



THE VALLEY PATRIOT

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CHIEF: We Came Close To Another Columbine



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PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

**SEE STORY
ON PAGE 11**

Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon says that Methuen High School avoided a mass murder spree by one of the school's students when a brave girl came forward and told authorities of his plans to shoot up the school. Solomon says that parents need to be more proactive in their children's lives and urges them "Go through your kids' stuff!"

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH LAWRENCE NATIVE FRED PIETROWSKI, U.S. NAVY

Helen Mooradkian,
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

LAWRENCE - It was early 1961 during the Cold War. The United States had just closed its embassy in Havana, Cuba. The Cuban Missile Crisis would not come to a head until one year later, in October 1962—the closest the U.S. and the Soviet Union ever came to a global nuclear war.

Fred Pietrowski, U.S. Navy, of Lawrence, Mass., was an electrician aboard the submarine USS Angler (SS240) when a goodwill tour to New York suddenly turned into a chase to drive off two Soviet diesel subs and capture a Soviet nuclear sub. Few know about that incident in early 1961 when Pietrowski discovered three submarines hiding near the Statue of Liberty, long before any major confrontation

between the two world powers.

From the port lookout, Fred had focused his binoculars on the Statue of Liberty, only 800 feet away. Suddenly he saw a Soviet periscope pop up out of the water only 300 yards from the Statue. When reported to their New London, Conn., base, the order came: "Chase him!"

Minutes later, Fred saw a second Soviet submarine hiding only a half-mile from Wall Street! Again the order: "Chase him!"

Then they heard the turbine whine of a nuclear sub. The unmarked sub refused to identify itself! This time, they were told: "Ram him!"

Instantly, five U.S. submarines sped to the scene. All six American subs spent three days, 24/7, trying to capture the

HERO: PAGE 28

Fred Pietrowski, U.S. Navy, 1959–1964, who served on submarines during the Cold War and Cuban Missile Crisis, shown with one of his beautiful woodcarvings. His many miraculous escapes from death—from encounters with sharks to subs rammed in half and sunk—are chronicled in his book, "De Profundis—Out of the Depths," (spring 2013 publication date). Recently he gained national fame when he found \$500,000 in stocks in an old file cabinet and, after a six-month search, returned it all to rightful owners. "I've received many blessings, and I want to pass them on to others," he says.



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Everyone gets a Trophy in North Andover

The North Andover School Committee has decided that grading children in the school system with the time tested letter grades which reflect their achievement on tests and projects, is no longer needed.

Instead, they have decided to create a complicated number grading system that parents say do not reflect actual achievement. Parents complained at a public forum that two students getting a different number of questions wrong on the same test were given the same grade.

The public forum on the issue was held *after* the school committee made their decision.

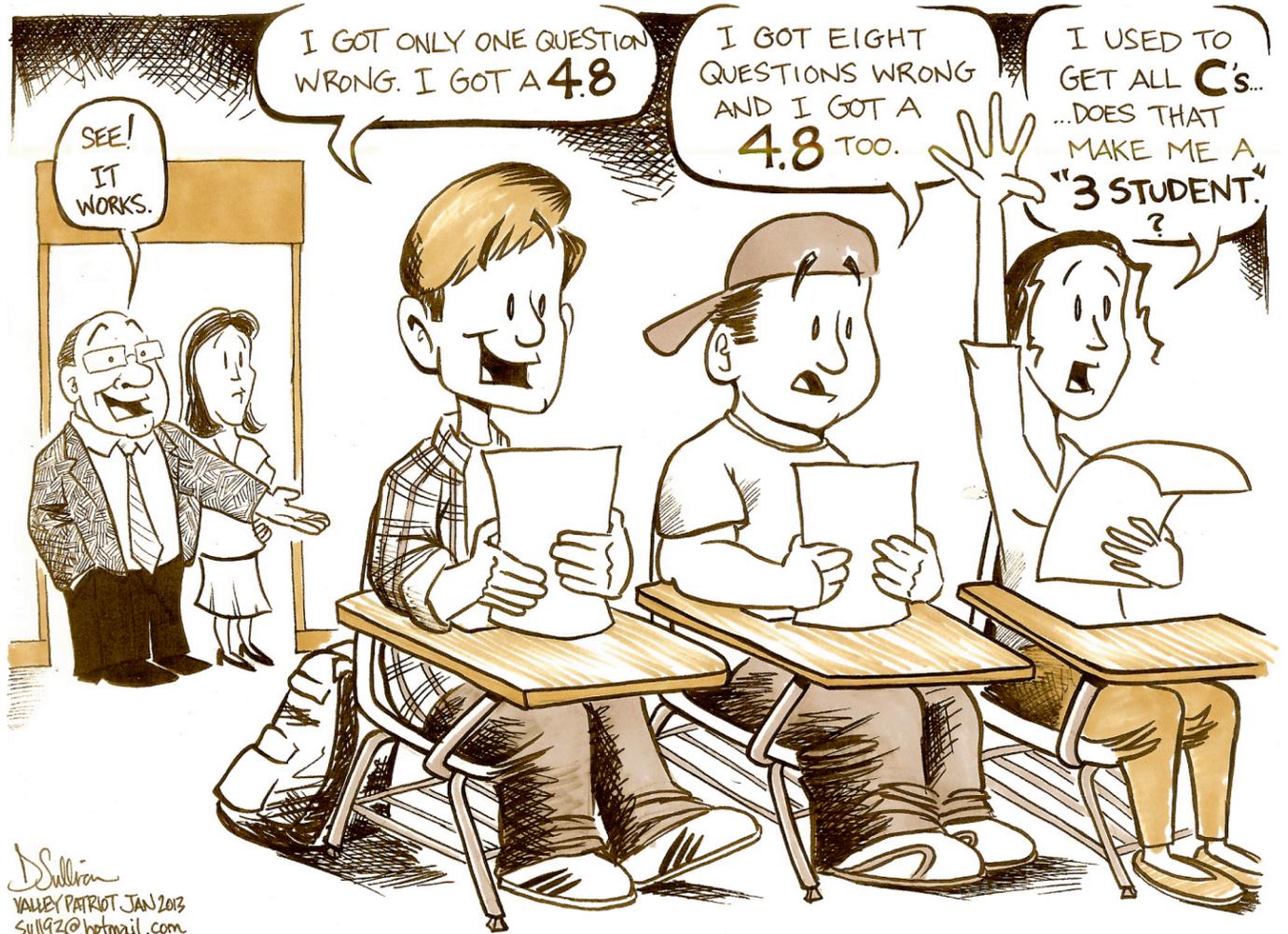
This is hardly the act of elected officials concerned with transparency in government or public input.

Whatever convoluted lies and excuses the school committee tells the voters of North Andover, we believe that this is nothing more than politics and the dumbing down of educational standards.

We also believe it is a purposely complicated number grading system which will result in parents not really knowing what level of achievement their children have really mastered.

When two students can get the same grade for getting a different number of questions wrong on a test; it is no different than holding a baseball tournament where everyone gets a trophy just for participating.

By blurring the line between an exact letter grade and a subjective number grading system, The North Andover School Committee has shown how out of touch they really are.



Sullivan
VALLEY PATRIOT JAN 2013
sully92@hotmail.com
facebook.com/sullysfunnyfaces

And by holding a public forum *after* making the decision to implement such a grading system, they proved that deep down they know it.

The North Andover School Committee has done some amazing work in increasing educational standards over the last ten years. We do not believe this to be one of them.

We believe in this case, that the North Andover School Committee has not acted in the best interest of the students or the voters. We believe the result of that bad faith effort means a lower standard of education.

This spring the voters of North Andover have a chance to change the direction and the leadership (or should

we say lack of leadership) in the North Andover School System.

We encourage them to take a long, hard look at the decisions this current school committee has made over the last three years. We also encourage them to pay a little more attention to the school committee candidates before they vote.

Shooting Straight About Newtown, Connecticut

Jeff Katz

VOTED AP's BEST RADIO TALK SHOW HOST

I remember distinctly where I was as I heard about the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. I was trying to assemble some material to discuss that afternoon on WIOD Radio in Miami, Florida. I was going to talk about an outrageous rate increase for Florida Power and Light and I felt that a few other things would surely pop up by show time. And then my wife asked me, "Did you hear about Connecticut?"

I actually had not. As I pulled up some news sites online, I read about the horror. Different sites had different death totals, but even with the numbers still subject to change, what was certain was that we were witnessing one of the most horrific slaughters in modern history. What was also certain was that some were ready to

use this for crass political purposes.

When I sat down behind the microphone, I made a few confessions on the air. First, I said that despite more than a few years in the talking business I honestly had no idea what to say. I apologized to the listeners when I shared with them that I would not be turning my cell phone off and I warned them that if it rang during the show because my sons wanted to talk about the killings, I would be taking that call. For six hours, I fielded calls from moms and dads who shared with me that they could think of no words to describe what had happened either. Each of us, it seemed, had dropped a son or a daughter off at school that morning and fully expected that we would be seeing them at the end of the day. The vast majority of us did, of course, but for some parents in Connecticut, their children would never be coming home.

I know what twenty elementary school kids look like. Every Wednesday evening, I volunteer as the Den Leader for my community's Cub Scout Wolf Den. Every week I attempt to help a group of second grade boys navigate the process for completing their Scouting achievements. Some weeks are easier than others, but every week I walk out of there with a tremendous sense of accomplishment and pride. I describe this weekly duty as being tiring but rewarding. I'd imagine that the wonderful school teachers at Sandy Hook Elementary felt the same way.

Before that day, the biggest problem that those children had was wondering what they'd be getting for Chanukah or Christmas. Before that day, the biggest problem that their parents had was trying to outsmart them and make sure that the presents were well hidden. Of course now, those gifts will forever go unopened. No need to hide them any longer, but I'm not sure that I could ever bear to remove them from the closet.

After a terrible tragedy like this, people invariably look for logical answers. The problem is that those who commit acts like this are neither rational nor logical. Some are psychopaths, some are sociopaths and some are mired in the depths of schizophrenia or other severe mental disorders. Good people stand up and proclaim "we have to do something." These are people who don't want to feel that they are powerless and sadly they are often manipulated by bottom feeding politicians who work overtime to exploit tragedies.

I know that Connecticut has some of the strongest restrictions on firearms in the



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

country and yet this happened. I know that the mental health system is routinely ignored. I know that we must remember the victims and their families in our prayers. I know that we need to hug and kiss our kids even as we embarrass the heck out of them by proclaiming loudly "I love you!"

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A Real Plan to Stop School Shootings

Written Expressly for Parents of School Children

Dr. Charles Ormsby
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR

The recent massacre in Newtown, Connecticut was horrific to say the least. By all accounts, the unarmed staff members, administrators and teachers acted with great courage while trying in vain to stop the carnage. The killing did not stop until the police arrived at which point the deranged killer shot himself. Twenty children and six staff members were senselessly slaughtered.

In the aftermath of this killing spree the talking heads are all abuzz about ways to ensure that nothing like this can ever happen again. Predictably, the left is using this event to restrict the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. The implicit assumption made by the leftist proponents of stricter gun control laws is that if certain things or acts are made illegal, those things or acts will cease to exist and they will no longer pose a threat.

It must be nice to live in Fairyland. Adam Lanza broke numerous Connecticut gun laws before his killing spree at Sandy Hook Elementary School. None of the laws he broke made one bit of difference.

Aside from Adam Lanza killing his mother, just his possession of the guns he brought to the shooting broke several Connecticut laws. First, Connecticut requires citizens to be 21 before possessing a handgun – Adam Lanza was 20. Connecticut requires an eligibility permit for possessing a handgun – Adam Lanza didn't have one. Connecticut requires a special permit to carry a handgun outside one's home or place of business – Adam Lanza didn't have one. A handgun safety course is required of anyone carrying a handgun – Adam Lanza never took a safety course. It is unlawful to carry any firearm on public or private elementary or secondary school property – Adam Lanza wasn't deterred by that law. Loaded rifles may not be carried in a motor vehicle – I'll bet Adam Lanza ignored that prohibition on the way to Sandy Hook Elementary School.

And, of course, laws against murder didn't deter Adam Lanza either.

Maybe if we passed another law, say outlawing the Bushmaster rifle Adam Lanza used in the killings (or ones like it), that would make these senseless killings a thing of the past. Or how about outlawing clips holding more than ten rounds? Or rifles

with a folding stock? Or rifles that look really mean?

Of course the left's love for all these restrictive firearm laws has little if anything to do with stopping senseless murders. The left's intelligentsia knows that such laws are probably responsible for increasing, not decreasing, the likelihood of such massacres. It is all about disarming the citizenry and making the people more dependent on and more subservient to big government. The more gun laws we pass, the more killings of disarmed citizens that occur, resulting in more excuses for more gun laws. The cycle is self-reinforcing. The government's power grows and the citizen's freedom is diminished.

We should consider a different approach – one that works.

The NRA recently suggested that armed policemen/guards be placed in our schools. As a life member of the NRA, I respect the organization's advice but disagree in this instance. The NRA approach would be prohibitively expensive and probably less effective than a substantially less costly plan. At most, a somewhat increased and randomized police presence should be a minor ingredient to a successful plan.

After 911 some of us suggested that airlines be allowed to arm their pilots and/or co-pilots (in addition to employing other inexpensive measures such as reinforced cockpit doors and more effective passenger screening/profiling). Notice I said "allowed" – not "required" – to arm their crews. Not only would airlines that choose to arm their crews not have any attempted hijackings, passengers would flock to them and away from their more timid, politically correct competitors (Which would you choose to fly?). Within a year nearly all airlines would have armed crews and hijackings would be a thing of the past.

The key to discouraging – if not eliminating – school shootings is similarly obvious, but offends the sensibilities of the imbecilic, politically correct, big government, lunatic left: Arm a random subset of administrators and teachers.

Each community could decide for itself: do nothing, foot the bill for openly armed security guards in each school, or adopt a variant of the plan suggested below.

The plan: All regular day-employees of a school who are licensed to carry a concealed weapon would be asked if they would volunteer to carry while at work and



Christine Morabito, President of the Greater Boston Tea Party exorcizes her 2nd amendment right to bear arms.

take on the role of stopping the taking of innocent life in the event of an incident. Those who volunteer would undergo a thorough review by state and local law enforcement agencies. These agencies would then provide recommendations to a panel of school administrators and local law enforcement personnel. A subset of those volunteering would be selected and would be put through a several weekend course designed by law enforcement officials (probably including strategies for delaying the perpetrator while law enforcement was en route, combat pistol skills, when the use of deadly force is appropriate, what to do when the police arrive, etc.). This training would be refreshed annually.

