to 2012 and was the House Majority Leader for the 2011-2012 legislative term. He currently works

as a special education academic assistant and is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Salem Animal Rescue League.



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Santa Distributes Donated Gifts to 650 Members of Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence

More than 650 members of the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence cheered as Santa Claus distributed donated toys and gift cards at the annual Christmas party on Dec. 20. Groups of longtime volunteers served the dinner, which was donated by the 99 Restaurants of Andover and North Andover.



Write In Candidate Jessica Leigh Finocchiaro (center) at her swearing in to the Greater Lawrence Technical School Committee in Methuen last month flanked by State Representative Diana DiZoglio and United States Senator Ed Markey.

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Ye Gay Ol' Valley

Perspectives on Being Gay

D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

Last month Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan posted an article on Facebook about a gay teacher who had been fired from his position at a Catholic school.

Just as Tom hoped, the comments came flooding in fast and furious and with a great deal of misplaced passion. The perspective of heterosexuals on the gay community is so ignorant and shallow that it's staggering. The article was about losing a job because of one's sexuality NOT about one's acts of sex and yet, each and every time homosexuality is brought up around heterosexuals more than one of them reduces being gay to nothing but sexual activity.

Being gay is not about sex, it is about being physically AND emotionally attracted to the same sex. It is about finding a deep and spiritual bond with another person, developing and nurturing a relationship, making a lifetime commitment and for some, raising a family. It is NOT, as Tom pointed out, about people who 'choose' to "engage in same sex activity". The people who do this are not looking for a meaningful relationship; they are looking for sexual release. Big difference!

Erin Kelley who commented on Tom's post was upset because her daughter came home and told her that her teacher was gay. When Kelley asked how she knew, her daughter said the teacher mentioned that she had a wife. Kelley said that she didn't have a problem that the teacher was gay; she was upset that her child knew her teacher's sexual preference. You're lying Ms. Kelley. You DO care that she is gay because you wouldn't have given it a second thought if the teacher were a man mentioning his wife. Cheryl Wahlgren added that she didn't think, "children needed to know teachers sexual preference or that their teacher has a sex life." Really? I'm willing to bet one or more of your teachers mentioned their spouse and/or children when you were sitting in their classroom. Did the thought of them having sex with their spouse ever enter your mind? Adding to that, if you are out and meet and engage in a conversation with a man who mentions his wife, do thoughts of their sexual antics dance around in your head? I highly doubt it. If a teacher's sex life entered students' minds, then pregnant teachers should hide at home until giving birth.

But when it comes to homosexuals, many heterosexuals can't get their minds out of the bedroom. They consistently fail to see the man or woman standing before them. They gloss over the highly educated instructor, the skilled surgeon, the hard working retail manager or the dedicated



civil servant. They ignore the person's God given talents, their dedication to being the best citizen they can be, their commitment to their spouse and, if applicable, their children and seem to only think, "their sleeping with someone of the same sex". I find that disgusting and petty.

The fact is teachers do talk about their personal life. They mention friends and family, as it is applicable to the curriculum. And students ask about their teacher's personal life because they want to know the person, not just the teacher standing in front of them. Highly educated professionals, for the most part, use great judgment in what it is they share with their students and it is usually age appropriate.

My wife and I like to travel and we purposely go to places that relate to my curriculum: Rome, Mexico, Puerto Rico, London and hopefully next summer Istanbul. When studying these places with my students, I discuss the trip I took with my wife and I share the wonderful things we learned about the culture and its history. It makes me a more credible educator and the kids really love the fact that I've actually been to the places they are learning about. The fact that I'm gay has NEVER come to the forefront of the conversation about my travels. Teachers also sometimes discuss when their own children finally understood something that the students sitting in front of them are struggling with to let them know that they will get it, too. It has nothing to do with being gay and everything to do with being human and making connections and being a good educator.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: I am gay. I am a mother, teacher, daughter, sister, aunt, writer, golfer and I am a human being. To be reduced to one's sexual activity simply shows how perverse a person's perspective on being gay really, really is.



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

CULTURE WARRIOR

Happy New Year?

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I have noticed a pattern. It seems that at the beginning of every new year people proclaim two things: 1) that the previous year was a bad one, and 2) that the next year will be better. This new year's eve I again observed this same mantra. Why is it that each year we are convinced the upcoming year will bring us the happiness the previous one failed to bring? Why are we so confident that each new year will fulfill our hopes and dreams when each previous one did not? And why is it that so many Americans seem to have an exaggerated disappointment and disdain for the past while holding onto an unfounded hope for the future? Let us explore this fascinating phenomenon.

It is natural for a creature to seek the fulfillment of its being, and humans are no exception. Everybody seeks happiness. In fact Aristotle claimed that no one cannot NOT seek happiness. Every act we do is for the sake of being happy, even though we often miss the mark. Other creatures find their fulfillment passively through instinct or the environment, but having a rational mind we humans must understand ourselves and freely choose the behaviors that are proper to bringing about our fulfillment. We can't passively rely on determined factors. Why, then, does such a seemingly natural human endeavor such as the pursuit of happiness prove to be so difficult?

The problem begins with a culmination of bad philosophy that has permeated modern times, affecting our understanding of the meaning of 'happiness'. In a nutshell we seek to fulfill our dreams rather than our nature.

This distinction is important because if our dreams do not coincide with the fulfillment of human nature we cannot possibly attain true happiness. If we were to poll average Americans on the question "What is happiness?" most would say it is a feeling, an emotional high, or an experience of pleasure. Therefore, any act that brings about this transient feeling of happiness to the individual is seen as fair game and considered one's "right".

The problem, however, rests in the fact that such a notion of 'happiness' is influenced by a combination of errors that conflict with human nature, stemming from radical individualism, utilitarianism, relativism, subjectivism, materialism and hedonism. In short it is a pursuit based on

placating fears, pursuing desires, and being distracted from what happiness really is. Today, comfort, security, money, sex, and fame are all confused with happiness.

What we have forgotten is that there is a higher dimension to the human person that must be fulfilled in order to be happy. It goes beyond the physiological needs and desires we share with other animals and it makes our species unique. This higher dimension refers to our immaterial or spiritual needs. The pursuit of happiness ultimately means the pursuit of truth and love. While the basic needs of the body must be appropriately met, it is the goods of the soul that offer each person a chance at happiness.

This is where hope in the future comes into play. Everyone knows through experience that perfect lasting happiness does not occur in this life. When we think we might have it something eventually gets in its way. Yet, despite this there is something in the human heart that continues to hope. Why? If happiness lies primarily in the spiritual goods of truth and love that cannot be fully attained in this life, then why does every human heart continually hope for that "happily-ever-after" that can never be attained? Might it point to the fact that our happiness lies in a transcendent Source and End, Who is Truth and Love, from which all things have their origin? Might it be a sign that every human heart is seeking God, albeit sometimes unwittingly, and union with Him is the only fulfillment of human nature and cause of everlasting happiness?

It makes sense that ushering in a new year would offer new hope, particularly for those who have rejected the state of denial offered by the world that stubbornly chooses self over God and one's own disordered desires over His perfect will. Happiness is found in humility and selfless love as the Master Himself points out: "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life" (John 12:25).



Paul Murano teaches philosophy at Middlesex and North Shore Community College and theology at Magdalen College. He is host of *Beneath the Surface* on WCAP radio 980AM Sunday nights 10pm-midnight, 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.

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Highlights from 2013: A Year in the Massachusetts State Senate

Senator Katy O'Connor Ives
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

A year ago I was sworn in as the State Senator of the First Essex District, representing the communities of Amesbury, Haverhill, Merrimac, Methuen, Newburyport, North Andover and Salisbury. It has been a very busy and productive year, during which I have advocated for initiatives that have state-wide and district benefits, with a focus on constituent services.

One of the seven bills I filed in 2013 was An Act Relative to Welfare Reform, requiring photo IDs be placed on EBT cards. This provision was included in the Fiscal Year 2014 budget and is currently being implemented by the Department of Transitional Assistance. This is a common-sense step to deter fraud in the system, while still protecting resources to help people that truly need this assistance such as seniors, those with disabilities, and children. The Senate also passed a more comprehensive welfare reform bill that will make public assistance more transitional and invests in job placement and training.

The Senate passed a bill requiring newborns to have a simple and quick blood oxygen reading via a clip placed on the

finger for early detection of cardio vascular problems, a bill I signed on to and believe will be an important preventative measure in health care.