Those selected would be instructed to not advertise their selection or when they were carrying, but they and the administrators would know those who were selected and would create a plan for alerting them in case of an incident.

Barring acts of gross negligence and taking into account the circumstances attendant to any particular incident, state law would expressly protect those selected from any criminal or civil liability if they were called on to use their weapons. The weapons carried would be approved or provided by local law enforcement. Teachers/administrators selected would be paid a modest stipend for fulfilling this role and for their training time. The goal would be for approximately 5-10% of staff to participate (with a minimum of two even in small schools).

Finally, any school adopting this plan would make their participation VERY PUBLIC. They would advertise their adoption of the plan and tell the nuts out there: "Don't even think about it! We are armed

and we will protect our precious children."

I'm sure that numerous improvements could be made to this plan by law enforcement professionals. But it is a good starting point, not only for K-12 but also for our universities and colleges.

I'm willing to bet that schools adopting this plan or a variant of it would experience a substantially lower frequency of such attacks. And if an attack did occur, the carnage would be substantially less than what would have occurred without the presence of armed staff.

What objections would there be to this plan? Armed teachers could start killing children? They can do that now. Get a knife; get a gun ... nobody will stop them from entering the school because they are already approved to be present! This doesn't raise the risk from these teachers any more than the risk of pilots crashing their planes is increased by letting them have a gun.

Banning assault weapons will be TOTALLY ineffective in stopping such crimes. Disarming law-abiding citizens only encourages such attacks.

If you love your children, demand a real plan that will protect them ... not a fairy tale plan designed by leftists with an anti-gun agenda that has nothing to do with protecting your children.

And if you think the suggested plan is way off base, just Google "Harrold, Texas."



Dr. Ormsby is a former member of the N.A. School Committee. He is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate degree from MIT. He is currently a Professor of Mathematics at UMASS, Lowell. You can email him at: ccormsby@verizon.net

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Activities in the Town of Andover

Ann Knowles

VALLEY PATRIOT ANDOVER COLUMNIST

BOOK SALE: The Book Sale at Memorial Library, sponsored by the Friends of the Library will be held January 27, 28 and 29. The third floor of the library will be the site. Books, movies and music for all ages will be available. This is the first book sale of this year. There are two more scheduled and the public will be notified of the dates.

The Friends of the Library is a group of supporters for the Library that present many programs during the year. A sign up site is available on line at the library. Friends of the Library have a mission to the Town of Andover, to make the library an important part of cultural and historical activities for the library. Each month the Friends of the Library will have activities for toddlers to high school age to adults

and seniors.

Consult the library on line site for more information. The Friends of the Library contribute greatly to the mission of the library. Andover is very fortunate to have an engaged staff of professional librarians and a support group like the Friends of the Library.

Consider this organization when volunteering. Joining this organization and being a supporter is a great way to take part in one of the most valuable assets for the Town of Andover. Assess the library's home page to see how you can help make important decisions about the many programs available at Memorial Library.

Visit the library to see the many changes that have been made to make the library a very charming place to spend time and peruse books. The staff is very happy to introduce new and innovative reading aids. Please look at the Memorial Library

home page for features and activities each month.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

Here we are ready to start A Happy New Year in 2013, and as we are giving some thought about it, why don't we begin the New Year by becoming a "Friendly Visitor". This will give an isolated older person, a senior in a nursing home, assisted living facility or a private residence a visit from you. Your time and interest is very valuable and the recipients appreciate your interest.

The Andover Senior Center will be happy to work with you. Training and an ongoing supervisor will help you in this very important volunteer service. A background check will be part of the training.

The Senior Center has other volunteer opportunities. Interest in helping people is always in need. There are many ways that a senior volunteer can help, and by doing so, it can enrich your life and the person you work with by being a friend.

The following opportunities are available: Friendly Visitors, Medical Transit, SHOP (seniors helping other people), Computer classes, Mentoring, and being a pen pal to students, Cultural committees, Meals on Wheels.

Call 978-623-8321 or e-mail the senior-center@andoverma.gov.

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR SENIORS

During the months of January and February make plans to attend one of the following activities.

Wednesday January 16, 2013, at 2:00p.m. at the Senior Center, Rebecca Hayes from the Addison Gallery of Art will give a talk on the history and the programs of the art center. Reservations required.

The Men's Breakfast Group will take a trip to Ft. Myers Fenway South and live at the Red Socks Fantasy Baseball Camp with local resident David Davis. Reservations needed.

Celebrate Chinese New Year on Monday February 11; there will be a special Chinese luncheon and a film at 11:00 a.m. Cost will be \$2.50 and sign up as soon as possible.

Sweets and Treats of Valentine's Day will be celebrated at a Valentine Brunch on Feb. 10 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Sign up begins January 15.

There will be "Treat of Chocolate"- a fountain of chocolate to dip fresh fruit into, a German Chocolate cake and Frank's famous brunch with hot entrees, omelets, waffles, bacon and fruits. Music will be provided by Elliott Jacobwitz. Advanced tickets are available at the Senior Center. What a great way to start the New Year.



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Notices From the North Andover Senior Center

If you call it "Senior," will they come? That's just one question on the minds of the North Andover Senior Center as we look down the road and see the baby boomer population approaching old age. What happened? When I was in high school no one wanted to be a freshmen, sophomore or junior. We all could not wait to call ourselves seniors. So why now as we age and become seniors in our community does it have negativity attached to it? A common name helps people find the Center in their community. It clearly identifies the facility as where seniors go for services and activities. The common barriers that keep seniors from attending are accessibility issues like transportation, parking, health issues and hours of operation. Perhaps more difficult to combat are misperceptions people have about senior centers—such as that they're only for low income individuals or people must be very old to participate. In many situations, there's a basic lack of understanding about what a senior center is, what services are provided and to whom the services are available. The North Andover Senior

Center is truly representative of what I see centers looking like in the future, multi-service, a wide range of programs for young, old, frail, active, retired and working. We offer a computer lab, large multi-functional space that can be broken into multiple program areas and a support services health room. We focus on multi-functional utilization. We are offering more exercise and health programs and a greater selection of intergenerational activities. We are actively collaborating with other community organizations such as universities to offer educational and recreational opportunities that seniors want. I welcome you this New Year to stop by and take a good look. I hope you will choose to get involved in what is going on at the North Andover Senior Center.

BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC: The North Andover Senior Center and Home Health Inc./VNA operate a wellness clinic every Wednesday from 9 am until noon. If you are a North Andover Senior, we urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to check your blood pressure, blood sugar, weight and blood oxygen level. You will

be able to consult privately with an RN regarding any medication and health issues that you are concerned about. There is no charge for this service, but donations are gratefully accepted.

Volunteer Medical Transport Drivers are needed! You can set your own schedule, morning or afternoon, any day of the week. Call the North Andover Senior Center for more information. Speak with Cahla at 978-688-9560 for application and assistance.

Foot Care: RN Catherine Languedoc Foot Care Specialist will be available on the third Friday of every month from 9-12. Upcoming dates are, Jan. 18th, Feb. 15th. Dr. Connolly is available on the second Wednesday of the month from 1-4. Upcoming dates are Jan. 9th, and Feb. 13th. Please call to schedule an appointment.

Peabody Essex Museum: Trip to the museum for a guided tour of the "HATS" Exhibit. \$15.00. NO charge for the bus. Lunch is on your own. Friday, January 18th. Bus leaves the senior center at 9:30. Minimum of 10 participants needed to run this trip. Reservations payable with reception.

MYSTERY RIDE: Thursday January 24th. Visit a local Senior Center and have lunch at the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Bus \$3, Lunch \$4-6.

FOXWOODS: Tuesday January 15th, \$30. Bus leaves from St. Michael's church parking lot at 6:30 am.

THE FIX - IT SHOP: On the first and third Monday of the month from 12-3pm. We repair almost as good as new. Lamps, with cords and sockets, replace watch batteries, small tables and chairs. Anything that is not listed, we will give it a shot! Your cost is \$2 - \$4 depending on work needed, plus parts. Proceeds benefit the Senior Center.

WALKING GROUP: Monday through Friday 9 am. Walk at your own pace inside the youth center on Johnson Street.

BOWLING GROUP: For more information stop by Academy Lanes Wednesdays at 11:45 am, \$8 week. Contact person Arlene Coon.

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

ONE ON ONE COMPUTER LAB CLASSES: Thursdays, 9-11:30 am, 45 minute sessions, \$7 each at the Senior Center. Call to reserve your slot.

New Hearing Clinic: Miracle-Ear will be at the North Andover Senior Center the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10 to noon. Sign up with reception for a free screening.

SHINE VOLUNTEERS: Free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to North Andover residents on Medicare. The 1st, 3rd and 4th Tues. of the month, 12-3. Call center for appointment.

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Mark Mezzina To Run for School Committee in the Spring

19 year old Mark Mezzina says he wants to serve on the North Andover School Committee. The Johnson Road resident says that he is against the new grading system in North Andover which replaces the letter grade report card system (A through F) with a number grade system. Parents spoke at a recent forum on the issue saying that students are getting the same marks for getting different number of questions wrong on the same test.

“What we need to do is make the curriculum tougher and the evaluation standards tougher instead of going a completely different direction,” Mezzina said.

Mezzina also took the school system to task for holding a public meeting on the issue after they passed the grade change. “They should have had the open forum meeting before the changes were approved. I am sure there were many parents who would have liked to give input on that.”

Mezzina says he is running to bring transparency and openness to the school committee. “My Big thing is I want to do more to bring open and transparent government. I will post every vote I take on-line with a full explanation of my vote.

That way, people don't have to guess what I did or why I did it.”

Mezzina was attending the University of South Carolina and says he took the semester off to come back home and run for school committee. He has three siblings in the North Andover Public Schools and has lived in North Andover his entire life.

“I've been interested in politics for as long as I remember,” he says. “I started getting active in the last few years and a lot of people encouraged me to do this.”

Mezzina campaigned for Karin Rhoton for State Representative and says he is a conservative who looks forward to working with local legislators like Jim Lyons to bring more local aid to the North Andover schools. “North Andover gets less local aid than many of the surrounding towns, and I'd like to change that.”

He says he is not running to replace the current school committeeman Christine Allen, who has yet to declare herself a candidate for reelection. “I am running no matter who is in this race, I am doing this because I want to be involved and make a difference. If Chris Allen runs I welcome the competition.”

Massachusetts 'public' education #1-in the world

Mark Gray

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Well, Massachusetts is number one in something but it's not what you or I would call education. It has more to do with slinging animal waste on the fields where crops grow. The head slinger here in Massachusetts Mitchell Chester has taken on the torch left from the other commissioner of education where white washing the truth, propaganda and deceit are the tools of the education trade, not education.

My piece here is inspired by the commissioner's propaganda piece of Dec 13, 2012. Where the public was intentionally being misled into believing that Mass schools were number one in the WORLD? For me, without any research, I knew this was far from true, and was intentionally not put into context. Which however for the readers, they should know follows suit with the decades long tradition the DOE has in making sure the 'public' is kept in the dark.

I contacted the state on its claim and asked a few questions about how it was able to boast such a claim. One question for the state and put to TIMMS (the entity the 'facts' were based on) was which schools were being used? The state quickly pronounced that charter schools were public schools. TIMMS despite having on their website that the schools identification numbers used were public, forwarded an email to me that this was private information and couldn't get it. I don't know about the rest of you but anyone can't simply go to a charter school and enroll their kid. I've tried. Charter schools for the general population is NOT public. However the DOE thinks they are because they have a jurisdiction over the charter schools. This is exactly the type of deception the state engages in, to assert its propaganda.

The facts are that Mass ranks about 17th at best in the world. Remember, (that's by tainting the 'public school' classification with charter and private schools test results) It falls short of countries like Canada. Spends more than any other industrialized nation but doesn't produce the results for that expenditure. In fact the US spends more than France, Germany, Japan, Brazil, Australia, Canada, and the UK COMBINED. Yet, these countries listed score in the same area or above what the US scores at.

To note, before I called TIMMS I looked on their web site. I noticed ticker tape results to questions that put Illinois and Connecticut schools ahead of Massachusetts. I read through some of their standards like number of computers a child has access to, homework assigned, libraries, etc. I also noticed that this wasn't some worldwide organization (as



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

it claims worldwide results) but in fact was based at Boston College a group who has long been associated with the state and its K-12 education workings. Another little missed disclosure is their association with Pearson publishing. That is relevant because they supply educational books to schools like Lawrence. The same books that the state said needed to be replaced because they were inadequate. The same publishing groups I said needed to be replaced.

TIMMS had information available that I have sited, but, after my email and phone conversation to them has since disappeared from their site. I think that's usually a good sign at how creditable the organization is. To disclose my facts, I used the same groups that the USDOE uses like PISA.

Massachusetts is also number one in 'gaming' the system. For starters the commissioner is quick to point out how some off the wall report (from an insider) puts him at number one but fails to state that Mass applied for and received a waiver from being held accountable to NCLB standards. Not the action you'd expect for a number one state right? The report doesn't state that charter schools or even private school results may have/were used to create the illusion that Mass was doing well or that many school districts don't test or teach regularly science, civics, history and in doing so skew the results for the exclusive math and ELA and twice science.

The moral of the story, you pay the state to lie and deceive you. If you ever believe anything they have to say, in the least, it should be agreed to by people like me who see them for the wolves that guard the hen house that they are.

Mark Gray is a former Member of the Lawrence School Committee, a former Marine and a guest columnist for The Valley Patriot. You can email him at: ghostapollo@yahoo.com

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Rep. DiZoglio To Tackle Enforcement of State's Public Records Law

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

What do you call it when the legislature passes a law but they purposely don't impose any penalties for violating that law? Well if you live in Massachusetts you would call it the Public Records law, or MGL Chapter 66.

Now Sate Representative Diana DiZoglio says the first piece of legislation she is filing, is a bill that will correct the flaw in the state's public records law so that penalties will be imposed on those who refuse to comply with the state's version of the Freedom of Information Act.

"We have to hold public officials accountable for turning over public documents," DiZoglio told The Valley Patriot in an exclusive interview.

"If citizens are not able to gain access to public documents, we cannot claim that there is transparency in government. If we don't have some kind of penalty, there is no enforcement and people are not going to comply."

DiZoglio said she is fulfilling promises she made to her constituents during the campaign and doesn't seem deterred by the legislature's lack of interest in putting teeth in the public records law.

"This is what I ran on, public accountability, transparency in government; this definitely has to be done."

Both Republican and Democrat legislators in The Valley say they agree with DiZoglio and support penalties for those who refuse to turn over public records in the ten day time period called for in Chapter 66.

(prestando attenzione!)