I made my first speech on Senate floor to advocate for increased funding for municipal training in Massachusetts from \$200,000 to \$500,000 in order to change the trend of decreased funding for training for city and town police officers. Massachusetts has ranked at the very bottom of U.S. states for funding municipal police training and its important to reverse that trend in funding.

The Senate passed a domestic violence bill strengthening legal protections for domestic violence victims and included language strengthening penalties for strangulation of which I was an original co-sponsor.

The Senate passed the Valor II Veterans Bill. Among other aims, this bill will prevent students in the armed services from having to forfeit tuition payments or credits if called to duty and included amended language I co-sponsored that broadens the definition of eligibility for Medal of Liberty recipients to not only include those killed in action but also includes those "... who died in service while in a designated

combat area in the Line of Duty." This will allow us to honor an even greater number of deserving Massachusetts service men and women who have sacrificed their lives for their country while on active duty.

I filed and continue to advocate for a bill, An Act Relative to Public Records Request that will strengthen government accountability and transparency. This bill would put teeth into the current law so that those who ignore requests for public records are held accountable.

As Chair of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development, I worked on releasing the bill to study bringing the Olympics to Massachusetts. Growing tourism in the region and investing in historic preservation and the arts is beneficial for all, including small businesses and residents. I continue to work to bring more funding to my district and to showcase the Merrimack Valley across the state.

Serving as Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee on Small Business and Community Development has allowed me to work with committee members on legislation and strategies to support small business and local economic growth.

As a member of the Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, I have advocated for passing a secondary metals bill to discourage thefts and sale of stolen scrap metals. The bill passed the Senate and is awaiting action from the House. I also continue to work on a bill I filed currently in this committee, An Act Relative to Unsolicited Loans. This bill strengthens consumer protection from

identity theft from requested credit/loan checks in mail. In light of the recent Target security breach, we should be doing everything we can to protect against identity theft and security breaches.

During the budget deliberations, I advocated for an increase in local aid levels for cities and towns for the Fiscal Year 2014 budget, ending a trend of reductions in local aid and voted to create a commission to study the school funding formula. I also helped secure funding for the C-10 Foundation's monitoring of nuclear radiation within the 10-mile radius of the Seabrook Nuclear Power plant and attained funding for sand nourishment for Salisbury Beach.

My office team provides continuous constituent services, whether residents need assistance to navigate unemployment benefits, veterans services, healthcare coverage questions, or other matters related to state business. This is by far the most important aspect of my job.

The people of my district are my priority and I intend to continue to work on their behalf. I look forward to the work ahead for 2014 and appreciate the opportunity to representative the First Essex District.



State Senator Ives is a Democrat from Newburyport and represents 1st Essex District, which encompasses Amesbury, Haverhill, Merrimac, Newburyport, Methuen, Salisbury, and portions of North Andover.[1] Before her election to the Massachusetts Senate in 2012, O'Connor Ives was a member of the Newburyport City Council.

Raising the Minimum Wage: Unions Win; Poor and Minorities Lose

Christine Morabito
PRESIDENT, GREATER BOSTON TEA PARTY

Raising the minimum wage – sounds like a good idea. Fair? Compassionate? Would you feel differently if you knew it would hurt the very people it claims to help?

If you were to peek behind the curtain, you might see your favorite politician in the warm embrace of the local labor boss. Despite all the rhetoric about "fairness," unions stand to benefit the most from minimum wage increases, and the politicians are more than happy to assist if that translates into campaign donations.

You might wonder why unions are such big advocates of raising the minimum wage, when the average private-sector union member makes \$22 an hour. Truth be told, their support for the increase is not about compassion, but greed. Some labor contracts tie union wages to a percentage of the minimum wage. When

it goes up, so do union wages. Others benefit from salary negotiations which are triggered every time the minimum is increased.

Meanwhile, the working poor and minorities, lured in by false promises, risk reductions in work hours and even losing their jobs entirely. But how can this be? They are supposed to get a raise, right?

First, let's consider the small 1 1/2 percent of people nationwide who earn minimum wage. The vast majority of them are unskilled workers, more than half being teenagers and students just entering the workforce. Yet, we are expected to believe that the average minimum wage earner is providing for a family of four. This is simply not true. Minimum wage jobs are entry level positions. No one is expected to remain at that wage forever, and hardly anyone does. As workers gain experience and skills, they move up the economic ladder. That's how a healthy economy works.

In economics, nothing happens in a vacuum. Anyone who has taken Econ 101 knows that labor costs are a huge factor in any business venture. An employer must carefully consider how many employees he can hire based on the product they will produce. The business owner must make a profit, or he will not stay in business long. If he knows his profit will be small, he may lack the incentive required to start the business in the first place, knowing the sacrifice involved and significant financial risk he must take. So let's say the government steps in and forces him to pay someone \$15 an hour, when that person only does \$8 an hour worth of work. He will then have some tough choices: hire a skilled worker who will actually do \$15 an hour worth of work, cut workers' hours so he can still make a profit, lay off workers he can no longer afford, raise the price of his product, or he may choose not to expand his business because he lacks the capital.

Who loses in the above scenario? I would argue that America loses, because the economy is stifled and prices are inflated. But the ones with the most to lose are the unskilled workers - the young blacks, Hispanics and teenagers who initially lack the skills to do anything else. Without that first minimum wage job, they will never acquire the skills necessary to climb the economic ladder.

A higher minimum wage ensures that low skilled workers will have to compete with high skilled workers, and they will lose. A higher minimum wage ensures that the poor will remain poor and there will be more income inequality.

Ever wonder who comes up with these arbitrary minimum wage amounts? - Bureaucrats in Washington and here on Beacon Hill; career politicians who know next to nothing about the economy or how market forces determine the price of labor and goods. If it were up to Senator Elizabeth Warren, the minimum wage would be \$22 an hour. Maybe we should ask her why she exploits her interns by not paying them anything for the work they do. She is a millionaire, after all, but I digress. Employers in Massachusetts already pay a higher state minimum wage rate than the federal law requires. With all the tax burdens and onerous regulations, we are rated 47 out of 50 for worst state to do

business in. Our teenage unemployment rate has almost doubled over the last decade. Nationwide, black unemployment is around 12.5 percent. Do we really want to make things worse for our most vulnerable, just so labor unions can get rich?



Christine Morabito is a resident of Haverhill and President of the Greater Boston Tea Party. You can email her at christine.morabito@hotmail.com



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“He can have an entire conversation while he is doing it and that’s with any cube.

Josh’s best time is 8.4 seconds in competition. “At home it’s like 6.8 seconds, and will be in Norwalk, Connecticut on February 1st for the Northeast Regional competition, and then the nationals in August to compete for the world championship in 2015.

“You get five solves and they throw out your best and your worst and then average the rest out,” Josh says.

Josh is ranked sixth in the state solving the Rubix Cube. “I’m always trying to get better, trying new strategies, it’s not just about practicing, it’s about figuring ways to get it done better and faster and using different strategies,” Josh said.

The competitions are run by the World Cube Association. The top three winners get a cash prize.

Josh is a junior at Essex Agricultural School and says he wants to major in biology when he goes to college.

The Valley Patriot will report on Josh’s progress in the upcoming competitions.

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LAPLANTE: FROM PAGE 21

officers and public safety officials about how they do their jobs and the challenges they face with minimal resources.

“One thing that struck me,” Councilor Laplante says, “is how they responded to the calls two or three cars at a time. On one domestic violence call there were multiple cars responding because they don’t want to be outnumbered when they walk into these situations.”

Laplante says that given how many cops Lawrence has to respond to calls in the first place, tying up three or even four police cars on one call is a nightly event.

“It’s easy to see how every car can be tied up at once if you have two or three of these calls come in at the same time or near each other.”

Laplante says even on a slow night the calls come in one after another. “These

officers are hopping from call to call and it runs the gamut. One minute they are at a noise complaint or a domestic violence call and the next minute they are taking a call of ‘shots fired.’

“What I witnessed on the three police ride-alongs that I’ve done so far is a department that shows tremendous professionalism despite being low on resources, manpower and equipment.

“I was there for closing [last call] of the nightclubs and I have to say what these officers deal with is a wild scene in Lawrence at end of the night. I don’t know how they do it, but they do and they handle it really well. You have clubs all closing at the same time, there are many inebriated patrons filing onto the streets of Lawrence and with that comes the inevitable problems.”

Laplante said that this included parking lot fist fights, altercations in the middle of the streets, drunk driving, and was quick to point out that most of the individuals who are causing the problems “are not from Lawrence. They are from outside the city.”