PAYING ATTENTION!

with Tom Duggan 

Senators Kathleen O'Connor Ives (D) Newburyport says she will also file a bill in the Senate to add penalties to the public records law. So far Senator Bruce Tarr (R) Newbury, Representatives Jim Lyons (R) Andover, Linda Dean Campbell (D) Methuen, Brad Hill (R) Newbury

Under Mass General Law Chapter 66 public entities such as municipalities must turn over public documents within ten days of any citizen's request.

The Valley Patriot filed out our initial request for public documents back on February 22, 2012. It is now Janu-



"If citizens are not able to gain access to public documents, we cannot claim that there is transparency in government. If we don't have some kind of penalty, there is no enforcement and people are not going to comply ... This is what I ran on, public accountability, transparency in government; this definitely has to be done."
~State Rep. Diana DiZoglio, (D) Methuen

and Brad Jones (R) Reading, have all said that adding teeth to the law needs to be done and committed to the Valley Patriot that they will support penalties in the law.

This is good news for the taxpayers of Massachusetts and the news media.

If you are a regular reader of The Valley Patriot you are probably familiar with our nearly year-long battle to get documents showing payments made by the City of Lawrence to the DiAdamo Law firm. A Law Firm which does legal work on behalf of the city and is paid for with the taxpayers' money.

ary 2013. Despite the fact that the law mandates public records be turned over within ten days, The Valley Patriot is still waiting because there is no penalty for those who refuse to comply with the law.

We have letters from the Secretary of State's Office (Dated September of 2012) demanding Mayor Lantigua turn over the documents. He refused. We have an order from Essex Superior Court Judge Tom Murtagh (Dated October, 2012) ordering Lawrence to "produce the documents."

Mayor Lantigua slapped him and the court in the fact and outright refused.

Judge Murtagh even held the city in contempt of court for refusing to comply with his order.

Yet, as of the day this newspaper went to print (January 8th) The City of Lawrence continues to conceal the amount of your tax money that was spent on outside legal bills with the DiAdamo Law Firm.

My hope is that Representatives DiZoglio uses the Valley Patriot's struggle for public information as a template for the law she is going to file.

In order for any new legislation to achieve forcing public officials to turn over public records it must include the following:

- A daily fine imposed personally upon the keeper of records and/or the person specifically responsible for not turning over public records within the mandatory ten day time limit called for in Chapter 66.

- Financial reimbursement for all expenses incurred by those who request public records and are forced to seek a remedy in court or through some other government agency.

- Criminal penalties for anyone who is a repeat offender in failing to turn over public records.

- Language in the law that mandates the Secretary of State's Office enforce penalties added to Chapter 66 to ensure that the law is not ignored by the Secretary of State.

- A daily fine imposed on the Secretary of State's Office for failing to enforce the law within ten days of being notified of a public records violation.

- Authority granted to Superior Court Judges to enforce Chapter 66 with the authority to impose additional fines and penalties when violations of the law become a pattern.

Enforcing the state's public records law is a no brainer to anyone who cares about public access and transparency in government. Enacting these types of enforcement measures will ensure that scofflaws who try to conceal public records to hide their illegal activity will be held accountable.

The Valley Patriot will be watching this debate very carefully. We will be meticulously watching to see which legislators make excuses to oppose adding penalties to MGL, Chapter 66.



Tom Duggan is the publisher of The Valley Patriot, a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP, 980AM, every Saturday from 10am-noon. You can email your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com

HAPPY FIRST ANNIVERSARY TO DR. VASO WITH RIVERWALK DENTAL

Dr. Vaso Hatzigiannis D.D.S. Joins Dr. Joseph P. Beninato D.M.D., P.C.

After spending 6 years in Connecticut and previously working in Methuen (from 2007-2008) Dr. Vaso Hatzigiannis has returned to the Merrimack Valley as the new partner of Joseph P. Beninato in the bustling Sal's Riverwalk, on Merrimack St. in Lawrence.

Dr. Vaso takes the place of the retiring Dr. Howard Smith, who grew up in Lawrence, received his Bachelor's Degree from Merrimack College in North Andover, was a clinical instructor at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in the Craniofacial Pain Center for the past twenty years.

Dr. Vaso hails from Greece. She came to the United States to go to college in 1993 and attended Brown University for her undergrad degree and graduated from Tufts Dental School. Dr. Vaso is married with two children and lives in Boxford.

Dr. Vaso is accepting new patients for any dental work or aesthetics you need (crowns, veneers, root canals), and she does accept children as clients.

SEE HER AD ON PAGE 30



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An Open Letter To The Community of Pentucket Regional Schools

Joseph D'Amore
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST



I want to remind everyone that this week the Superintendent will meet with the Chief of Police in an important meeting to review school security measures.

Coming off the incredibly volatile emotions from the tragedy in Connecticut - I - like you - whipsawed with ideas in mind about what to do and what not to do.

Some ideas, extremist by any measure, were fueled by what every single one of us has thought about at least once since December 14th. How would we feel if one of those 20 angels were one of our own?

Here's where I stand: I will propose the formation of a REGIONAL SCHOOL

SAFETY SECURITY COMMITTEE so that the law enforcement community, in conjunction with the school committee, community leaders, the superintendent and administrators will consistently focus on, build, implement and evaluate comprehensive measures to protect our children our schools.

This will include 1) identification of threats 2) Physical changes and modifications to buildings to improve physical security and deterrent measures 3) Formation and implementation of clearly defined emergency protocols including: regularly-scheduled "lock-down" drills and separately and distinct from that - fire/evacuation drills.

In the course of the next few weeks as these discussions produce tangible results I will ask for a public hearing to review suggestions made by the authorities. At

this meeting I will ask for the parents and supporters of our schools to deliver statements and suggestions so that the policies we review and improve -and if we have to those we create from scratch - will reflect enhanced measures and protocols formed in a collaborative process.

The central theme of my proposal and suggested actions is to enable our law enforcement community, especially the Police Chiefs and public safety experts, to play a very prominent role in public policy formulation pertaining to school security.

This is essential and can materialize because of two reasons:

1. What's happened in Connecticut
2. The priorities of our new Superintendent are better aligned with this vision

When I bring my service on the school committee to a close after my second term in May and move on to other posts,

if the public will grant me that privilege, I will further the viability, integrity and relevance of a REGIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY-SECURITY COMMITTEE. My goal is to help develop it as an advisory panel for school officials modeled after the very successful Regional Finance Advisory Committee which is made up of community leaders, officials, school administrators and finance directors from West Newbury, Merrimack and Groveland.

I wish everyone a blessed, prosperous, happy and safe New Year.

And I remain eternally grateful for your support in the years I've served on the School Committee.

Joe D'Amore
Groveland, MA
Member- Pentucket Regional School Committee

The City of Lawrence The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

First, let me say Happy New Year to all the Valley Patriot readers and let's expect the absolute best in 2013 for everyone.

If I were to give this column a second title it would read something like this, "Why Supposedly Good Elected Officials say and do nothing when Bad things happen to Good People, while at the same time saying and doing nothing when Good things happen to Allegedly Bad People?" Obviously the latter is way too long but it encompasses what I want to convey in this column.

It drives me crazy when I read news from the Valley Patriot Facebook posts or the yesterday's news today from the daily paper that concerns the city I live in. Then after reading such outrageous news there are no comments from the supposedly good elected officials that represent Lawrence! I am talking about our wonderful State Senator, Mr. Barry Finegold and our distinguished State Representatives, The Honorable Marcos Devers and State Representative Elect and City Council President, Mr. Frank Moran. These are good people who say they make decisions and vote from the heart, but how they can remain silent while lots of shenanigans at City Hall are going on is beyond my comprehension. What does this say about what's in their hearts?

For example, how they can remain silent when a Lawrence DPW worker, Mr. Tom Sapienza got fired right after Thanksgiving for taking leave to care for his wife at home dying of cancer? Then on the same day of his firing a former enemy and now new FOW, (Friend of Willy, Mayor William Lantigua), Mr. Jose Santiago was hired as a DPW worker. How can they remain silent when Highly Decorated Firefighter, Mr. Tim Atwood gets fired after

submitting Doctor's documents that state that he got sick on the job? How can they remain silent when Lawrence Deputy Chief of Police, Mr. Melix Bonilla gets indicted on extortion charges and suspended with pay in September of 2012, (Salary, \$140,000.00)? How can they remain silent when Police Officer, Mr. PJ Lopez was Indicted on Bribery charges and suspended with pay in September of 2012, (Salary, \$60,000.00)? Both gentlemen in law enforcement are taking \$200,000.00 from a poor city; clearly it pays to be a FOW, (Friend of Willy, Mayor Lantigua).

This is definitely some of the bad and the ugly of the happenings in the city of Lawrence. Not a good way to end 2012, but I am left to think that this is okay with the elected officials representing Lawrence. I am left with the old maxim of "see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil." This seems to be the rule of conduct by our elected officials. This explains why at the beginning of this column I offered a second title of, "Why supposedly good elected officials allow bad things to happen to good people while at the same time allowing good things to happen to allegedly bad people?"

Oh' I can already hear the response from their supporters, "What do you want these Politicians to do? My answer is simple,

show some signs of life and say something! Do they agree and stand with the Mayor of Lawrence with these actions of his or do they disagree and condemn these actions?

At the time of the writing of this column, The Honorable Mayor, Mr. William Lantigua announced his intentions of running for another 4 year term

as The Mayor of Lawrence. He actually believes that he has done a marvelous job and that the City is much safer now due to the policies that he has implemented, therefore deserving of 4 more years! The boldness and arrogance of this guy is outstanding! From day one it has been an in your face type of arrogance with the promoting of his friend Police Sergeant Melix Bonilla to Deputy Chief of Police who as I said before is now indicted for extortion. The Mayor ended 2012 with the hiring of his long time enemy

and now new friend Mr. Jose Santiago to work in the DPW Department. Surrounded by supporters, he boldly announces that due to his good leadership and the work of his administration he believes he should continue to be the Mayor of Lawrence for another term. This has to be the height of arrogance and self-righteousness! I pray that the majority of the Hispanic community of Lawrence who supported him 4 years

ago sees through this bunch of smoke and corruption and comes to the conclusion that the City of Lawrence really deserves better.

In conclusion, I thank God the See no evil, Hear no evil and Speak no evil way of doing things by the City Politicians is not the rule of conduct by the people, the citizens of Lawrence. I am now happy and delighted to share the GOOD of what makes Lawrence a wonderful place to live. I refer you to an article in the daily paper by Keith Eddings, published December 19, 2012, entitled "Community rallies for family facing cancer, foreclosure." In this article you will find the details of how a community of caring neighbors and friends came to the aid of the Sapienza's in their difficult time of need.

The good news is that the good deeds done by these good people outweigh the continued silence or lack of action from the elected officials of Lawrence. The good deeds done by the people of Lawrence will continue into the New Year with a benefit planned for the Sapienza's to help them keep their house and help with other financial hardships they may have on January 12, 2013 at the Relief's Inn Social Club on Market Street in Lawrence. (More details to follow). Former City planning Director Mr. Mike Sweeney who also was fired by Mayor Lantigua is organizing the event. So it is good to see that in spite of what some may call heartless efforts by the Mayor of Lawrence and his administration, good can and will prevail in Lawrence in 2013!

Once again, have a Happy and Safe New Year!

God Bless You All!



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

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Son of Knee Surgery Patient who Died At Holy Family Says He Will File Suit

Brian Evans, the son of Helen Bousquet, who died on October 5th at The Holy Family Hospital in Methuen after knee surgery, says he will file suit against The Holy Family Hospital, Steward Health Care, Cerberus Capital Management, and separately, intends to file a \$50 million lawsuit against The LeapFrog Group, who rates the hospital.

Bousquet was admitted to the Holy Family (Caritas) Hospital late last year for knee surgery and died in recovery. She had sleep apnea and was not hooked up to a physician prescribed machine during recovery.

Evans, a renowned big band singer whose hit song "At Fenway" was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame Library, says he will claim fraud in his forthcoming suit against LeapFrog Group. LeapFrog Group contends it is non-profit, Evans says he wants to expose who their donors are contending that LeapFrog then rates them.

The American Hospital Association is also concerned about LeapFrog Group.

"In my opinion, some people make a living off the appearance that they care,

not what they actually do," Evans says.

"LeapFrog is giving false faith to patients, which results in them being cared for at hospitals such as this, is in my opinion fraudulent. I also believe the Catholic Church should not allow their names to be on privately owned hospitals by an equity firm, which gives older people the belief that it's safer. I say this as a Catholic myself. Steward Health Care System has no business owning a hospital named Holy Family, St. Elizabeth's, "St. Anne's," or "Good Samaritan." It's just marketing, in my opinion. The moment a private equity firm bought the hospitals, the names should have all been changed to reflect that."

Evans spoke with Archdiocese investigator Ed Murphy, who said he'd get back to Evans in "a couple of weeks." Evans says he never did.

"My mother gave up years of what were

to be great years, and she will not have done so for nothing. Aside from the legacy she will have for what she did for me, and with me, as she has been added to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and indeed Red Sox Nation with her work on our forthcoming music video, she will have accomplished more than I ever will in what she did when she gave up her life to bring attention to the dangers of sleep apnea," says Evans. "She saved lives."



"People need to get in the habit of screaming when something like this happens to them. The idea that you have no ability to change things is just what they want you to believe. A corporation is run by people, and you all need to lose the fear that they are too big to go after. My mother did it, but it's the family members who are given the responsibility to be their messenger

when they are gone. You are responsible for making the world know that your loved one was here, mattered, and made the world a better place. My mother did just that. I will not let my mother down, and when I see her again, she will know I never sold her out. As anyone who has lost a mom can tell you, it's when you realize that you will indeed die twice."

Helen Bousquet with William Shatner at Fenway

Actor William Shatner, who also suffers from sleep apnea, has conveyed his support in Evans holding those in her untimely death responsible. Shatner has supported the placement of a plaque on M Street in Hampton Beach in her honor, an idea her son came up with.

"I've had family members actually say to me that I needed to honor my mother. That I wasn't by bringing up what I believed had been done to her on the day she passed away. I knew there was nothing I could do. There was coming to the conclusion that this was real, which is a shocking feeling they make no pill that I can give you to describe, and then phase two, which

HOLY FAMILY: PAGE 21

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RONNIE'S RANTS

Random Thoughts

Ronnie Ford

VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

Officer Tom Earnshaw is one big dude! When faced with a twenty people mob attack on his person, the experienced and likable Cop was really up against it. Thank God for the backup of the local police and State Police. This shows the potential danger that lurks around every police response.