“Overall I’d say it’s been very valuable to be able to see what goes on first hand. It’s critical to see what these officers face every day. I mean, you hear stories about what goes on but when you see it for yourself, you get a much better understanding of how well the police officers and dispatchers do their jobs and use that knowledge to make their lives and the lives of the people of Lawrence a little

better, a little safer.”

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT?

The Valley Patriot asked Councilor Laplante if there were any areas where he thought the Lawrence police needed improvement or areas where the LPD could be doing things differently.

“Well, I will say that 99% of the Lawrence police officers I have seen are professional and doing their jobs by the book. So, I don’t want anything I say to reflect badly on the 99%, but I did see a few incidents where officers were too aggressive and provocative, maybe ... had a little bit of an edge to them that didn’t seem helpful in the situations they were dealing with.”

“It’s really unfortunate when this happens because it can cast a bad light on all the good officers who are trying to calm these situations and make us a more peaceful city.”

Laplante said that he believes that there are city employees in every department who could benefit from additional training to better service the public.

“There are always people in any job who need to be reminded what their role is and how they are supposed to conduct themselves. I’m glad I got to witness that too,” he admits, though he said he had no interest in identifying the officer or cause a stir. He said that his role was to observe, not interfere, and also use his observations to increase efficiency and improve the quality of life in the city.

“I support the police officers while they are doing their jobs, but I need to also be able to understand the frustrations of my constituents when they run into an unfortunate situation with one of our employees who could be doing a better job.”

“The reason I am doing all this is to learn how things work. I want to better understand the challenges our public safety officers face every day and give them the support they need. Whether that’s finding out where they need more funding, such as for vehicles and equipment, or how we can change policies to make their lives safer such as retraining some officers.”

“I can’t stress enough how professional this department is. They are potentially dealing with life and death every time they answer a call and they handle it extremely well.”

COMING IN FEBRUARY . PART II Councilor Laplante Observes Lawrence Fire Department, Fire Alarm, and DPW.



BHI Forecast: State tax revenues to Rise in 2014 and 2015

The Beacon Hill Institute at Suffolk University (BHI) estimates that Massachusetts state tax revenues will come in at \$23.283 billion for Fiscal Year 2014, 5.3% above FY 2013. Meanwhile, revenues will be \$25.132 billion for FY 2015, 7.9% above FY 2014.

The 7.9% increase for FY 2015 is largely driven by a surge in personal income.

The New England Economic Partnership projects state personal income to increase by 6.0% in Calendar Year (CY) 2014 and 6.7% in CY 2015.

David G. Tuerck, Executive Director of the Institute and Professor of Economics at Suffolk University, and Paul Bachman, Director of Research, will presented the forecast in testimony before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means last month in The Gardner Auditorium at The State House.

The legislature uses the BHI estimate, along with estimates provided by other groups, to help determine the revenues needed for the upcoming state budget.

Total tax revenues for FY 2013 closed out at \$22.12 billion, and FY 2014 revenues are on pace to exceed the predictions made last December of \$22.19 billion.

Sales tax revenues are expected to

grow by 6.7% in FY 2014, while personal income tax revenues are expected to grow by 3.5%.

“Massachusetts is experiencing a firm recovery from the Great Recession and moving ahead with a tax cut required by law,” says Tuerck. “Growth is taking form in all of the major tax categories through FY 2015 with only a slight dip in miscellaneous taxes for this fiscal year.”

According to BHI projections for FY 2015, personal income tax revenues will grow by 9.3%, sales tax revenues by 2.2%, and corporate excise by 16.7%, while more volatile business excises and usually stable motor fuels tax revenue will grow by 31.3% and 5.8%, respectively. Total taxes for FY 2015 will grow by \$1.91 billion over FY 2014.

“Both the U.S. and Massachusetts economies have survived the fiscal cliff and the government shutdown,” said Tuerck.

“There is uncertainty at the federal level over the effects of Dodd/Frank, the Affordable Care Act, and eventual tapering of federal reserve policy. But the continued capacity of Massachusetts to outperform the rest of the country bodes well for strong revenue growth.”

MORABITO STEPS DOWN: FROM PAGE 23

the common or that the press ignored the incident.

“Patrick Humphries and I were at a conference in D.C. when the story broke. I could not believe another group would intentionally harm the Tea Party brand by doing something so blatantly reckless and offensive. All they succeeded in doing was to prove to the media that some members of the Tea Party are exactly what they have been saying about us. To this day I am asked to defend the Tea Party against the actions of those saboteurs of the movement. I was surprised and perhaps a little naïve that the media, with the exception of the Valley Patriot and WCAP, ignored the story. Then it began to make sense. Portraying the Tea Party as inclusive, tolerant and non-judgmental did not fit into the media narrative.”

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

We asked Morabito to give us her thoughts on where the Tea Party was when she took over and where it is now?

“When I took over, I felt like we were living out a George Orwell novel. Nothing made sense anymore. The Tea Party, with its average citizens concerned about a government that was becoming too large and powerful, was being blamed for every problem known to man. Yet, the ‘Occupy’ movement, full of anarchists, vandalizing businesses, destroying private property, hacking into corporate computer systems, costing taxpayers millions of dollars and causing general mayhem were being completely embraced by liberals – especially the Obama Administration.”

“I knew we had a lot of work ahead of us to educate folks about what was really happening versus what they were hearing from the mainstream media. The Tea Party is a threat to the status quo; a threat to big government spendthrifts, corrupt politicians and those gaming the system.”

“Over the years we’ve evolved from a protest movement to an activist movement, with an effort towards education, legislative and public policy advocacy where we can affect real change.

Morabito says that in the last few years



Patrick Humphries, new President of the Greater Boston Tea Party

the Tea Party has been working smarter not harder.

“But I would not trade the experience for anything. The role I accepted has forced me to stretch my comfort zone beyond anything I could have imagined, and I have grown as a person because of it. I am so grateful to all the hard-working activists who have stood side-by-side with me in this incredibly important movement. We have celebrated many wins and suffered more than a few losses. But all in all, I’m proud of what we have accomplished in this state and the organization we’ve built together. I will cherish the friendships and professional relationships I’ve developed over the past 4 years with GBTP.”

Morabito lives in Haverhill and is a psychiatric nurse at a local hospital. Morabito is also a monthly columnist for The Valley Patriot and active with True the Vote, a grassroots organization to protect the integrity of the voting process.

The tea party also elected steering committee member, Peter Laird as media liaison. Kat Hess was elected to serve as secretary. The steering committee nominates and elects officers every two years. New terms commence January 1, 2014 and end December 31, 2015. Other members of the committee include Austin Hess, Catherine White and Pat Alessi.

NOTEBOOK: CONTINUE FROM PAGE 17

services, ranging from healthcare needs to social supports.

Dr. Kent comes to PACE after completing his medical education and obtaining his Medical Degree in Russia. His postdoctoral training was at Oakland Medical Center, an affiliation of Wayne State University, Pontiac, MI, and at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. He is also currently a Geriatrician at The Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Lawrence, MA.

Dr. Kent said that he appreciates working with the PACE program because "it provides a concierge concept of highly personalized care with a multidisciplinary approach. I appreciate the tailored care for the specific needs of seniors, and I also enjoy working with them because of their wisdom and gratitude," he said.

For more information, please visit www.pacenorthshore.org or call 877-803-5564.

LAWRENCE CHESS CLUB

The Lawrence Chess Club will meet on Wednesday, 15th Jan. 2014 from 6-8pm at the Lawrence Public Library, corner of Haverhill & Lawrence streets. This is always a FREE event, held the third Wednesday each month. Please bring a friend and a chess set. ALL ages and abilities welcome. Play, learn and help teach. We can teach anyone to play in about 20 minutes, but it requires a lifetime to master. English is not required.

HAVERHILL BANK EMPLOYEES DONATE TIME, FOOD, GIFTS TO FOUR AREA ORGANIZATIONS

Haverhill Bank Employees spent November and early December collecting items for various local charitable groups. Somebody Cares New England (SCNE), Emmaus Inc., and Adopt-A-Family and Community Meals all benefitted from donations from the bank this month.

More than 12 large boxes of non-perishable items were collected and donated to SCNE in a bank-wide food drive. In addition, the bank also presented SCNE with a \$295 check; and collected mittens, gloves and hats for children supported by Emmaus Inc. Bank employees also served a meal and provided desserts to those that eat at the Monday night Community Meals and, for the eighth year in a row, two local families had their wish lists fulfilled via the Adopt-A-Family program.

Each of the receiving organizations operates in Haverhill. SCNE has been in existence since 2003, with an open food pantry

in operation for the last six years. Located at 125 Winter Street, and also known as the Common Ground Café, the food pantry is a resource available to anyone from the community that needs assistance. Emmaus Inc. has been providing shelter, affordable housing and compassionate services for homeless individuals and families since 1985. For more than 25 years, Community Meals has been providing a hot meal to Haverhill's needy. Facilitated by the Haverhill Department of Children and Families, Adopt-A-Family program provides gifts to low-income families. For additional information on these programs, please visit their websites.

METHUEN SENIOR CENTER

Jan 10th - Fuel Assistance. 9AM by appointment only.

Jan 10th - Get To Know Your Senior Center informational session and tour. 10am.

Jan 11th - Sat Night Ballroom Dance. Boots & Co. 7pm. \$9.00.

Jan 13th - Movie Matinee & Luncheon! Movie at 10:30AM with pizza lunch sponsored by Home Instead Senior Care to follow. Watch for movie title to be announced. Reservations required.

Jan 15th - Methuen Veterans Director Tom Hargreaves monthly office hours. 10-11:30AM.

Jan 15th - Free Legal Clinic. Atty. Karol Bisbee. 9am. Appointment required (15 minutes maximum)

Jan 16th - Birthday Party. 11:30am.

Jan 17th - Arthritis Support Group meeting featuring guest speaker from Nevins Family of Services. 10AM. - All are welcome.

Jan 20th - Martin Luther King Day. Center closed.

Jan 21th AARP Meeting. 1PM.

Jan 25th - at Night Ballroom Dance.

The Entertainers. 7PM. \$9.00.

Jan 27th - Informational Health Talk featuring guest speaker from Nevins Family of Services to talk about balance. 10:30AM All are invited.



Tom Duggan is the publisher of *The Valley Patriot*, lectures on media bias, is a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and hosts the *Paying Attention!* Radio Program on WCAP, 980AM, every Saturday from

10-noon. You can email your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com

Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner with Pablo Francisco

As everyone knows the year began with the clock striking midnight as everyone cheered "Happy New Year" to all as the sound of glasses clinking off each other was heard at the very minute.

The ball dropping in Times Square, New York was the thing to watch on television as an arm full of television shows reflected upon the 2013. Did they mention that the Red Sox came from Worst to First to win their third World Series title in ten-years ... some of them might have, but the show I watched left it by the wayside. Did they mention that the Wilbur Theatre turned 100-years old in 2013??? ... No ... so I'm notifying you of that right now.

Another thing they failed to mention reflecting back on 2013 was when they forgot to mention that Comedian Pablo Francisco would be performing at the Wilbur Theatre at 246 Tremont Street in Boston on Saturday, January 11, 2014 at 7 p.m.

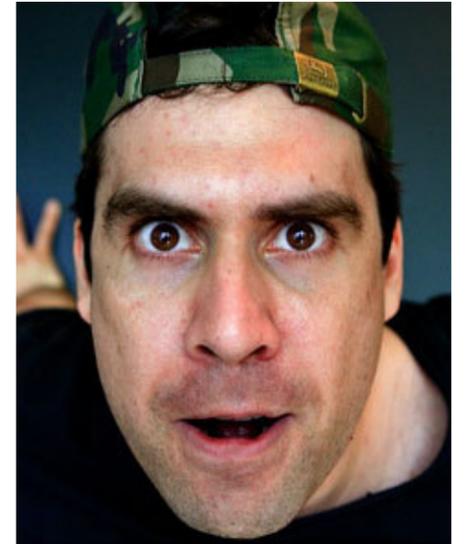
"It's going to be a crazy show," said Francisco. "If anyone wants to come down to the Wilbur, it's just like the funniest place to go. It's the ultimate spot for comics to do shows, and it's great and I'm really happy to go there."

Performing for his third time at the Wilbur Theatre, Francisco was in a limousine heading to Ontario, California to perform alongside Comedian Steve Kramer as we had a phone interview.

Mentioning that he has Positive A.D.D., Francisco said he feels everyone has A.D.D. in one way or another.

Talking about performing at the Wilbur Theatre, Francisco said he will try to persuade Kramer to come along with him for the show. "He has to do a gig in Iowa so I'm trying to talk him out of it so we'll see how it goes," said Francisco. "I think after three Jack Daniels, it's pulled off."

Impersonating 15-celebrities and 12 others (27 people total), Francisco said he met deep voiced Vin Diesel once and Aaron



Neville wasn't too happy with his performance, most likely because he was making fun of him outside his tour bus.

Meeting Jimmy Fallon in the 90s taking acting classes at the Melrose Improv in Hollywood, Francisco said, "As soon as we saw each other at the Jimmy Fallon Show I walked up to him and he said, 'What's your best impersonation?' I said, 'Right now I'm working on Charlie Sheen.' He did Charlie Sheen for me and took my jokes and made them better. That was hilarious."

"It's going to be a little bit of Saturday Night Live plus Family Guy divided by the square root of In Living Color," said Francisco when mentioning that comedy fans should see him perform at the Wilbur Theatre on January 11 at 7 p.m.

Shawn Hansen is a Real Estate Agent at Century 21 Advance Realty in Medford, MA. If you are looking to list your home, sell your house or buy a house call him at 1-781-395-2121 extension 227 or send an email to shawnhansen@c21advance.com. Along with The Valley Patriot, Hansen also writes for the Tewksbury & Wilmington Advocate newspapers.

PUPPYGIRL: FROM PAGE 15

until noontime.

I grabbed a coffee in the lobby and headed back to EAHS. When I got there, I was greeted by a new staff member I hadn't met yet.

He gave me the job of squeegeeing the floors of the freshly sprayed kennels. After that I was assigned to switching dogs that had been in the play-yard with the dogs that I had just fed.

A few hours passed and Carolyn showed up. She is such a ray of sunshine. Always has a smile and a great attitude. I loved the way she sweetly spoke to the dogs; called them all her "babies" in her southern twang. We talked a little bit, but then I had to head back to the hotel to change out of my yucky clothes and into my business attire. I wasn't ready to say goodbye to my new friend yet, so I decided to swing by their local adoption day at PetSmart and say goodbye there. Their section of the store was filled with dog crates and families looking and adopting.

It was a great day for EAHS and for those of us in rescue. Dogs were finding their forever homes. It reminded me of what my typical adoption day on a Saturday at Petco

would look like.

I left Alabama with a new found sense of hope. It was nice to see there were other people like me out there. People with normal, busy lives; juggling fulltime jobs, families, and their own pets; but willing to make the sacrifice of giving up free time in order to save dogs. I was hundreds of miles away from home, but felt connected. I made friends during that trip that I will keep in touch with for years to come (especially thanks to social media).

One more quick story.

A good friend of mine recently told me that she and her boyfriend are heading to St. Martin next month and they plan to visit the only animal shelter on the island. What a great idea, sounds like something I would do! We are going to send a few treats and toys with them so they can shower the shelter with much needed goodies. My point of telling you these stories is this: no matter where you are, you can always be giving back and helping others. Whether they have two legs or four, help and selflessness is always needed. So let 2014 be the year that you decide to give back.

CONTEST: FROM PAGE 19

- 1st Prize: Fall Colors at Linwood Cemetery, Haverhill by Martha Akey of Haverhill
- 2nd Prize: Early Morning on the Merrimack (at Lowell's Boat Shop), Amesbury by Suzanne DeGeorge of Newburyport
- 3rd Prize: Sunflowers at Colby Farm, Newbury by Stanley Slys of Salem
Category: The Merrimack Valley
- 1st Prize: The Chapel at West Parish, Andover by Peggy Erb of Andover
- 2nd Prize: Chicken Crossing The Road, Middle Road, Newbury by Ken Jordan of Lynn
- 3rd Prize: October Sunrise on the Merrimack River, Newburyport by Suzanne DeGeorge of Newburyport
Category: People and Places
- 1st Prize: Hail Helianthus! at Colby Farm, Newbury by Susan Plutsky of Beverly
- 2nd Prize: Fireworks over the Friendship, Salem Maritime NHS, Rick Matthias of Salem
- 3rd Prize: Kayaking the Danvers River

in Beverly by Elaine Gauthier of Middleton

Category: Essex Coastal Scenic Byway

- 1st Prize: Winter Island Snow, Salem by Stanley Slys of Salem

- 2nd Prize: The Essex at Burnham's Boat Yard, Essex by Don Erb of Andover

- 3rd Prize: Eastern Point Sunset, Gloucester by Steven Perlmutter of North Andover

Youth Entry Prize:

- "Far and Away," Plum Island, Newburyport by Kerry Reynolds of Georgetown

Photo Contest Reception and Exhibit

The public is invited to attend the 2013 Photo Contest Reception on Thursday, January 23, 2014, at 6 PM, at the new gallery at Hunt's Photo & Video in Melrose (located at 100 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176-6104). At the reception, photographers will be presented with their awards and visitors will have a chance to meet the photographers as well as preview the 2013 Photo Contest Exhibit. The reception is a free event; please call Essex Heritage at (978) 740-0444 to RSVP.