If we are going to back up our police, then let us do it right. Earnshaw is not a fresh Cop. He didn't deserve that attack just for trying to keep the rest of us safe. Bring back the two people cruiser and more of them. So let us start yelling and get these men and women in blue who protect us 24/7 some protection and equipment.

We spend monies on frivolous nonsensical things. Let's get some manpower and essential equipment that they need to challenge the escalation of gangs that are growing so rapidly. It doesn't take much to start a mob mentality in any situation. So we should protect our police and fire personal from assaults and quell this notion that mobs and gangs can overrun our public safety personal.

The horror that took place in Newtown, CT is being shown all over the states and beyond. And well it should, if it will bring some concrete ideas to keep our school children safe. Most of us still cannot wrap our minds around this senseless assault. But, it seems to me, with all the knowledge, resources and intelligent people we have here in our homeland; we can find a

solution to this problem. We can put men and women on the moon, put a spacecraft on Mars, have a space station circling the globe, satellites floating around to maintain computers, GPS and any manner of electronics; then we ought to be capable of keeping our schools safe! We have a war on drugs, illegal people crossing our borders, killings in our streets and assault weapons in homes (why we need these is beyond me) and it goes on and on.

Why? Because it is lucrative to the many! Money is the root of all EVIL! We could fix all of the above, for God's sake, WE ARE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA! Let the leaders of our nation put a zipper on their pockets, never mind playing political games, start doing the people's business no matter what party you belong to. Most importantly of all, PUT GOD BACK IN OUR SCHOOLS and public buildings.

The majority wants it let the minorities leave the country if they don't like it. Start doing the right thing before there is anarchy in our land. Khrushchev once said "We will bury you from within", well see it now. The greatest falsehood the devil ever perpetrated was to convince the populace the he doesn't exist!

Wishing you all a very HAPPY, HEALTHY, NEW YEAR! May the good Lord take a liking to you, do something nice for someone today. And, we wish you enough.

Ronnie can be contacted at radiotalk@comcast.net

The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

Woman Denied Abortion Dies in Hospital

Irish Times November 14, 2012, Kitty Holland & Paul Cullen, Health Correspondent

Jack Doyle, County Sligo

VALLEY PATRIOT IRISH COLUMNIST

Two investigations are under way into the death of a woman who was 17 weeks pregnant, at University Hospital Galway last month. Savita Halappanavar (31), a dentist, presented with back pain at hospital on October 21st, was found to be miscarrying, and died of septicaemia a week later.

Her husband, Praveen (34), an engineer at Boston Scientific in Galway, says she asked several times over a three-day that the pregnancy be terminated. He says that, having been told she was miscarrying, and after one day in severe pain, Ms. Halappanavar asked for medical termination.

This was refused, he says because the fetal heartbeat was still present and they were told, this is a Catholic country She spent a further 2 days in agony until the fetal heartbeat was no longer present and the fetal heartbeat stopped.

Intensive care

The dead fetus was removed and Savita was taken to the high dependency unit and then the intensive care unit, where she died of septicaemia on the 28th. An autopsy carried out by Dr. Grace Callagy two days later found she died of septicaemia. documented ante-mortem and E coli ESBL. A hospital spokesman confirmed

the Health Service Executive had begun an investigation while the hospital had also instigated an internal investigation. He said the hospital extended its sympathy to the family and friends of Ms. Halappanava but could not discuss the details of any individual. Speaking from Belgaum in the Karnataka region of southwest India, Mr. Halappanavar said internal examination performed when she first presented.

The doctor told us the cervix was fully dilated, amniotic fluid was leaking and unfortunately the baby wouldn't survive. The doctor, he says, it should be over in a few hours. There followed three days, he says, of the fetal heartbeat being checked several time a day.

Savita was really in agony. She was very upset, be she accepted she was losing the baby. When the consultant came on the ward rounds on Monday morning Savtia asked if they could not to save the baby could they induce to end the pregnancy. The consultant said as long as there is a heartbeat we can't do anything. Then again on Tuesday morning after the ward rounds and it was the same discussion. The consultant said it was the law, that this is a Catholic country. Savita (a Hindu) said: I am neither Irish nor Catholic but they said there was nothing they could do.

Continued next month.

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Chief Solomon: Search Your Children's Rooms, Read Their Diaries

After Preventing School Shooting at Methuen High, Chief Says Parents are the first line of Defense

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

METHUEN – Just days before the Newtown, Connecticut shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon says that Methuen High School was very close to having a “Columbine-style” mass murder.

“When I saw the breaking news in Connecticut, ... I got that little chill and you say ‘wow’, you know, thank God our situation worked out the way it worked out in Methuen. That could have been us. That could have been Methuen.”

After getting a tip from a Methuen High School student last month that someone was planning a mass shooting at the school, Chief Solomon said that they conducted a search warrant and were able to arrest the student, having him held for a “dangerousness” hearing while they continued their investigation.

Solomon said that he believes the teen “absolutely had every intention on committing a mass shooting at Methuen High. We were very lucky just days before the Sandy Hook Shooting that we were able to prevent what happened there.”

PREVENTING ANOTHER COLUMBINE

“There were some rumors going around that something was going to occur,” Solomon said.

“A girl actually had a conversation with the subject [Jacob Booth Maille] and during that conversation she became aware that this was absolutely his plan to do a Columbine-type strike at Methuen High School.”

“Then after there was further conversation between her and the suspect, she went immediately to a school counselor. The school counselor interviewed her, then interviewed her with the principal, and we brought the school safety officer in.”

“Threats to commit a crime of murder is a felony,” the chief continued. “So, its an arrestable offense, and therefore we were able to have the power of arrest to bring him in. We placed him under arrest and then conducted a search warrant. Some of the evidence that was located, that we’re not allowed to talk about, made me a bit alarmed. It was not weapons, but definitely, I believe, if we had an opportunity of coming close to [a mass shooting] occurring at Methuen High. I think this might have been the opportunity.”

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING

“You know who really deserves an award? The girl who brought the information to us, she had the courage to stand up

when she knew something was this important, and actually came forward. And she’s the one who absolutely, 100% should be receiving every single award and accolade. She’s the hero here. If it wasn’t for her coming forward to us, we wouldn’t have had the information. And if this was pre-Columbine, we probably wouldn’t have interviewed the suspect until the next morning when school started and that may have been too late.”

Solomon said he wants to “Encourage students to follow the role model of this girl,” encouraging students that if they see or hear something they need to tell officials right away.

“If someone says, ‘hey I’m going to kill so-and-so... even they are just mad and you’re not sure if they mean it, please report it. Let us look into it. We’d rather have the situation we had [last month] than the situation like they are dealing with in Connecticut today. I don’t think people realize how serious this was!”

Butze-Maille is being charged with threatening to commit murder, willfully communicating a threat concerning a dangerous item, and intimidation of a witness.

At a dangerousness hearing held in Lawrence District Court on January 4th, a Lawrence District Court Judge ordered Butze-Maille held no dangerousness until January 25th. District Attorney Jon Blodgett’s office dropped the “threat to commit terrorism” charge, a move that Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon said he agreed with.

“The situation is extremely serious,” the chief said.

“I’m glad the courts and the District Attorney are taking this seriously. But, based on their evaluation of the charges and his situation, they decided that one of the charges should be withdrawn and that’s the terrorism charge, and we support the D.A. completely on that.”

Solomon said that he was relieved that the teen was not going to be freed and that his situation was continually being evaluated.

“It appears this case will remain in district court because the most serious charge has been nullified. We are working towards [finding out] what his motivation was behind all this. Once we are comfortable that we have an answer to that, then the decision will be made as to whether or not this is extremely serious, or just moderately serious.”

TRUSTING YOUR KIDS WITH PRIVACY AT HOME IS LIKE “EVERYONE GETS A TROPHY”

Police Chief Solomon says that gun

“Not only do you go through their rooms, in my opinion, but they’re driving, you look in their cars. You look in their glove box. And for me, I would look in their phones, and their computers, because most kids are writing notes or making plans in there. And what you see if you look around the country ... most of the time after a school shooting you find a diary, or a book, or journal where they kept notes, and plans and drew pictures. So, as parents, if you want to be proactive? ... look through your kids stuff!”

~ Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon



bans will not stop school shootings, but there are things parents can do to prevent them from occurring: by being more aware of what their children are doing.

He says children living at home with their parents, even kids in their late teens should have no expectation of privacy and parents need to go through their rooms, read their diaries, cell phones, emails, etc. “As parents we need to be involved in what our children are doing when they think their parents are not paying attention.”

“That whole privacy issue,” Solomon said. “I look at it this way for the kids; the privacy issue at home is the same concept as ‘everyone gets a trophy.’”

“I’m so against that personally, where just for participating you get something! I remember crying at the end of the basketball or baseball season because we lost as kids. I remember getting to the final game and we came in number two. You absolutely have to know what disappointment is about. A lot of these kids don’t even know what disappointment is about, so they can’t deal with people making fun of them. They can’t deal with losing or disappointment. So, no I don’t believe that kids, even kids in their late teens should have any privacy from their parents.

Not only do you go through their rooms, in my opinion, but they’re driving, you look in their cars. You look in their glove box. And for me, I would look in their phones, and their computers, because most kids are writing notes or making plans in there. And what you see if you look around the country, even internationally, most of the time after a school shooting you find a diary, or a book, or journal where they kept notes and plans and drew

pictures. So, as parents, if you want to be proactive? If you want to help your child who may be involved in something like this themselves.... and stopping them from committing suicide at the end, or going to prison for life, if you want to help prevent another family from having to live with this trauma, look through your kids stuff!”

“I don’t see that as an invasion. You know what? When they get to be 18 years old, and they want their own privacy, go rent yourself an apartment. We’ve done our job to bringing you up.”

“If you want to live in my house then you have a reduced expectation of privacy. Parents need to understand this. Their children are not their friends. Giving them privacy doesn’t make you a good parent. Searching their rooms and their iPhones and their emails makes you a good parent, because it means you care enough about them to want to protect them from their own bad decisions.”

Solomon said that the police and school officials are continuing to improve security at all city schools and that every effort is being made to ensure every student is safe at school.

“We need to continue our vigilance in the schools,” Solomon said. “I’ve met twice with superintendent on this, there are additional measures we are taking to ensure student safety in every school in Methuen. I am personally attending training with the Methuen School Officers to move us from where we are, to an advanced level of lockdown. When that is done, we will move the success we have already had with school safety, to the next level.”

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Why Banning Guns Just Doesn't Work

Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

GEORGETOWN TODAY

"Free men own guns. Slaves don't," Tim gruffed as he shuffled egg bits around on his plate, speaking to no one, but speaking to everyone as we caught up at the local breakfast nook called Theo's (best omelets around, but I was in the mood for the special pancakes for which I brought in my own 'real' maple syrup, yum, yum).

"Yeah, but today, today, with all the killings... In Chicago, see, the Chicago Tribune just printed more than 500 murdered folks, by guns in 2012," a young guy twisting on a

stool and tapping his electronic phone thing replied to Tim. I could feel Tim's warming up, and I just sat back and poured some more syrup. This kid was going to get a little self-education; Tim was going to make him think. I've seen this before. I could see Tim was going to have some fun.

"How many of those 500 fought back?" Tim asked.

The 'Kid' had been spouting and spouting about gun control and Obama since he sat

down.

"What do you mean fought back?" the twenty-something year old said as he tapped on his electronic phone thing as I could see his eggs getting colder by the moment (obsessed as he was with text-chats since the minute he sat down. Heck, it took the waitress several tries to get his order between taps and beeps and more taps on that little phone thingy communication destroyer the kid gripped like Linus's security blanket).

"Fought back. When they were banging down his front door, what did the guy do? Grab a broom? Grab the phone? Grab a gun to defend himself and his kids?" Tim whispered very slowly as he poured a little cream into his fresh brew.

"Gun? That's the problem. That's what I said. They can't have guns. That's what caused the murder" the kid sneered.

"So, what you're saying is that it's O.K. for the bad guy to come in with a gun, but the homeowner, or that apartment dweller in Chicago you were yammering about, can only defend himself with the telephone?" Tim held back an inner laugh.

The kid went on with a long explanation about how guns were bad, how guns caused the 500 murders in Chicago, how guns are evil, blah blah, blah.

"Chicago. Isn't that one of Obama's home-towns?" Tim asked, and continued without waiting for an answer "the gun control laws there are tremendous. 'The 'city without guns' is what they call those gun laws. If I wanted to own a gun in Chicago, no way, no how. So why do you think, in a city where you can't get a gun legally, 500 dads and moms got murdered? Have you looked at how many home break-ins occurred there? How many times neighbors hid while a gang of three or four punks banged on a door until finally making their way in, quickly killing the homeowner, grabbing what they could, then disappearing in the night? How many small businessmen murdered by lone gunmen? Have you thought about this at the ground-level?" Tim dug. "About being a dad, protecting your wife, at ground level?"

"Ground level? What do you mean" the kid replied, his hand frozen in time above his tapping device.

"Well, put yourself there. It's a Friday night. You're home watching TV with your bride. Suddenly there's a big rumble outside

your door, and then, someone is banging and trying to break in. What would you do?" Tim started.

"Now, before you think about calling the police, which is what you need to do, I have to ask, what will happen to you and your bride if the door gets broken down before the cops show up, like it did for hundreds of folks in Chicago?" Tim deadpanned.

"Do you have an exit strategy? Like a safe room with a bigger lock and a tougher door to keep them away from you while you wait for the cops? Do you have any kind of defense weapons? Pepper spray? Will it work against 3 punks high on the latest drugs? Do you have any way to comfort your wife and your children, as you wait, while they continue to pound on that door, that door, the hinges, the only thing between you and a raped wife, a knife in your gut, your kids throats slashed. How long will it be? How many minutes, how much terror of the unknown?" Tim asked.

I forgot I was in a restaurant. The place was dead silent. The focus was gone. Everyone was watching the twenty-something 'kid'. His phone now placed silently on the counter.

"So, what you're telling me, what you're trying to tell me is that, if I had to defend my family, if I had a wife and kids, and it was up to me, I would need something, something now, while we waited, something just in case, in case they broke in our safe door where we ran to hide," he managed, his eyes fixated on something but nothing, his vision gone to a home, to a place, to a situation beyond his control.

"Just asking," Tim said, as he poked his eggs again and started back at his breakfast.

"Hmm, so when seconds count, the cops are just minutes away," the kids managed.

"I think you get my point," Tim said. "Too many folks don't prepare, and can't fight back. I hope you never have to fight back. If you do, I hope you can protect yourself, somehow."