Commissioner Ed Davis sadly is not this Commonwealth's Role Model

TEEN TALK WITH ANA DEBERNARDO

Mylie Cyrus off the Deep End

Dr. Bharani Padmanabhan
VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

In Boston a young woman was murdered recently. The murderer had previously attacked another but hadn't been arrested, even though he dropped his wallet at the scene and the poor victim had described him. The death of Amy Lord thus was an undeniably preventable murder that should have been prevented by people we pay a salary + pension to do just so. Applying this principle, Police Commissioner Ed Davis immediately demoted the detective who should have arrested the soon-to-be murderer but did not. Commissioner Davis aligned his sense of right & wrong with that of the common people and made the police accountable to taxpayers, who work hard and fund the salaries of those in Government. Applying this principle to the institutionally-corrupt Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS = DPH + DMH + Board of Medicine + DCF) we see Commissioner Ed Davis is not this State's role model.

Boston's hospitals are politically powerful. Enforcing the rule of law on them is a laughable concept. Hospital trustees are the local elite who fund politicians, thereby purchasing total impunity for their hospitals. Police Detective Tim Braun who caught Charles Cullen, RN for 400+ murders, proved the hospital actively obstructed the police. That is what hospitals do. A powerful law called Section 187 (MGL Ch. 149) is specifically designed to protect the common people from uncaring hospitals. Which is why it sits, forlorn and unloved, the unwanted stepchild, exactly like anti-corruption laws in Third World countries. Section 187 also requires that a sign be prominently posted throughout hospitals to inform employees about this law. This has never been enforced by Attorney General Martha Coakley or by EOHHS.

It is impossible to even imagine that AG Coakley would use this law to hold hospitals accountable to defenseless folks dependent on the State for protection. She never has, never will. It requires State officials to actually care enough about the little people to go against politically powerful hospitals. It requires intact morals and a spine. I brought this to her attention a year ago, to damning silence. Her studied refusal to prosecute is deliberate.

If this law were applied even once, us little people would see fear finally force Chief Medical Officers like Gerry Steinberg to actually care. The recent preventable death at Arbour Hospital proves this. A caring physician, Dr. Sheldon Schwartz, risked his license to tell the Government that there were not enough internists to perform proper medical evaluations of patients admitted to Arbour. Patients with mental illness in need of inpatient treatment do not leave their other grave illnesses at the door, such as HIV, post-transplant complications, anticoagulation for stroke/heart attacks, insulin-dependent diabetes and sleep apnea. These need to be seriously managed as well, by internists. Dr. Schwartz, who fully meets Eyal Press' definition of a Beautiful Soul, repeatedly warned 2 EOHHS Departments - Mental Health and Public Health. EOHHS did not care. A patient, Lori Ann Durant, died exactly as predicted by Dr. Schwartz.

Dr Schwartz is being persecuted by Arbour who retaliated against him for contacting EOHHS and perniciously filed false charges against him at EOHHS' Board of Registration in Medicine even though he left Arbour months before this patient died. This Board threat is a clear SLAPP* to crush him before the dead patient's family files a lawsuit against Arbour. Facilitating hospital retaliation is the main function of EOHHS' Board of Medicine and it's website consciously tramples the US Constitution & 130 years of case law as Counsel Emily Rathbone knows. That is "the Boston system." Crony capitalism, just like India and Russia.

*(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_lawsuit_against_public_participation)

Retaliation against public health whistleblowers has a chequered history within Boston's hospitals. Precisely why Section 187 exists, to remove from medical professionals any fear of losing their job & license when they raise concerns about public safety and cover them with a cloak of governmental protection. Progressives who care about public safety should vociferously question AG Coakley as to why she ignores this law, and how many more Lori Anns must die.

R. Allen Stanford crushed Leyla Wydler, another Beautiful Soul, using NASD (now FINRA), the board policing the license of finance people. Wydler too reported fraud to regulators and they crushed her instead too. Her Senate testimony is a must-read. There is zero difference between the persecution of Wydler by her former employer using the power of NASD and the persecution of Dr Schwartz by his former employer using the power of EOHHS' Board of Medicine.

After Enron, employees of finance firms came under the Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) statute's protection, for the nation's good. After public outrage SEC bigwigs received tongue-lashings during the Madoff hearings. For 10 years the SEC suppressed warnings from fraud examiner Harry Markopolos. Harry published a book called "No one would listen." Dr Schwartz should too. All finance people are aware of SOX now whereas no doctor in Boston's hospitals has heard of the pro-consumer law called Section 187.

Boston's politically-protected hospitals rejoice in the knowledge that they face no threat at all of prosecution by AG Coakley under Section 187 (how much have they paid her?), an undeniably classic case of Regulatory Capture, which thus allows hospitals to destroy with total impunity Beautiful Souls who care about the people of this Progressive state which then serves as a clear warning to other physicians to toe the hospital's line or be driven out of medicine itself by EOHHS' own hit-men such as James Paikos, exactly as NASD crushed Wydler. That is "the Boston system."

The Globe's article "Frustration on all fronts" (Sun. 12/15/13) documents the impossibility of an ordinary family overcoming Massachusetts' "deference towards a hospital." - "They took their complaints to every authority they could think of: the District Attorney, the Attorney General, the Governor's office, even the FBI. They alleged that Children's was using its considerable muscle to box them out at every turn." - This family wouldn't have fared any better in Sicily seeking redress from the Mafia. "Deference to hospitals," the local euphemism for Regulatory Capture, consciously violates the 14th Amendment and confirms the total abdication of state government. The parents' human rights are also crushed by the collusive captured state government's conscious violation of Article 23 of the ICCPR (Art. 16 in the Universal Declaration), an article fostered by Eleanor Roosevelt herself, ratified by Congress without reservations and given the force of law by President Bush's signature.

"What was it drove our forefathers to this country? Was it not the ecclesiastical corporations and perpetual monopolies of England and Scotland? Shall we suffer the same evils to exist in this country?" - James Jackson (1757-1806)

What is entirely unacceptable is to have our tax-dollars wasted on public servants who do not care about the public good. These include the leadership of EOHHS, conscious parties to regulatory fraud, who gave Arbour 3-days notice of a "spot check" and ignored the spot-on warnings of Dr. Schwartz, which naturally led to the entirely preventable death of Lori Ann Durant. I wonder how much EOHHS regulators pocketed from Arbour to ignore Dr. Schwartz,

One of my family's favorite movies is called "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World".

It's an old slapstick comedy that revolves around a group of greedy people who are brought together in the common pursuit of buried treasure after they witness a car accident in which the dying driver, in his final moments, tells the bystanders about the location of his hidden fortune. I can recommend the film to anyone who appreciates classic comedies -this is a great one.

I thought about the movie recently, not because of the plot, but because of the title, which seems more and more relevant with each passing day.

I was watching TV last week, and they were talking about Miley Cyrus' latest cringe-worthy antics. Miley has gone off the deep end, and I can't believe that my sister and I used to idolize her. She is making her own choices now, and she will have to live with them for the rest of her life, however long (or brief) that may be. I can't help but compare her ridiculous and dangerous current lifestyle with her previous wholesomeness. She was an example for all young girls to imitate, and now, just a couple of years later, she represents everything that is wrong with the decadent celebrity "look at me" crowd. Like it or not, kids imitate what they see, and you can't turn on the TV, browse the internet, or pick up a magazine without being inundated with the latest wild pictures of the lost Miley. It can depress you if you let it, especially because she is so talented and so beautiful, and in a position to do so much to the positive. Still, there are some who see her as a role model and idolize her even more now for her "innovative" or "fresh" style. For her, and for those who imitate her, it's an unfortunate development.

It's shocking to see altogether how each generation of teens has evolved over the decades. I suppose every generation believes that their emerging youths are the ones getting out of control. Of course, this makes sense because change is inevitable. It's constant regardless of where you live or what kind of community surrounds you. Perhaps the reason for this is that young people tend to desire the acceptance of their peers. Somehow, this works best when you try to give off an air of indifference or suppress your opinions, no matter how foolish this might sound. I can relate to this myself. As a teenager, I have sometimes been reluctant to reveal my thoughts and beliefs at times, for fear of committing "social suicide". The solution to this problem is simple, yet may not be in reach. Kids should start to place less value on fitting in,

persecute him through the Board and make that 30% profit happen.

If Ed Davis, a man of the people, were Attorney General, us little people would have real hope of seeing heads roll at the institutionally-corrupt EOHHS, which now claims \$15 BILLION a year is not enough! A public adversarial Knapp-level Commission is essential after Annie Dookhan, 64 meningitis deaths, Arbour and the 5yo Fitchburg boy heartlessly betrayed by EOHHS whose leaders such as JudyAnn Bigby are also criminally and civilly liable individually for the false imprisonment of hundreds of people. They know it too and homesteaded their houses recently. Unlike Wall Street executives, these we can send to prison soon and should.

Unfortunately, we have only Martha Coakley. We cannot expect better. She will not save heroes like Dr. Schwartz. Regulatory Capture ("deference to hospitals"), violations of the US Constitution, preventable deaths and 30% profits shall continue. Expecting Massachusetts to hold hospitals accountable

and attach more importance to standing up for what is important to them.



I think there are many components to being a good leader. A big part of being a leader is exactly what the word suggests. In order to lead, you must attract followers. Followers might be mimicking their leaders, but leaders don't go along with the crowd. They set themselves apart from everybody else BECAUSE they don't do what everyone else does.

They set an example through their trustworthiness, their loyalty, and their courage to stand up for what they believe in. A leader should be someone to emulate.

I have known, both personally and through outside experiences, hundreds of leaders throughout my life. To me, being a leader consists of multiple different qualities, not necessarily all being found in the same person. I have never really been a huge fan of politics, but if I had to choose one person who has influenced me a lot and demonstrated, in my opinion, the epitome of being a leader I would most certainly say Ronald Reagan. When I first learned that Ronald Reagan was an actor prior to becoming president, I was drawn to his story. I also saw a documentary about him when I was younger and he just seemed like a super down-to-earth, fun-loving guy.

I suppose it's just the fact that when you're younger and ignorant about politics, and you see someone who is comfortable in his own skin and has an easygoing demeanor, you admire them more for being such an influential leader yet maintaining the ability to be a little silly too. After learning more about his political viewpoints and all the things he accomplished for America, I developed a much greater respect for him.

To me, Reagan was not just an effective leader because of each individual thing he accomplished during his presidency, but for the results of the sum total of his decisions. Of the many quotes attributed to him, one of my favorites is "We are never defeated unless we give up on God." This quote really encompasses, for me, all the great things about this man. It just amazes me that he thought that way especially with the pressures of the presidency. The fact that he was able to keep a deep faith throughout his two terms amidst a total lack of privacy, and with the never-ending duties that naturally went along with serving as president, just makes me admire him so much more. Not only does it demonstrate that he was a man of faith and he didn't abandon his beliefs, it shows that he was humble in governing the country while being aware that he was guided by a Higher Power.

is like expecting certain states to hold mining firms accountable or the military holding itself accountable for the preventable murder of Lance Corporal Maria Lauterbach.

One hope for the future is Progressive activists confronting "the Boston system" head on just as ACT UP confronted the taxpayer-funded NIH and saved thousands of people that NIH, like EOHHS, was happy to let die. The other is direct monitoring of EOHHS by Congress or Federal Judge Wolf to save the people (incl. parents visiting across state lines - interstate commerce) given the abdication of the State Attorney General and the utter failure of State government. We need to put EOHHS into receivership just like Chelsea but Federal this time as willfully-blind State legislators who even exempted hospitals from new pharmacy rules prompted by the 64 meningitis deaths clearly do not care. The common people desperately need saving from State predators.

TV TALK WITH BILL CUSHING

THE EMPTY CHAIR SHOW



My Top TV Shows of 2013

Bill Cushing

VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST



My list of the best that TV had to offer in 2013 was so hard to compile. There were so many quality programs to choose from this year, so narrowing this list down was a tough

task. You will notice that there are no sitcoms on this list, but unfortunately the crop of comedies on the air right now just didn't make the cut. Here are my choices for the best TV shows of 2013.

10. (tie) Homeland (SHO) – When I started compiling this list, this show wasn't on it. But the final 6 episodes of the season were top notch and propelled Homeland back onto the list. Claire Danes and Damian Lewis were excellent as always, but this season belonged to Mandy Patinkin and his portrayal of CIA Director Saul Berenson. The truly gut wrenching finale was one of the year's best episodes.

10 (tie) Mad Men (AMC) – Mad Men didn't have its best season, but still better than most series on the air. Jon Hamm's Don Draper continues to be one of TV's greatest characters. With just 2 short seasons left of this amazing show, I'll be savoring every episode.

9. The Blacklist (NBC) – The only network series on my list, The Blacklist stars James Spader as one of Americas Most Wanted who now aids the FBI in catching the most dangerous criminals in existence. Spader is superb in the lead role.

8. Ray Donovan (Showtime) – Liev Schreiber stars in the title role of this exciting series. Ray Donovan is a Boston raised tough guy, now living in Los Angeles and making his living as a "fixer" for a powerful law firm. Jon Voight, as Ray's ex-con father, gives one of the best performances of his career.

7. Masters Of Sex (Showtime) – This freshman series about Masters & Johnson, the pioneers of the science of human sexuality whose research touched off the sexual revolution, boasts some of the year's best acting. Michael Sheen, Lizzy Caplan, and Beau Bridges are excellent.

6. Boardwalk Empire (HBO) – Even though this show is lower on my list than it was last year, that speaks more to the quality of programming on TV today than any decrease in the quality of this series. On the contrary, Boardwalk Empire had one of its strongest seasons to date.

5. Southland (TNT) – TV's best police show, Southland, ended its 5 year run in April with its finest season yet. Top notch writing and acting, especially by Michael Cudlitz, who gave one of the year's best performances.

4. House of Cards (Netflix) – Kevin Spacey's top notch performance highlighted this political drama. The series centers on Senator Frank Underwood who, after getting passed over as Secretary of State, decides to exact revenge on his political enemies.

3. The Walking Dead (AMC) - Now in its 4th season, AMC's zombie apocalypse drama continued to evolve by adding something to this year's episodes that it was previously lacking, a great villain. David Morrissey's performance as The Governor stood out in a great ensemble cast.

2. Orange Is The New Black (Netflix) – Weeds creator Jenji Kohan created this dramedy that centers on Piper Chapman, played excellently by Taylor Schilling, a woman in her thirties who is sentenced to 15 months in prison. This engrossing series that mixes dark humor and dramatic storylines, top notch acting and writing was TV best new series of the year.

My pick for the best show of 2013 is.....

1. Breaking Bad (AMC) – There is just way too much to say about this series in this small space. Perhaps the finest TV drama ever created, Breaking Bad, came to its immensely satisfying conclusion this year after 5 seasons and 62 episodes. Vince Gilligan's epic story of Walter White's evolution from mild mannered chemistry teacher to hardened gangster intensified its brilliance this year. Bryan Cranston continued his mesmerizing role as Walter White. "Ozymandias" was one of the best TV episodes of this or any other series.

Honorable Mentions: Modern Family, Bates Motel, The Big Bang Theory, The Americans, Veep

Do you have any questions about TV? Email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future column. For daily TV news, follow Bill on Twitter @TVNewsandNotes and on Facebook at TVNewsandNotes - tvnewsandnotes.com

The Voice of Heroin

Phil Lahey

VALLEY PATRIOT'S PHIL OF THE FUTURE

I destroy homes, tear families apart, take your children, and that's just the start. I'm more costly than diamonds, more costly than gold, the sorrow I bring is a sight to behold, and if you need me, remember I'm easily found. I live all around you, in schools and in town.

I live with the rich, I live with the poor, I live down the street, and maybe next door. My power is awesome; try meyou'll see, but if you do, you may never break free. Just try me once and I might let you go, but try me twice, and I'll own your soul.

When I possess you, you'll steal and you'll lie. You do what you have to just to get high. The crimes you'll commit, for my narcotic charms will be worth the pleasure you'll feel in your arms.