The score (as reported just before press time by the Chicago Tribune): 500 moms and dads and kids murdered in Chicago last year. Yes, in a city that continues to impose extremely restrictive gun laws on its citizens, leaving those law-abiding citizens naked to the wolves. Oh, and that's a 17% increase from 2011.

"Keep the faith, stock up on food, cash, and laundry detergent, and as always, keep sending your notes. Peace."

Lonnie@georgetowntoday.org



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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

New Book to tell the tales of Lowell's Own Bobby Christakos

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Five-time Golden Glove boxing champion, Bobby Christakos may live in a modest home in a quiet neighborhood in Lowell, but once visitors get a look inside it is clear that this is not the home of any ordinary Lowell citizen.

Lining the walls and ceiling of his garage are awards and photos of Christakos with various celebrities and boxing greats. Christakos, the only person to win the Golden Gloves five times in a row, will be the subject of now a book called "The Brawler".

"And if things go well," Christakos told the Valley Patriot in an exclusive interview, "hopefully they are going to make a movie when the book is done. We wanted to call it The Fighter," he said laughing. "but, that one was kind of taken."

In 2010, Mark Wahlberg and Christian Bale starred in the hit movie "The Fighter" about another Lowell boxing champ, Micky Ward.

"John Dousterlaros came up to me at the Owl Diner, and he had heard me telling stories about the old days when my father ran a bookie joint, the cops on my father's payroll, the celebrities and the politicians who used to come in. He said he wanted me to tell him my stories so we could put it in a book," Christakos said.

"He sat down with me every Friday for over a year and I told him my stories. It's slated to come out by the end of March."

Christakos was animated as he shared stories in and out of the ring. In his boxing career he had 98 wins and 9 losses with 42 knockouts. Christakos fought five Gold Glove Champions including Mariln Starling Vinny Pazienza, Bobby Sims, and

Bobby Joe Young.

Getting his Start in Boxing

"I was in front of my father's coffee house one time, my father was a bookie on Market Street. So, this guy walked by with a long hair and a beard, he looked like a drug addict or something. And I had a big mouth back then so, I asked him 'What's your F*ing problem?' My father said to me, 'Hey, you started it, go fight him.'"

"I got my ass beat bad by that guy. After that my father said, 'you are going to the gym, you better learn how to fight with that big mouth of yours.' So, I went down to the gym and started training with Irish Beau Jaynes, Manny Freitas, Steve Coop, Dicky Eckland, Mickey Ward, and Jimmy Lopez. I mean these are all guys who are great fighters."

"I remember sparring with Manny Freitas, man you could hit him with a pipe. I was only 16 years old, he was like 25 years old. But, my father always told me, if you spar with the best you are going to be the best. If you spar with a bum, you're going to fight like a bum. You want to spar with someone better than you."

"All of sudden, I am fighting in the Golden Gloves and I won. I won the championship. Imagine, from getting my ass kicked to being a Golden Glove winner. It was amazing," Christakos recounted with excitement as if it had only happened yesterday.

"That was in 1975. The next year, in 1976 I won the Golden Gloves again, and the next year, and the next. By 1981 I had won five Golden Gloves."

Life is Stranger than Fiction

"One day, after winning my 5th title, I was looking across the street and I see the guy, that guy who beat me up five years earlier, and he took a couple of cheap shots-



Five Time Golden Glove winner Bobby Christakos in his Lowell Home among dozens of photos and awards with his long time friend Larry Richardson.

giving me the boot that first time."

"I said hey, you remember me? He said, 'I just got out of jail, I was in for three days leave me alone.' I put him down with one punch. I said remember me now? Now, Tiny Mulligan the cop is standing right across the street and saw me beating the guy. He didn't know what to do. When it was all over he ended up arresting the other guy for assaulting me," Christakos said giggling.

A Change Meeting with Whitey Bulger

"Everyone came into my father's place. Everybody. We had Congressmen, we had gangsters, we had cops, we had the guy who lived down the street. Whitey Bulger went in there, the whole Winter Hill Gang hung out there. Guys like Manny Bello, Jackie McDermott, Peter Sinderas, Allan the Closet, Rifleman Flemmi, who is still alive today. These guys were in my father's place all the time."

"I walked in one day and my father said, 'get out!' He was meeting with a bunch of guys. I could see this guy and the two goons with him didn't want me there, so I said, 'No.'"

"I had no idea who this guy was, but Whitey says 'hey kid come here.' He smacked me in the back of the head and handed me a \$100 bill and told me to go get him some coffee."

"I get to the store and the coffee is only 15 cents. I handed the lady the \$100 bill and she got mad, she said 'What am I supposed to do with this?' I said 'it's for some guy named Whitey Bugel, Whitey Bungle?' She grabbed the money right out of my hand and said "give me that" and handed me \$99.85 in change. When I brought the guy his coffee, he slapped me the head again and said 'take the change and get the F* out of here and don't come back for two

hours."

"You know how much \$99.85 was worth back then? That was like \$5,000 back then. I remember what he said when I was leaving he said, 'one of these days you are going to work for me.' I said, 'never happen.' I never did, either."

Christakos says that not everyone who frequented his father's "bookie joint" was a criminal or a gangster or a politician on the take. "We had regular people too. It

wasn't just criminals all the time like people think," he said.

"You know, back in those days it was normal. It wasn't corruption, it was just the way it was."

FRIENDS TODAY

"When Davis was on vice-squad in Lowell, he arrested my father, and he pushed him. Me and my brother Butchy, we both went after Davis. Next thing you know they hit a panic button and 30 cruisers show up." Christakos said

that eventually the cops separated everybody but the only thing they were really concerned about was keeping Bobby and his brother Butchy apart.

"But it's funny, now, me and Davis are friends. In fact, he has done a few favors for me recently and he didn't have to do that. But we go way back and it's nice that some of the guys from back then help each other out, you know?"

THE BRAWLER

The first book signing for "The Brawler" will be in July at the Spinners Field. "Drew Webber says that's what he wants me to do, and I love that guy. He really is the best," Christakos said. The Valley Patriot will be closely following the book release and will publish more of our interview with Bobby Christakos in the coming months. Christakos will also appear on WCAP's Paying Attention with Tom Duggan later this month.

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Reps. Lombardo, Lyons Call for Fair and Just Legal Benefits

BOSTON – “Should every innocent, law-abiding, taxpaying citizen of Massachusetts receive legal benefits similar to those being bestowed on a vicious wife killer?” That is precisely the question being raised by Representatives Jim Lyons of Andover and Marc Lombardo of Billerica.

According to news reports, a convicted wife murderer is on track to receive a taxpayer-funded endowment of more than \$700,000.00 to pay for his legal fees, as an incarcerated prisoner in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Make no mistake: these generous legal fees do not concern the question of guilt or innocence. Instead, these expenses result from the murderer’s desire for a sex change operation, and his insistence that the innocent, law-abiding, taxpaying citizens of Massachusetts pay for such an operation.

Today, this wife killer expects the innocent taxpayers to pay both for his sex change operation and for his legal fees incurred, while he was demanding that those law-abiding citizens pay for such a procedure.

Responding to that line of argument, Representatives Jim Lyons and Marc Lombardo will file legislation guaranteeing each and every innocent, law-abiding, taxpaying citizen of Massachusetts legal fee benefits that are equal to the amount they are obliged to pay on behalf of this vicious criminal who murdered his spouse, Cheryl Kosilek.

“If innocent taxpayers are forced to fund the unlimited expenses of wife murderers

- even when those bills are unrelated to a trial ascertaining criminal guilt or innocence - then shouldn’t those law-abiding citizens have access to the same benefits,” asked Lyons. “It’s the height of absurdity to mandate that taxpayers have an obligation to pay the massive bills of vicious murderers, but those same law-abiding citizens have no right to equal legal benefits.

“This is an issue of fundamental fairness,” Lyons emphasized. “The hard working citizens who follow the rules and pay their taxes do not qualify for benefits like this. If we provide extravagant benefits like this to a vicious murderer, then why deny them to the law abiding citizenry? It’s a simple matter of fairness and justice.”

“It seems that every day that passes with this case, a new absurd ruling is made that costs taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars,” added Representative Marc Lombardo. “I’m outraged that any taxpayer dollars are being spent on heinous convicted murderers, never mind that those dollars are being used to pay legal fees for efforts to have a taxpayer funded sex change. The taxpayers continue to get a raw deal with this case. We need some reassignment of priorities in our state government.”

Lyons and Lombardo agreed that they will continue to speak on behalf of those who follow the rules, because in this case it is the innocent who are being punished.



Nanci Milone Hill is new Director of Dracut Public Library

John Dyer, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Dracut M. G. Parker Memorial Library is pleased to announce that Nanci Milone Hill will join the Dracut M. G. Parker Memorial Library staff as the LIBRARY DIRECTOR on January 22, 2013.

Ms. Hill most recently worked as the Director of the Boxford Town Library in Boxford, MA and previous to that several other Massachusetts Libraries. She brings with her a vast amount of experience in library management and patron services.

She is the author of Reading Women: A Book Group Guide for Women’s Fiction, which was released from Libraries Unlimited in March of 2012. In addition, she co-edits the “Perspectives” column for Public Libraries, writes a bi-monthly column for Library Journal, and is a regular

contributor to NoveList; a readers’ advisory database utilized by public libraries. She serves on the Executive Board of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium, as well as the Executive Board of MassLNC (the Massachusetts Library Network Cooperative). She is also active in the Massachusetts Library Association and the American Library Association.

Ms. Hill has a Master’s Degree in Library Science from the Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Boston, MA and a Bachelor’s Degree in Literature and Philosophy from Bradford College, Bradford, MA.

Ms. Hill states that she is thrilled to be joining the wonderful staff at the Dracut Library, and looks forward to working with them to bring the best possible library service to all Dracut patrons.

Dracut Senior Happenings

There are a lot more fun activities for our vital Dracut elders! Please see their calendar on their website: www.dracut-ma.us

Jan 10th, - 1:30-3:45pm	Nurse Nancy
Jan 11th, - 9am	Bowling
- 9:30am	Job Lots & Al Fresca’s in Tewksbury
Jan 14th, - 10am A	Affordable Hearing (Free Screening)
	10:30am Rep. Colleen Garry (office hours)
Jan 15th, 10am	Grocery Shopping
Jan 16th, 2:30pm	DCOA Board Meeting
Jan 17th, 1:30-3:45pm	Nurse Nancy
Jan 18th, 9am	Bowling
	9:30am Target & China Buffet in Lowell
Jan 21st	CLOSED MLK HOLIDAY CTR IS CLOSED
Jan 22nd, 10am	Grocery Shopping
Jan 23rd, 9:30am	Shine
	1:00pm Senior Club Meeting
Jan 24th, 11:30am	MVNP Site Special
	1:30-3:45pm Nurse Nancy
Jan 25th 9am	Bowling
	9:30am Homegoods & 99 in Derry NH
Jan 29th Tue, 9am	Veterans Breakfast
	10am Grocery Shopping
Jan 30th, 10am	Coffee with the Director
	1:30-3:45pm Nurse Nancy

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Unwanted Meds Disposal Kiosk Now At Dracut PD

Through grant funding received by the City of Lowell Health Department, the Town of Dracut has been provided with a kiosk specifically designed for the disposal of unwanted medications. A kiosk has been placed within the lobby of the Dracut Police Department located at 110 Loon Hill Road. The kiosk is accessible to residents 24/7. Only residents can drop off waste medications; businesses are prohibited from dropping off waste medications.

The kiosk is for the collection of pills only, no liquids or sharps are to be deposited. Residents are to remove pills from containers and seal them in a plastic ziplock type bag.

The bag containing the pills should be no larger than two slices of bread. There is no limit to the amount of individual bags that can be deposited. Residents are to package the pills prior to arriving at the police station. The police department will not be supplying materials for the disposal of unwanted medications. The packaged pills should be ready for immediate deposit upon arrival at the police station. The kiosk is for unused prescription and over the counter pills, no illegal items of contraband and/or controlled substances per se are to be deposited. The kiosk will be open for deposits as of December 17, 2012.

WHOLESALE PRICES TO THE PUBLIC

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

MAYOR MEETS WITH CGS STUDENTS

Methuen, MA – Continuing a tradition that began when he first took office, Mayor Steve Zanni is once again meeting with local students for lunch each month. “Last year I thought it would be a good thing to meet with students at each of the schools before the summer break,” explained Zanni. “I really enjoyed the opportunity to sit with students, so I wanted to continue that into this school year.” Zanni, who was joined by Methuen Superintendent Judy Scannell, visited the Comprehensive Grammar School for lunch on Wednesday. The Mayor described the lunch as being extra special because he sat at the same table as his granddaughter Gianna, a first grade student. “I know she loves having me stop by,” laughed Zanni, “but it also is fun for me because she helps pull other kids into the conversation. It’s fascinating to hear how much our students know about the City, and to hear their perspective. Maybe it’s the former teacher in me, but I love it.”

NORTHBOROUGH TEA PARTY

Wednesday, January 16, 7 pm – Merrimac Valley Tea Party’s first meeting in 2013 will focus on the U.S. Constitution. VFW Hall, 32 Park Street, North Andover. Ted Tripp tripp45@dslextreme.com

Wednesday, January 30, 10-11:30 am – The Founding Fathers Reading Group. Nathaniel Philbrick’s “Mayflower: A Story of Community, Courage and War” will be discussed. Northborough Free Library, 34 Main Street. All are welcome. Information: Barbara O’Mara 508.393.8011

Wednesday, January 30, 6:45-9 pm – The Greater Marlborough Tea Party monthly meeting will focus on its plans for 2013. Embassy Suites Hotel, Berklee Room, Route 20 West, Marlborough. Contact: Ralph Belmore jrbelmore@aol.com

LAWRENCE CATHOLIC ACADEMY “HOLIDAY SERVICE DRIVE” HELPS HURRICANE SANDY VICTIMS

Lawrence Catholic Academy announced the students, teachers and faculty held a “Holiday Service Drive” to help the people devastated by Hurricane Sandy. LCA held a dress down day and for a small donation, everyone could escape the traditional uniform and business attire and wear normal clothes to school. This event raised \$1000.00 and one hundred percent of the money raised will go to help the Hurricane Sandy Long Island Disaster Relief Fund. Also, each class was assigned to bring in certain items and/or products such as: clothes, paper towels, baby items, soap, first aid kits, toothbrushes, dog and

cat food, etc. all of which will go to help the victims of this unbelievable disaster. “Lawrence Catholic Academy community wanted in some way assist with the process of helping people restore hope and rebuild their lives, said John M. Licciardi, Director of Advancement, Lawrence Catholic Academy. “Because of the generous help from the American Ambulance Company, Boston, MA and its employees, Megan Saucier, Jarrod Mackenzie, and Susan Mackenzie, who donated their time and service to drive all the items and products down to the victims, LCA’s tradition of helping others will be achieved,” said Mr. Licciardi. For more information on Lawrence Catholic Academy and its educational programs, please contact John M. Licciardi at 978.683.5822 or visit our website at

www.lawrencecatholicacademy.net

MY LIFE, MY HEALTH CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

When: January 22 - February 26, 2013 (held once a week for 6 weeks) 1pm to 3:30pm including a 20 minute social time to meet other participants. Where: Lowell General Hospital, 295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell MA 01854. Questions or to Register Call: 978-946-1260. Over this 6-week workshop participants will learn how to manage their own medical condition. The workshop will help participants to remain healthy, active and independent in their own home. Come and enjoy this interactive program and meet many others with similar conditions!