You'll lie to your mother; you'll steal from your dad. When you see their tears, you should feel sad. But you'll forget your morals and how you were raised, I'll be your conscience, I'll teach you my ways.

I take kids from parents, and parents from kids, I turn people from god, and separate from friends. I'll take everything from you, your looks and your pride, I'll be with you always, right by your side. You'll give up everything your family, your home, your friends, your money, then you'll be alone. I'll take and take, till you have nothing more to give. When I'm finished with you you'll be lucky to live. If you try me be warned this is no game.

If given the chance, I'll drive you insane. I'll ravish your body; I'll control your mind. I'll own you completely; your soul will be mine. The nightmares I'll give you while lying in bed, the voices you'll hear from inside your head, the sweats, the shakes, the visions you'll see; I want you to know, these are all gifts from me, But then it's too late, and you'll know in your heart, that you are mine, and we shall not part.



You'll regret that you tried me, they always do, but you came to me, not I to you. You knew this would happen. Many times you were told, but you challenged my power, and chose to be bold. You could have said no, and just walked away, if you could live that day over, now what would you say?

I'll be your master; you will be my slave, I'll even go with you, when you go to your grave. Now that you have met me, what will you do? Will you try me or not?

It's all up to you. I can bring you more misery than words can tell. Come take my hand, let me lead you to hell

This was a reading I found on line from one of my support groups. It explains HERION and how powerful it is better than I could ever hope to do. After you have finished reading it I ask you to read it again slowly to get the full impact on what it is like for people that get hooked on this deadly drug.

As always, I invite you to contact me at 978-557-9235 for any questions or info that I may be of help. Or if you like, go to our FACEBOOK page called The Empty Chair.



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One in Five Children Have a Mental Disorder; Lower the Risk Before Pregnancy

Dr. Jin Sung
CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

One in five American children today has a mental disorder and the rate is rising, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Affecting 13 to 20 percent of youth under 18, mental disorders impact a child's behavior, ability to learn, and cope with their emotions.

Although researchers don't have a definitive explanation for the rise, studies have linked a mother's autoimmune disease during pregnancy, environmental chemicals, and industrialization of food with the rise in childhood brain disorders.

All of these factors profoundly affect the developing brain in utero and can lead to a brain disorder in childhood.

The rapid rise in the rate of childhood brain disorders is alarming and unnerving. For instance, one study showed the rate of hospital stays among children for mood disorders increased 80 percent since 1997. Inpatient admissions for mental health issues and substance abuse increased 24 percent between 2007 and 2010.

The most commonly diagnosed brain disorder is attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), affecting nearly 7 percent of children. Other commonly reported issues include autism, anxiety, depression, Tourette's syndrome, and behavioral disorders. Alcohol and substance abuse are issues as well.

Autism linked to autoimmune disease in mothers

The brain begins developing as early as the first trimester and is profoundly impacted by the health of the immune system. When a pregnant woman has an unmanaged autoimmune condition, such as Hashimoto's hypothyroidism, type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, vitiligo, etc., it means her immune system is imbalanced and overactive. Research has shown that some mothers of children with autism carry immune compounds called antibodies in their bloodstream that react against proteins in the brain. These antibodies damage the developing brain of the fetus while in utero and may cause autism. Women with autoimmune disease are more likely to carry these immune antibodies.

A parent's diet, physical activity, stress hormone levels, and exposure to environmental chemicals are other examples of factors that can affect a child's brain development beginning in utero.

We see evidence of immune imbalances in children with brain disorders as they typically also suffer from multiple food intolerances, stomach pain, chronic constipation, leaky gut, asthma, eczema,



yeast infections, and other issues that signal an imbalanced immune system.

The rising rate of childhood brain disorders is a pressing concern that will continue to affect all aspects of society. Although there is no easy answer, parents-to-be can lower their risk of giving birth to a child with ADHD, autism, or other brain disorder by limiting exposure to environmental toxins both in the home and outside (for instance, rates of autism are found to be higher in those whose mothers lived near freeways during pregnancy), eating a whole foods diet free of common food sensitivities (such as

gluten), and testing for and managing any autoimmune reactions.



Dr. Jin Sung is a chiropractic physician who offers a unique, drug-free, and effective approach to the management of chronic health conditions. He utilizes Brain Based Therapy

and Functional Medicine approaches to achieve excellent results with his patients. Call 978 688 6999 or visit www.DrJinSung.com



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BABIES AND BRIEFCASES

10 REASONS TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS IN 2014

Cheryl Hajjar

VALLEY PATRIOT MOMMY COLUMNIST

There must be a reason why over 600,000 new businesses are founded each year. In years past you could argue that starting your own business was a risky proposition, but after the fall of the economy in 2007-2008, in today's job market, being an entrepreneur is becoming a secure and manageable way to earn a living. Here are 10 Reasons why starting your own business might be a safe bet:

1. Job Security No Longer Exists- Years ago it was very common to go to college, earn a degree and get a job in the corporate world laden with benefits, pensions and peace of mind. Today that seems like a far away fairy tale. Not only has corporate America drastically downsized, but industries and evolving and changing at such a rapid pace that job appear and disappear overnight. Not only does this weaken traditional employment, it also wanes the spirit of the worker creating a lack luster excitement about the future of the workforce and ultimately productivity.

2. Control your Own Destiny- Many entrepreneurs consider themselves "Type A personalities". They like to make their own decisions and be in control. Owning a business allows just that, control. By calling the shots, business owners are able to create their own culture for the company, hence encouraging creativity and re-enforcing your brand.

3. Say Goodbye To Commuting- Does the thought of not bearing that hour commute each morning breathe new life into you? If it does, then read on. Starting your own home based or small business allows just that. Many entrepreneurs are self-starters and are also self motivated so they can create their own structure within the home. They say sitting in traffic can take years off of your life and cause stress so by starting your own business the only commute you will be making is to the coffeepot in the kitchen.

4. Knowing How To Get More For Less- It is not a secret that spending many years in a recession has made us all experts on how to get more for less. We have become thrifter than ever and stretching every dollar to the max is the exact mindset an entrepreneur needs to have to be successful.

5. Finding Your Life balance – One of the greatest things about owning your



own business is the ability to design our lives. Flexibility is key. Making your own schedule, deciding when you are taking your lunch break and taking your dog for a walk when you want to do it is just priceless. Many entrepreneurs say that could never go back to working for someone else because of experiencing the freedom of designing their own lives.

6. Choose The People You Work With- The days of that annoying co-worker in the cubicle next to you snapping their gum at the speed of light are over. When you are the boss, you choose who gets to work with you. You get to weed out the negative people and place only positive people who are enthusiastic and provide optimism that you will need to keep moving forward.

7. Follow Your Passion- Many entrepreneurs say the long hours they invest in their business never seems like work because they are having fun in what they are doing. Start a business in something that you have a love for and it will never feel like work.

8. Give Back To The Community- Non-profits are popping up in droves these days by business owners wanting to give back and help others. The desire to create more American jobs is very important as well. Many businesses are now also making donating to charities part of their business plan. There is nothing more American than lending a hand.

9. Sense of Pride- When you operate and own your own business, you feel a great sense of pride and accomplishment of building something of your own. There is nothing like being successful through

BUSINESS: PAGE 35

News from the American Legion

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

As the year 2013 came to a close, we did get some good news from Washington, DC. Finally a budget was passed with support and compromises from both political parties. The bad news is that some of it came at the expense of military retirees. I have been present when comments were made by the White House, members of the Senate and members of the House of Representatives that they would not balance the budget on the backs of veterans. Apparently they forgot what they promised. There is time to correct this mistake and I hope Congress and the Administration will take action on this matter.

Being in the military is not like a civilian job. One cannot just up and quit, go to work elsewhere. Our troops are scattered across the planet. Many are often away from their families for months at a time and sent on multiple deployments. Those that are overseas are particularly in difficult, stressful situations wondering when they might be under attack. They suffer mental and physical wounds. Some give their life for our country, our freedoms. And their families and friends share that burden. It became very different when the draft ended in the 1970s. We have an all-volunteer force with our best and brightest. When the current conflicts started, let us not forget that many were sent off with inadequate protection for themselves and their vehicles. We must not let that happen again while budgets are cut. What price is our freedom? What price is the blood of our men and women in uniform?