PENACOOK PLACE NURSING AND REHABILITATION CENTER HAS BEEN FOUND DEFICIENCY-FREE FOR THE THIRD TIME IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

The state Department of Public Health’s Division of Healthcare Quality conducted an unannounced inspection in late October.

“Penacook’s staff works diligently to provide a positive atmosphere for residents,” said President and Chief Executive Officer Julian Rich. “I commend all staff members for having a cooperative and upbeat attitude every day. It makes a real difference in the quality of life for our residents.”

The division inspects Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing homes annually to assess compliance with federal and state standards of care. Inspectors evaluate nursing care, resident rights, food service, administration, and the overall environment of each facility. Those conducting the surveys are health care professionals such as registered nurses or licensed social workers.

The state surveys focus the greatest amount of scrutiny on the nursing department. Of Penacook’s 225 employees, two-thirds are members of the nursing department, whether assistants, supervisory staff, RNs or LPNs. Staff and residents celebrated with a Chinese food banquet.

Official results are available through the Survey Performance Tool for Nursing Homes at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/qtool2>.

Located at 150 Water St., the 160-bed Penacook Place is the only not-for-profit nursing and rehabilitation facility serving the city of Haverhill. Penacook Place has a professional staff of 225 employees. Contributions that support the purchase of new equipment, renovations and resident activities may be made to the Friends of Penacook Fund, c/o Penacook Place, 150 Water St., Haverhill, MA, 01830.

CLIFF EBERHARDT CONCERT JANUARY 19TH

Cliff Eberhardt performs at the New Moon Coffeehouse on Saturday December 19th at 8:00 pm. The coffeehouse is located in the Universalist Unitarian Church, 16 Ashland St, Haverhill MA. Admission to the show is \$20; \$10 for those ages 18 and under.

Extraordinary guitar playing, profound lyrics, and a penetrating, raspy voice—Eberhardt has it all. No wonder he continually ranks among the nation’s top folk musicians. His songwriting is artistic, insightful, humorous and soulful. His performances are witty, self-assured, and articulate. He’s been called the “missing link between Paul McCartney and Cole Porter.” Come hear his great melodies and find yourself and your world in his songs.

Tickets for this show are available at the door starting around 6:30; doors open at 7:30. Tickets may be reserved prior to the show by visiting www.newmooncoffeehouse.org, or by calling 978-459-5134.

The New Moon Coffeehouse is a nonprofit, an all-volunteer organization dedicated to supporting and enjoying the creative talents of acoustic performers. We strive to bring you the best performers in a relaxing, friendly, smoke and alcohol free environment, where you can enjoy a great show, fair trade coffee, and awesome desserts. Bring your own mug and the coffee is only \$1.00 for the evening.

The easiest way to get to the coffeehouse is to take 495 to exit 51A (Route 125 South). Stay on Route 125 South for about 1.5 miles. At intersection of Routes 125 & 110, look left for a red brick church. Turn left onto Kenoza Ave (aka Rte 110). Then right into church driveway. There are 2 parking lots available behind the church, on both sides of Ashland St. The coffeehouse entrance is also there, at the back of the church.

LARE HOSTS A HOLIDAY WOW!

The children of over two-hundred LARE Training Center Students received gifts from Santa this year thanks to the efforts of the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program and instructors and job developers of LARE, a branch of American Training, Inc. devoted to the education of the those looking to learn a skill or upgrade their current knowledge in a more marketable area.



Angela from Methuen Family Restaurant shows off the grilled marinated chicken salad. See their ad on page 33.

Students attend LARE Training Center in order to better their future and better provide for their family. Pursuing an education increases their lifetime earning potential but may financially restrict their ability to provide the ‘little things’ for their children in the short term. This need is why LARE began their Christmas with Santa Holiday program in 2003 and with each year the need for this holiday tradition grows.

“To see the Magic in the eyes of each of our Students’ children when they open their gifts directly from Santa and Mrs. Claus brings to light the real spirit of the season. We are so happy to be able to make Christmas real for so many children especially in these challenging economic times,” said Tom Connors, President and CEO of American Training and the LARE Training Center.

LARE’s three campuses of Chelsea, Lawrence, and Lowell held Holiday parties for each Center’s Student population and their children. Both Santa and Mrs. Claus were on hand to pose for pictures, visit with each child and hand deliver amazing gifts provided in conjunction with the local Toys for Tots program.

LARE Training Center is the educational branch of American Training that provides award-winning education, occupational skill training, and job placement programs to youth and adults in greater Lawrence, Chelsea, and Lowell. Licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Proprietary School Division, LARE is recognized as one of the most successful program of its kind in the state.

TOP OF NEXT PAGE

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American Training, Inc. programs support unemployed workers in need of technical training; young parents and youth in need of direction; and people with disabilities or mental illnesses who want to more fully participate in their community, or need a place to live. ATI is the parent company behind Day Services, Clinical Services, Residential Options, LARE Training Center, Contract Services, Starworks and Vanway.

For further information or to schedule an interview with a member of the American Training, Inc. please contact: Thomas M. Connors, President/CEO Tom@AmericanTrainingInc.com. 978-375-5163 cell

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www.dankirouac.com

NORTH ANDOVER - MUSEUM OF PRINTING - STRANGE TYPOGRAPHIC TALES.

Date: Saturday, February 2, 2013 at 10:00am

Discover strange stories, legends and tales of type! Dedicated to preserving the history of the graphic arts, graphic design, printing equipment and printing craftsmanship, The Museum of Printing holds the most extensive collection of materials and machines east of the Mississippi River. Explore the museum and experience the evolution of printing from Gutenberg's invention of movable type to your personal portable phone or tablet; advancements in printing and type technologies have been the predecessors to changes in civilizations. Industry expert and President of the Museum of Printing Frank Romano will share some of the strange typographic tales that he has collected in his travels around the world. Join us to learn the history of type that your teacher never taught you and the type designs that we see every day! Please note: The exhibit space at the Museum of Printing is handicap accessible but the lecture space on the 2nd floor is accessible via stairs only.

Reservations required. Essex Heritage & Museum of Printing Members \$10; Non-Members \$15. This event is open to the public, but space is limited and reservations are required. Please reserve online at www.essexheritage.org/membership/



Scott Jenkins from Armed Citizen Training on Merrimack Street in Lawrence conducts a firearms safety course.

events or call Essex Heritage at 978-740-0444 with questions and for more details. Event fees sustain the Essex Heritage Membership program and support partner sites. Location: The Museum of Printing

800 Massachusetts Avenue North Andover, MA 01845

NEWBURYPORT - PIANIST FREDERICK MOYER OPENS WILSON MUSIC SERIES ON JAN. 20

Concert pianist Frederick Moyer will perform "Of Old and New: A Grandfather's Tale" on Sunday, Jan. 20 at 4 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, 26 Pleasant St., Newburyport, the first of three concerts in the 2013 Jean C. Wilson Music Series.

The concert will feature works by Sergei Rachmaninoff, Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Liszt, Claude Debussy, Béla Bartok, Alberto Jonás, Ernst von Dohnanyi, Enrique Granados and Sergei Prokofiev.

During over 25 years as a full-time concert pianist, Moyer has established a vital musical career that has taken him to 43 countries and to such far-flung venues as Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Sydney Opera House, Windsor Castle, Carnegie Recital Hall, Tanglewood, and the Kennedy Cen-

ter. He has appeared as piano soloist with most of the major orchestras of the United States as well as many orchestras throughout Europe, Asia, South America, Africa and Australia.

Moyer's far-reaching interests have allowed him to contribute to classical music in unique ways. An avid computer programmer, he often incorporates technology into his concerts. As a member of the Jazz Arts Trio, he performs note-for-note transcriptions of such jazz pianists as Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans and Erroll Garner, bringing this great American music onto classical music stages. In July, 2009, he and Dr. Paul Green unveiled an unfinished piano sonata by Robert Schumann, a find that was widely reported in the national news media.

His 24 recordings comprise works by over 30 composers and reflect an affinity for a wide variety of styles.

The Jean C. Wilson Music Series is named for one of the founders and the director of the music series for 27 years. Now, under the auspices of the First Religious Society Unitarian Universalist Music Committee, the Music Series typically offers three concerts held during the first three months of the year.

Suggested donations are \$15, \$10 for seniors, children and students free. For more information about the concert go to www.frsuu.org or call 978-465-0602 x401.

NECC - FREE ESOL PROGRAM PREPARES STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS IN HEALTH-CARE

More than 15 non-native English speakers will have the opportunity to attend a free, 20-week program designed to teach them English as it is used in Northern Essex Community College's health care certificate programs.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Bridge to College and Health Careers Program will be offered at NECC Riverwalk, 360 Merrimack St., Lawrence beginning in the winter of 2013.

The program will run Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 to 9 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon from January 21 through July 15 with spring and summer breaks. The program is funded by the Massachusetts Literacy Foundation in partnership with Verizon.

Intermediate English speakers with a high school diploma or G.E.D. are encouraged to apply. After completing the program they may want to apply for admission to one of NECC's health care certificate programs or continue with further academic or language support programs.

The 180-hour program will include pre-college level classes teaching English language skills through Introduction to Healthcare Occupations, Oral Communi-

NOTEBOOK: PAGE 34

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PHOTO: DICK VAILLANCOURT

PHOTOS TOM DUGGAN

MENORAH LIGHTING IN NORTH ANDOVER - Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan lights the Menorah on the North Andover Common last month celebrating the Jewish holiday of Hannukah, The Festival of Lights. The New Chabat of North Andover and Chabat Lubavitch Jewish Center of Merrimack Valley and The Valley Patriot are annual sponsors of the North Andover Menorah Lighting.

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You Just Never Know who You Will Catch Reading The Valley Patriot



The Valley Patriot's youngest fan, Jonathan aka "Bobo" Ortiz : 2 & 3) Anabel Gutierrez our new "Valley Patriot Girl" poses with her copy of The Valley Patriot at Sal's Riverwalk in Lawrence. Gutierrez is a DJ for Mega Radio in Boston, has been a dancer in several music videos, is a national celebrity model, and a rising star in Spanish language television. 4) The crew at Colizzi Memorials in Methuen (see their ad on page 15), 5) Ronny Tippet and Derrick Beasley from the New England Patriots at the home of our good friend Joe DiPietro in North Andover.



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Are You Up for The Challenge?

D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

I challenge you, America! It is the same challenge I have already offered up to my students and a new challenge that will be given to them within the coming week. I made a vow last summer that I would teach my students not just the required curriculum, but I would also teach them the benefits of gratitude and giving. I began the Attitude of Gratitude project.

It began with a discussion of what it means to be grateful. We study Buddhism in my four eighth grade classes. Buddha wanted to end suffering. He said that the only way to end suffering is to give up all worldly desires. Imagine that. It makes sense. My students and I discussed how every time we want some worldly desire, be it money, a new car, cell phone, clothes or other tangible item and we don't receive we lament on the loss of something we had never had in the first place. Imagine being happy with what you already had. Be thankful for the old cell phone, for your aging dented car that still works, for the small amount of cash in your pocket. If we just focused on being grateful for what we already possess then we are the richest people in the world.

Instead of having the usual bulletin board in my classroom that depicted the events of history covered throughout the school year, I recovered it with a blank wall and labeled it "The Wall of Gratitude".

Over the next several weeks students brought in pictures of things that they were grateful for and tacked them onto the wall. Soon, the pictures spilled off of the actual bulletin board and onto the walls. There were pictures of everything they were grateful for like paper for writing, utensils for eating, pets, parents, siblings, fingers, clothes—you name it, it's up there. It's a wonderfully amazing collage of literally thousands of things that my students are grateful for.

The next step to my Attitude of Gratitude project was to send letters out into the community to random or familiar people telling them about our project and asking them to respond with things that they are grateful for. After a few weeks, the letters began to come in. We

received a letter from a WWII Vet who was grateful for the American flag because its symbol kept him alive during the war. We received a letter from someone who survived cancer, from a dancer who was grateful for her legs and from grandparents who were grateful for their seven grandchildren. It was incredible. The students loved it so much that they want to send out more letters of gratitude this New Year.

I began a wikispace for students to post pictures of more things that they are grateful for and periodically, they add to the growing list. I added a new page to my wikispace. It is called 26 Acts of Random Kindness. My new challenge to my students is to commit 26 acts of random kindness no matter how long it takes. The acts can be as small as holding open a door for a stranger or as big as starting a program to help those in need. Every time they commit a random act of kindness they are to post it on the 'Kindness' page on my wiki. I can't wait to see what these young American citizens will do. If you want to see for yourself, go to www.attitudeofgratitude.wikispaces.com.

I am not just challenging my one hundred students this year to express and feel real gratitude for what they already have in their lives and to commit 26 acts of random kindness, I challenge ALL of you. Every American citizen, every human being that has been blessed to grace this earth! I challenge you to stop wanting more. I dare you to be happy with what you have. For it is true, "Whatever you appreciate and give thanks for will increase in your life." I dare you to be happy and help others. I ask that you rise up to the challenge of committing 26 random acts of kindness and passing on that challenge to your friends, family and coworkers. Can you imagine what the world would be like if we all did this? Are you up for the challenge?



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 DLangevin@aol.com

The Constitution

John LaHoud

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

NOTE: What follows is an intellectual exercise, designed to stimulate the thinking of my fellow freedom-loving citizens. Anyone wishing to participate may e-mail lahoudjp@gmail.com. Whether incorporated into the final document or not, all submissions will remain anonymous.

For lovers of government, the elections of November 2012 were a triumph; for lovers of freedom, they were a tragedy. Whatever it may be called—the tipping point or the Rubicon—we have crossed a line from which there is no turning back. The United States as it was founded and which we of a certain age loved—the nation that nurtured our love of liberty and our patriotic pride—is no more. I am reminded of the 1972 Cashman and West song American City Suite, whose haunting lyrics have stayed with me for forty years. Of the death of their beloved New York City, they sang: "I think of her. I think of life's own music. At least that's the way it used to be. I think of her, and I see the children laughing; but it's only on the streets of my memory. And I've never felt so lonely and so helpless. I'm wishing that I didn't know the truth. They tell me that a friend is dying, and there's nothing in this world that I can do."