There are other ways to cut the budget. Cut some of the ridiculous studies that go on under the guise of research. How about investigating fraud and prosecuting those who are guilty. As an example, look at our own Commonwealth of Massachusetts where State Auditor Bump found that \$18 million was given out in suspicious welfare payments! I am certain we are not the only state where audits will find similar problems. Let's cut out the fraud and abuse of good programs that are meant to help those in need, not those looking for a free ride. We all need to get this message out to our elected officials at all levels. I know I will contact them as



I have in the past. Please join me in doing so and making your voices heard.

This is the time of year for traditional New Year's resolutions. As in past years, I will look to lose weight and exercise more. I will add that I/we should look to connect more with family and friends in the coming year. Time truly does fly quickly, too quickly sometimes. I am reminded of a poem, "The Dash" by Linda Ellis. You should take a few minutes to look this up on the Internet. Basically it talks about how life is defined. We look at a grave marker and note the year of birth and year of death. These are divided by a "dash". It is what we do in the years between birth and death that really matter. What have we done in life? What impact have we made? Along with a new calendar year it provides a good measure for anyone to reflect upon their lives. I cannot change my past but I can shape my future.

I hope you will reflect upon this article and join me in thanking God for being in the greatest country on Earth and praying for our troops and their families. Especially for the families of those who gave their lives during this last year.

John Lenotte, Commander, Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4, Haverhill MA; Past Commander, Department of Massachusetts, The American Legion



John Lenotte is the American Legion, Commander, Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4 Haverhill and Vice Commander, Dept. of Massachusetts. He is also past commander. He is also the recipient of The Valley Patriot Hero Award. You can Email him at JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net

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A FAMILY BUSINESS FOR FIVE GENERATIONS

FROM 1: SGT. CHARLES P. SARANTOS

ary 1945) and Operation "Varsity" in March 1945...then advanced through the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe, and ultimately reached Berlin.

First assigned to the 512th Airborne Signal Corps, which later became part of the 112th Signal Battalion (Special Operations) (Airborne) and the 112th Allied Airborne Division, Charlie set up critical communications networks, working with the American Waco CG-4A combat gliders that had been introduced in February 1941 to transport troops and equipment. Behind enemy lines. In stealth. Under cover of darkness. To shock and confuse the enemy.

American combat gliders were shipped, unassembled, in huge wooden crates by cargo vessels to England, where they were assembled and then flight-tested. A single CG-4A glider required five enormous crates. In Manchester, England, Charlie saw them being assembled by untrained British civilians before the Ninth Air Force took over their assembly.

These gliders were towed across the skies by C-47 military transports, and relied on two-way radios to communicate with the C-47 pilot. Charlie set up the communications system, including a 10-volt generator on a trailer loaded into the glider. He also reinforced the CG-4A's honeycombed plywood floors to prevent heavy equipment from crashing through (which sometimes happened).

Charlie remembers seeing American glider pilots being trained in England. Many were civilians with only a pilot's license who had been allowed to volunteer because of the shortage of trained operators.

Germany had been effectively using gliders in WWII since 1940 and by 1941 had 300,000 trained glider pilots, produced by their numerous national glider clubs. Great Britain began their program in 1940, followed by the U.S. in 1941 after entering the war.

Four American glider missions flew as part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, two with extensive fighter es-

cort, although Charlie's unit was not involved. His unit did see their first action on August 15, 1944, when their combat gliders infiltrated France in Operation "Dragoon," dropping troops and equipment near Le Muy, France. After setting up a command post there, five days later they moved the post to Valescure, France, to support combat teams attacking a front along the northeast from the northernmost end to the Mediterranean coast 20 kilometers south.

Charlie himself flew on a number of glider missions to test the effectiveness of the radio communications. He had many close brushes with death, more than he wishes to recall.

Yet always, always, underneath he sensed the everlasting arms of the eternal God.

GLIDERS: "FLYING COFFINS"

These combat gliders were dubbed "silent wings" or, more aptly, "flying coffins." A 300-foot long nylon rope, about 1-inch in diameter, attached the glider to the C-47's tail via a D-ring coupler. Once they approached the drop zone, the glider was released to float silently to the ground with its cargo of troops and equipment.

The pilot had virtually no control over where he landed. No engine. No propeller. No weapons. In the midst of combat, the gliders were targets before they even landed, so a fast descent was crucial, preferably from altitudes as low as 400 to 600 feet. When under enemy fire, they had to crash-land in trees or other obstacles set up by the Germans. The pilot had only seconds to zero in on his landing spot.

As General William Westmoreland, U.S. Army, Retired, said, "Every landing was a genuine do-or-die situation... They were the only aviators during WWII who had no motors, no parachutes, and no second chances."

The CG-4A glider could carry a load of more than 4,000 pounds—the pilot and co-pilot plus 13 troops, or various combinations of troops with a jeep, or a 75mm howitzer along with 18 rounds of ammunition and gun crew, or a 1/4-ton truck, or a small bulldozer, as well as



At the Potsdam Conference in Berlin, July 16–August 2, 1945, following Germany's unconditional surrender on May 8, Sgt. Charles Sarantos was assigned the task of communicating messages when British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, U.S. President Harry Truman, and Soviet Premier Josef Stalin met to determine the postwar reconstruction of Germany, readjustment of borders, and the ultimatum to be given to Japan.

ammunition and other supplies. They provided backup for the paratroopers who had arrived earlier.

As the Americans advanced toward Berlin, wire and radio communications became extremely difficult as the supported combat teams moved rapidly over mountains in southern France. Charlie's unit commandeered the local wire networks to support the forward teams, some as far as 100 miles from the command post. They not only set up direct lines from the command post to each team but they also installed lines between the teams and provided teletype and wire communications to the Sixth Army Group Headquarters.

"BIG THREE" Postdam Conference

With Germany's unconditional surrender, Charlie, as part of the 112th Army Airborne Signal Battalion, was with the first American troops that entered Berlin for the Allied occupation of that city. The Brandenburg Gate insignia indicates their service in Berlin.

There in Berlin Charlie was present at an historic event that climaxed the end of WWII: the Potsdam Conference, July 16–August 2, 1945, that brought together the "Big Three" heads of state—U.S. President Harry Truman, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet Premier Josef Stalin. Charlie was assigned to set up and work communications during the conference, sending and receiving messages, because of his expertise in electronics and his seniority in the military.

At Potsdam, the "Big Three" dis-

cussed post-war arrangements in Europe and the portioning of the postwar world. One result was a joint proclamation by the U.S., Great Britain, and China that mandated the terms of Japan's surrender, ending with the ultimatum that Japan must immediately agree to unconditionally surrender, or else face "prompt and utter destruction."

"ON A WING AND A PRAYER"

Charlie grew up in a Christian family committed to God and to prayer. "We lived next door to the Greek Orthodox Church, and I literally spent most of my growing up years in the church. I believe in God. I believe in the power of prayer. During the war, I had many close calls with death but I survived miraculously. I always felt God's protection during the war, and I still feel His protection to this day. I know God answers prayer. He has blessed me abundantly."

The psalmist wrote, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust...I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from my enemies" (Psalm 18:2-3).



Helen Mooradian is our Valley Patriot Hero columnist and a former business writer. She is also a member of the Merrimack Valley Tea Party. You can email Helen at hsmoor@verizon.net



USAAF photo shows the American-made Waco CG-4A combat glider that had a wingspan of about 83.6 feet and an overall length of 48 feet. Sgt. Charles Sarantos, U.S. Army 112th Allied Airborne, set up the two-way radio communications between gliders and the C-47s that towed them across the skies before releasing them deep behind enemy lines. Besides the pilot and co-pilot, gliders had a payload capacity of more than 4,000 pounds, carrying thirteen troops—or any combination of men and equipment, ranging from a jeep, 75mm howitzer with gun crew, to a 1/4-ton truck or small bulldozer. The entire nose section, swung up for loading and unloading men and equipment.

SANDBOX: FROM PAGE 34

your own leadership and abilities. A really cool thing is that when you are an entrepreneur, people want to hear your story, how you got started and what motivated you to venture out on your own.

10. No Regrets- No one wants to say, "if only I had done this", or "why didn't I do that". Regret is even worse than failure because it's the unknown. What could have been is a hopeless island of self-loathing so better to have tried than not.

The game has changed in the rules of business and the old standards just do not apply anymore. So don't write off the possibility of starting your own business, it may be more riskier than you think.



Cheryl Hajar is a lifelong resident of the Merrimack Valley. She keeps busy by fulfilling her duties as a mother to her young son. She is an entrepreneur and the CEO of

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