Some will no doubt scoff. After all, every generation thinks that things were better in the old days: that the younger generation is taking the world to hell in a handbasket. But it is very different this time. This time, in the face of clear evidence of the downward direction of the country and the spiral into dependency on government, the electorate voted to accelerate the process of self-destruction. And with both the public "education" system and the major media firmly in the grip of the progressives (i.e., the Socialist left), how could it be otherwise—and how can it ever change? The short answer (absent divine intervention): it can't.

So, the time has come to determine where to go from here; and for many, the answer seems to be "out". For the first time in my life, I am hearing widespread cries for secession. No doubt, much of it is simply the venting of frustration by those who had placed their bets on the losers, while some is the ranting of kooks and crackpots. (Feel free to lump me in with either of those groups—my skin is thick.) But there is also a group of concerned Americans who have never cared for the European Socialist model so adored by the Left, and who have no desire to live in a Greece-like economic basket case of a nation. We are not necessarily wealthy, but we are producers who believe in working hard and enjoying the fruits thereof. We believe in making our own decisions

about retirement, health care, and a host of other life-choices that we do not believe to be the province of government. And we see a country now betraying the ideas and ideals that it once fostered. With no other country to go to (the U.S. was the "last best hope"), we dream of making a new one, a republic we can keep. (Sorry, Mr. Franklin, we couldn't this time.)

Before the election, we feared that it might come to this, but we wanted to give the country one last chance to reassert its sanity, to show that it hadn't crossed that line. Our plea was, to quote Cashman and West again: "Can you say it ain't true? Can you tell me now before I'm leaving you? I'd give anything I own just to believe in you...again." The answer to that plea was the slamming of the door in our collective face.

Now the task before us is to create a model for a new nation, building on that which the founders of the United States so brilliantly constructed more than two hundred years ago, but modifying it to create safeguards that will preclude the wrong turns to which their grand experiment succumbed. I invite any who wish to contribute to that model to do so; it may be an intellectual exercise more challenging than any that we have ever faced, but made all the more satisfying by its difficulty. I propose that we start by laying down some cardinal principles which will form the backbone of our Constitution: non-negotiable, non-amendable rules to which the federal government of this new nation must adhere. I offer some here to prime the intellectual pump of anyone who wishes to participate. More will follow—by God's grace—in the months to come.

Cardinal Principles

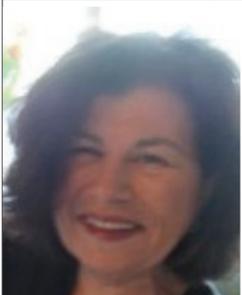
The federal government has no power to do anything that is not explicitly granted to it by this constitution.

The federal government may not tax the income or the owned property of any citizen or legal resident, or of any legal entity, in any state.

No money, or goods having monetary value, shall be given by the federal government to any individual or entity, including any other government entity, e.g., state or municipality, with the exception of payment for products or services provided in accord with legal contracts, negotiated openly and approved by Congress.

The official language of the federal government shall be English—the government shall not publish any material in any other language, nor require any other entity to do so.

There. Have at it, and have fun. And, by the way, since this is to be a new nation, sharing the continent with the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, it will need a new name. I welcome suggestions.



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A New Year's Climate Resolution: Let's Address Global Warming in 2013

Danielle Falzon

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

In 2012 the impacts of global warming hit us and it hit us hard. Massachusetts began last year with some of the least snow on record; only 7.7 inches fell in January and February combined. It was also the 2nd warmest winter in 118 years, with an average temperature of 37.2°F – 5.4 degrees higher than typical. Temperatures then spiked over the summer with the Commonwealth, experiencing the hottest season on record.

And the story was similar across the region. Last winter northeast ski resorts struggled as little snow meant a late start to the season and difficulty luring skiers to the slopes. Combined with extreme weather events including most recently Hurricane Sandy, we can be certain that these changes are not coincidental— they are consistent with global warming. And we will be sure to see more of them – despite our recent snowfall -- if we do not step up our game and soon.

And this was not just a New England phenomenon. Global Warming's impact was felt nationwide. 2012 was the hottest year on record across the U.S.. In the west wildfires devastated communities, sweeping through forests dry from the unusual summer drought. In Texas farmers watched helplessly as their fields dried up and cracked, unfit for agriculture after over a year of extreme drought.

Record temperatures and increased

frequency and severity of extreme weather events have become a trend. Environment Massachusetts Research and Policy Center's report In the Path of the Storm: Global Warming, Extreme Weather, and the Impacts of Weather-Related Disasters in the United States documented more and more people each year being affected by weather-related disasters. According to our report, more than 15 million Americans live in counties that have averaged one or more weather-related disasters per year since the beginning of 2006.

So what does this mean as we ring in the New Year? Here in Massachusetts we have made substantial progress toward a safer, more secure and less polluted future. In 2013 we need to build on this progress.

We must institute tight, effective caps on greenhouse gases from the region's power plants. Under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) that Environment Massachusetts helped put in place back in 2007, Massachusetts and other states in the region must lower their greenhouse gas emissions from power plants to 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2018. In addition the Obama administration must finalize Carbon Pollution Standards for new power plants and move forward with standards to limit global warming pollution from existing power plants.

A second way we can to reduce the pollution that causes global warming is by increasing energy efficiency. Massa-

GLOBAL WARMING: PAGE 34

FROM PAGE 9: HOLY FAMILY

was making sure I made certain that her life mattered to this world, not just to me. My mother was brilliant in many ways, and it's my job to make sure people know it. She enjoyed a lot, but not enough. I want her honored among the living, not on a plaque in a park that ten people a year see."

Evans says he wants doctors and nurses fired over this, and has filed a police report with Methuen Police seeking criminal charges.

"Just because the building says hospital, doesn't give the people inside who work there some free pass to ignore the patients. God knows they bill the insurance companies no matter what the outcome, even when they screw up."

Nurses protested the hospital just eight weeks after Helen passed away, advising Steward Health Care System that they do not have enough nurses on staff to care for their own patients. Steward Health Care System is owned by Cerberus Capital Management, a private equity firm.

Evans says any monies that come from any lawsuit will "go to things my mother cared about like children, animals, and dancing for kids. My mother didn't die so that I could buy stuff. The one thing she taught me more than anything is how meaningless material things are, and nothing taught me that more than going through this."

Evans says he will also file suit against

all doctors involved in her care prior to what was supposed to be a routine knee surgery, a surgery she was having so that she could go dancing again without pain.

"They took away what was most important to her they took away the entire dream of it. So now, I'm going to do the same to them."

CNN is now in process of doing a story on Helen Bousquet. Actor Tom Hanks is doing a recording that will welcome visitors to her website, www.helenbousquet.com. It will be up in the next few weeks.

"Whatever brings attention to what happened to her is all I care about," says Evans.

Evans contacted former Vice-President Dan Quayle, an executive of Cerberus (who owns Steward Health Care System), and he received no response.

The American Sleep Apnea Association has placed Helen Bousquet on their home page at www.sleepapnea.org. They will proclaim her birthday, January 21st, as "Helen Bousquet Day" nationally.

Evans is going to work with The Sleep Apnea Association to create a bill in his mother's name that requires all patients with pre-existing conditions be monitored until they are discharged following any surgery.

"One would think that's already the law, but it's not. It will be," says Evans. "This is all I can do about this now. I can't bring her back."

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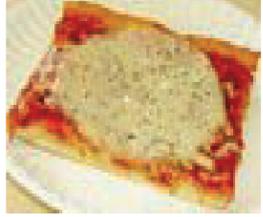
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DEMOCRAT CORNER WITH MARA DOLAN: THE TROUBLE WITH GUNS

Mara Dolan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I'm incredibly glad to have the opportunity to write a column for the Valley Patriot, and I thank Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan very much for taking on a columnist whom everyone knows is a Democrat. When he asked me about writing a column, he actually liked that about me, and was enthusiastic about bringing a new perspective on board. I really admire that, even as I confess I've had a little trepidation thinking about what my first topic should be.

But something wonderful happened in the last election. We've come to realize that we're overdue for reasonable, honest discussions about the serious issues we face. We've also, most of us, come to learn how to have those discussions.

So I bravely offer my observations, and my opinion, about a topic which until recently has been too politically dangerous a topic for all but the most far-leaning politicians to broach: the trouble with guns.

At last, we are talking seriously about guns. Never mind that more Americans are killed by guns than by war, or that among the 23 wealthiest countries in the world, 87% of the children killed by guns are Americans, or that women who live in a household where there is a gun are 12 times more likely to be murdered during a domestic dispute, or that we've had 31 school shootings since Columbine, and that all the guns used at Columbine were bought at gun shows, where there is no requirement for a



background check.

It took the heartbreaking tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut to get people seriously talking about what to do about guns in this country. Mass shootings take place so frequently we are no longer surprised to hear that it's happened again, only surprised at how much more horrible this one was. While we should have had this discussion a long time ago, at least we're having it now, and with that there is some small comfort.

The firearms industry is worth \$31 Billion in the United States, with \$4 Billion in sales last year. It's big business and big money. The National Rifle Association, which was formed to "promote and encourage rifle shooting on a scientific basis", has become a front for a lobbying organization that paid \$3 Million last year to help elect candidates who will vote the way they want them to, 96% of them Republican.

The arguments in favor of gun rights are powerful, even if they make

some of us very uncomfortable right now. Freedom, and individual rights, are the foundation of this country, and any potential restriction on our individual rights makes us rightfully cautious. Most people who own guns are law-abiding, responsible people who use their guns responsibly. The United States Supreme Court found that the 2nd Amendment guarantees a right of individuals to own guns.

For the record, I don't want to take guns away from law-abiding citizens who use them responsibly. But what do we do about the people who don't use guns responsibly? Was it responsible for the mother of a mentally ill son to teach him to shoot and keep .223s in her home? Are we as a country using guns responsibly when we let people buy them at gun shows without requiring a background check?

It is reasonable, fair, and responsible to ban so-called "assault weapons" like the one used at Sandy Hook Elementary

School. No one needs to fire off 30 rounds (or more) at a time, and we need to ban high-capacity ammo. It is not too much to ask that people who buy guns at gun shows go through a background check just like everyone else.

These relatively small measures could have prevented more deaths than I want to calculate, spared more parents the never-ending grief of losing a child, and taken America off the top of the list of gun homicides. These small measures are a very small price to pay, and we should be able to come together as a people and a nation at the very least on this.

Last, though there is no scientific proof of this, it does seem to me that the mentally ill mass murderers who commit these awful crimes are often terribly isolated. Life can be very tough, and while most people with troubles don't commit horrible crimes, you never know when a small act of kindness can make a difference to someone. A smile, a handshake, an extra minute or two of patience can go a long way in healing the heart and soul of the troubled. Kindness makes a difference, and it's something we can all do without changing any laws or paying any lobbyists.



Mara Dolan is an attorney, a former candidate for State Senate and the producer and host of "Twilight Talk" on WCAP, Mondays 7-9pm. You can follow her on Twitter @MaraDolan. You can email her at mara@maradolan.com

America Has Never Needed the Tea Party More

Christine Morabito
GREATER BOSTON TEA PARTY

Either Congress is in denial about their historically low approval rating of 18 percent, or they have pathologically high self-esteem. Actually, both things may be true.

While taxpayers are bracing themselves for higher tax rates, looming inflation and pending known and unknown Obamacare costs, it is business as usual in Washington. Monkey business, that is.

Exhibit A: The Hurricane Sandy emergency funding bill passed the Senate. A good thing, you say? Maybe not. Politicians considered this bill such an emergency that only a small fraction of it would be spent in the next nine months. It also includes \$150 million for salmon fisheries in both Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico, clearly nowhere near the affected areas. These pork-infused stocking stuffers - and these are just the ones that made the cut - were included in order to buy the 60 votes needed for the bill to pass the Senate. Luckily, the House was too busy with the "fiscal cliff" showdown to vote on this "Sandy scam" when it came before them. Now the bill will have to wait for the new Congress to take it up, and hopefully modify it. The bill will pass - and should - so storm victims can get the help they need. But, can we have it without the pork, please?

To make things even worse, while our

livelihoods were being held hostage over the insufferable fiscal cliff negotiations (HR8), the president ordered the lifting of a salary freeze, giving Congress and other federal officials a raise - perhaps an incentive to vote for the 157-page HR8? Only in American would the Senate be rewarded with a raise when it has not produced a budget in 3 years. Obama's latest executive order ('cause that's how he rolls) was a shock even to the intended recipients. Members of Congress, stunned by the move, felt it unseemly to accept a raise under the circumstances and declined the increase which would have cost taxpayers about \$11 billion.

Speaking of the fiscal cliff negotiations, where are the spending cuts? No seriously. We are buried in debt to the tune of \$16 trillion and counting. Where in Sam Hell are the spending cuts? HR8 requires only \$1 in cuts for every \$41 in tax increases. How absurd. They cannot possibly be naive enough to believe the promise of "future" spending cuts. History tells us otherwise. Remember the \$3 in cuts promised to Ronald Reagan for every \$1 in tax increases? It never happened. Then in 1990, George H.W. Bush fell for the 2-for-1 cuts that never came. As Matt Kibbe, President and CEO of FreedomWorks, likes to say, "Washington has an over-spending problem, not an under-taxing problem."



I was shocked by the shortsightedness of our lawmakers, who passed this bill, a bill they could not have possibly read, before the Congressional Budget Office even had a chance to score it. We now find out it increases spending by \$4 trillion over ten years. Anyone who believes we have not already gone over the fiscal cliff is delusional. If we do not seriously cut expenditures and enact real entitlement reform - forget falling off the cliff - we are about to splatter on the ground below.

As we begin 2013 with the 113th Congress, no doubt our elected officials are nostalgic for the days when their antics went unnoticed. The citizen uprising that became the Tea Party has forever changed that. Before the Tea Party, who, except for a few conservatives, was talking about the deficit and out-of-control spending? You cannot have an accountable government without the Tea Party any more than you can trust a fox to

guard the hen house.

The 2012 election was a devastating defeat for conservatives. As we tend our wounds, I hear many people ask "What does it matter?" As frustrating as it is, what we do matters a great deal. We will live to fight another day. Why? Maybe it is because we care too much.

We also know too much. We know how things work in Washington. We know about the backroom deals, the bills padded with pork, the profiteering and corruption. As tempting as it is to ignore politics, like so many uninformed Americans, we cannot put the genie back in the bottle. We know all too well what happens when we're not watching.



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



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Winter Wonderland and your Doggies

Tracey Zysk

VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

As the season changes and the snow and cold approaches us, we must consider how this affects our dogs.

Like humans, dogs can experience hypothermia and frostbite. They can also become victims of inappropriate shelter, lack of water and become poisoned by heating oil and antifreeze.

When going outside you must make a conscience effort to keep your dog warm:

Short haired breeds or puppies - please consider a sweater or coat. Chances are they will only want to go out for a quick potty break. Because of their lack of fur they will become cold much quicker. Take them out and immediately back in. A quick 5-10 minute piddle break is sufficient and then you can spoil them with indoor play time. You and your dog will be much warmer and happier.

Long haired breeds and big dogs- They will probably be pummeling through the snow in your yard and having a great time. Keep an eye on them, do limit their time, but know they will have a longer tolerance to the cold than the tiny pups.

Dry your dogs off thoroughly when they come in. This will eliminate the chill that

could linger along their bodies and help prevent the flu. For our long haired furry friends, brush regularly, salt and dirt could build up in their fur. This could also cause other health problems, make your dog smell, and will most likely drag a lot of dirt into your home too.

Check all your dogs paws for salt. If they have fur in between their paws, cut the fur back or ask your groomer to do this. Salt could build up and sting your dog or may cause your dog to lick profusely. This may cause your dogs to cut their paw pads while they are trying to dig the salt out.

Frostbite does happen quite quickly to our pets. The most common areas affected are the ears, toes tails and their lungs. But how do you know if your dog is experiencing frostbite? The frost bitten area may

become red or swollen or the skin may become pale. Your dog may even attempt to tell you with a little whimper too.

If Frostbite is to happen: Cover the area in a blanket and rub your hands over that area. This will help get the blood to circulate. Also, take a warm towel and place it on the affected area, please do not use a hot towel. Hot over warm may be too strong for your dog and this could cause the body to go into shock.



Call your Veterinarian if you believe your dog has experienced frostbite.

On the days our weather provides strong winds or low temperatures and wind-chill falls below zero are the days you will want to forgo a long walk with your dog.

Hypothermia can set in quite quickly with your dog. A dog that experiences hypothermia usually show signs of shivering, stumbling, drowsiness and their body temperatures will have dropped dramatically. Same as a dog with frostbite, if you believe your dog has experienced hypothermia please contact your Veterinarian immediately.

Winter is here and will be with us for the next couple of months. As a dog owner if your take the correct precautions both you and your dog will have a lot of fun together and enjoy this Winter Wonderland !



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

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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Paw it forward!

Happy New Year! With 2013 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 playtime. 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.

When 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 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 2013 be the year that you decide to give back.

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Area's Single Family Home Sales Soar in November, Rising by 55.4 percent

Condominium Sales Up by 34.5 Percent Versus Last November

(MERRIMACK & NASHOBA VALLEYS) — The Northeast Association of REALTORS® (NEAR) reported today that the number of single family homes sold during November in the 15 cities and towns from Boxford to Littleton were up a staggering 55.4 percent versus November of 2011. Year-to-date January through November, single family home sales in the area rose by 24.3 percent compared with last year. Condominium sales during November also climbed substantially, rising by 34.5 percent compared with last November, while year-to-date condo sales rose by 20.4 percent over last year's pace. The report is based on data from MLS Property Information Network in Shrewsbury.

The report also showed that the median sales price for the local single family homes sold in November was \$329,900, an increase of 22.2 percent over the median of \$270,021 for November of last year. Year-to-date, however, the median sales

price for single family homes locally rose by only 3.3 percent -- going from a median of \$300,000 from January to November of last year to \$309,900 for single family homes sold from January to November of 2012. Meanwhile, condominiums sold in November had a median sales price of \$196,000, an increase of 21.4 percent compared with last November's median of \$161,500, while the year-to-date condo median price was \$169,900, a drop of 4.4 percent compared with the same period of 2011. The median price is the point at which half the properties sold cost more, and half cost less.

Commenting on the area's home sales market, NEAR President Mary O'Donoghue said, "The housing recovery is clearly underway as evidenced by the continued increases in home sales. We are entering a Spring market with close to ideal conditions, namely: low inventory, historically low interest rates, strong sales activity, and improving consumer confidence."

The report also stated that the average length of time it took for a single family home sold in November to go from listing to a closed transaction was 112 days, down from 122 days last November. For condominiums, it took an average of 128 days for those sold during November to close, a 12.9 percent drop from the average of 128 days to close for the condominiums sold last November.

Also contained in the report is information on residential properties locally that became classified as pending (i.e., under agreement but not yet closed) during November. For single family homes, the volume of pending sales rose by 30.9 percent compared with last November, while the median price of those properties rose by 20 percent -- specifically, 288 so-called "pendings" were reported during the month, with the agreed-upon median price for those properties at \$312,000. Meanwhile, the number of pending sales for condominiums locally during the month rose by 12.4 percent, to 109 con-

tracts signed, with the median price up by 14.5 percent compared with a year ago, to \$189,900.

The report also provided inventory levels of area homes for sale as of December 15, which at 1,019 available single family homes and 396 condominiums have each dropped substantially since the peaks set in 2006 and 2007, which were 2,242 for single family homes and 1,251 for condos.

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

Closed Sales Nov 2012 vs. Nov 2011	# Sold Nov 2011	# Sold Nov 2012	Yr over Year Change	Median Price Nov 2011	Median Price Nov 2012	Yr over Year Change	Avg. DoM Nov 2011	Avg. DoM Nov 2012	Yr over Year Change
Single Family	204	317	+55.4%	270,021	329,900	+22.2%	122	112	-8.2%
Condo	84	113	+34.5%	161,500	196,000	+21.4%	147	128	-12.9%
Multi Family	35	47	+34.3%	211,000	235,900	+11.8%	55	87	+58.2%

Closed Sales Nov 2012 vs. Oct 2012	# Sold Oct 2012	# Sold Nov 2012	Mo over Month Change	Median Price Oct 2012	Median Price Nov 2012	Mo over Month Change	Avg. DoM Oct 2012	Avg. DoM Nov 2012	Mo over Month Change
Single Family	228	317	+39.0%	297,250	329,900	+11.0%	109	112	+2.8%
Condo	85	113	+32.9%	165,000	196,000	+18.8%	117	128	+9.4%
Multi Family	41	47	+14.6%	225,000	235,900	+4.8%	112	87	-22.3%

Closed Sales Jan-Nov 2012 vs. Jan-Nov 2011	# Sold ytd 2011	# Sold ytd 2012	Yr over Year Change	Median Price ytd 2011	Median Price ytd 2012	Yr over Year Change	Avg. DoM ytd 2011	Avg. DoM ytd 2012	Yr over Year Change
Single Family	2,385	2,964	+24.3%	300,000	309,000	+3.3%	115	116	+0.9%
Condo	804	948	+20.4%	177,750	169,900	-4.4%	129	129	+0.0%
Multi Family	416	399	-0.7%	180,000	209,950	+16.6%	94	88	-6.4%

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Do Everything You Can to Protect Your FREEDOM this New Year! Loss of Even a Small Bit of It Can Shatter Any Dreams You May Have. Follow the Example of People Living the WOW! and Protect Your Freedom with a Vengeance!

Thomas Connors

VALLEY PATRIOT WOW! COLUMNIST

Forget all those New Year Resolutions. It's the same thing every year. You are going to lose weight. You are going to eat healthy from now on. You are going to go back to school and learn new things. None of it ever happens.

The bottom-line is this. You have no intention of following through on any of those things. Like last year and the year before that, you will have forgotten or broken all those promises to yourself before the end of January. If you are lucky to even get that far.

I have a better idea. Make this ONE Resolution. Protect your Freedom. Your Financial and Religious Freedom. Because you are in the midst of losing it.

If you want to make a New Year's Resolution make only this one. And do your very best to grab hold of it and don't let go. Because, the loss of Freedom I am talking about will cost you in so many ways. Instead of coming up with those grandiose schemes which always lead to dead ends, you need to focus on protecting your basic Freedoms. Period.

Make no mistake about it. You're losing your Freedom bit by bit. And it's

not just your Financial Freedom. You are losing your Religious Freedom as well.

Open those eyes of yours. Your Freedom is being drained from you each and every day. Oh, it's not being done openly. They're too cute for that. They do it subtly and quietly.

Loss of Freedom doesn't just happen by some edict. It is more like a cancer that eats away at things you take for granted. Before you know it, you are shackled and prevented from leading your life in a way that makes the most of your opportunities.

Every time you pay more taxes, guess what? You lose a bit of your Freedom. You end up working to support government's appetite rather than your well being. When insurance costs go up, again, it doesn't benefit you. All it does is force you to work that much longer and harder to make ends meet. You end up spending less time with your family and less time doing the things you love. Translation, loss of more Freedom.

Just because you have no physical chains around your wrist or ankles doesn't mean you are free. There are other ways you get held down.

Don't allow yourself to get suckered into thinking you are getting so much

more in return. I know welfare and food stamps look great at first. But, the longer you rely on them, the deeper you get yourself into a dangerous rut. A rut that eventually captures and strangles you. A rut so deep that escape becomes virtually impossible.

Every dollar you find yourself relying on someone else to provide means you are cuffed to that source for your survival and completely beholden to them and their agenda not yours. Don't let anyone kid you. The greatest opportunities for Living the WOW! come to those who experience Financial and Religious Freedom. Plain and simple.

Financial FREEDOM is the greatest Freedom of all. And people living the WOW! work incessantly to achieve it and then, to protect it.

They know it is the basis for Lives that Matter. It is the foundation on which their lives are built.

You need to commit to making true Financial Freedom your focus for 2013. Just this one resolution will make all the difference in how you live your life and how you provide for those you love. You owe it to yourself and to each one of them.

If you are a Christian, open your eyes and take a good look around you. You have become enemy number one!

Over the years the politically "correct" have removed God from the classroom. And you were silent. Then, they mocked your beliefs and shamelessly championed those who denigrated and belittled all things representing our Lord.

This year, say enough is enough. Get a hold of yourself and stop accepting bogus arguments for dispensing with any reference to God in school or public ceremony or buildings. Grow some courage and call it out for what it is ... bigotry of the worst kind.

Resolve in 2013 to stand up, make yourself heard and defend your beliefs.

Take away a person's ability to earn an income and you destroy their self worth and hope for the future. Take away their Religious Freedom and you destroy their soul.

Let me set the record straight here. I have been directly involved with helping people get working for over thirty years. And not just any people. The people I

have been involved with are people who face multiple barriers to employment, yet, are driven by a passionate desire to make their lives meaningful. They know first hand how debilitating a lack of money can have on one's ability to live a full and purpose-filled life.

With the thousands of people we have placed over the years at American Training and despite the extreme diversity of these people, one common thread is evident. Getting that job makes all the difference in every single life. Shut down a person's ability to earn a paycheck or make the effort to con someone into thinking being on the dole is a worthy option and you, in effect, make them prisoners of their own circumstance.

The same is true when you take a person's Religion away. Only, the pain is even deeper. It captures your very essence; your soul. It destroys faith and hope in the future and relegates your life to one that relies on other people for meaning.

Make up your mind to reverse direction. Now is the year to do it. Commit to rethinking those things you took for granted.

When you start educating yourself and learn to stop allowing others to direct your life and make decisions for you. When you demand answers to extremely suspect actions that you know are not in your best interest. And when you build the confidence to stop creating excuses for not taking responsibility for your present circumstances and future successes or failures. Then, you will know you are on the right track toward a spectacular life of true Freedom and Living the WOW!

Now, that in itself is a WOW!



Tom Connors is President/CEO of American Training, a diverse collection of companies committed to "Bringing Out the Best in Everyone They Touch". He believes in living life to the fullest by making the WOW! a regular part of your personal, spiritual and working life. You can reach Tom at Tom@AmericanTrainingInc.com or by writing to him at Tom Connors, American Training, 102 Glenn Street, Lawrence, MA 01843} © 2012. You can also visit Tom at his BLOG ... TomConnors-ThinkPad.blogspot.com

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FROM PAGE 1: FRED PIETROWSKI - US NAVY

Soviet nuclear sub for its technology. "We chased it all the way down the coast to Virginia, where it took off."

Three Soviet subs hiding, undetected, in New York harbor! "Each missile on a submarine has 157 nuclear warheads—enough to blow up the East Coast from DC to Boston," Pietrowski points out. "Surely, God was protecting us."

Fred joined the Navy in 1959, after graduating from Central Catholic. His life in the Navy and civilian life has been a series of miraculous escapes from the jaws of death, literally.

"Shark!"

In October 1962, Fred was deployed to the Mediterranean on a three-week patrol, a secret mission, aboard the submarine USS Entemedor (SS340). Under Sealed Orders.

"Not even our captain knew where we were heading or our destination. If anything happened to us, we were told, 'You were never there!'"

Unknown to them, it was the beginning of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

"We went into 'ultra quiet mode'—like a ghost ship floating through the ocean depths. No air conditioners. No unnecessary movement. I took only twenty-one steps from my bunk to my workplace, and only seven steps to eat. No emptying garbage at sea (the enemy could track us).

"For three weeks we endured suffocating heat without a shower—140 degrees where I worked, 125 degrees in the rest of the boat. It hurt to breathe though my nose. The stench of rotting garbage filled our nostrils.

"After two weeks, our main electric propulsion motors began to overheat. Now at 179 degrees, they would automatically

shut off at 180 degrees, forcing us to float to the surface—like a "sitting duck!"

"We took photos through the periscope for intelligence gathering—without any idea of what we were photographing—missile sites, installations, or vessels. We laid 36 mines at a time. Finally, mission accomplished, we left the area undetected and surfaced.

"Once far removed from our mission zone, the captain stopped our sub and with engines running let us cool off with a swim. Two men were posted on shark-watch, armed with M-1 rifles. We splashed around, playing basketball with the five officers."

Suddenly, someone screamed, "SHARK!"

"I saw a gigantic black fin, over a foot high, moving swiftly toward us! It was a 35-foot long Great White Shark, our captain later told us. At the slightest movement in the water, it will attack at speeds to 15 mph.

"A football field away lay our submarine...

"To the torpedo-shaped shark, our submarine looked, and smelled, like its prey, a large black whale: round, with wide black diving 'fins' in the front and back. The exhaust of our diesel engines sprayed fishy-smelling bilge water along with smoke." The Great White, naturally curious, swam up alongside the sub and kept taking sample bites of the submarine—first circling one way, then the other—hour after hour. "Whenever the shark swam to the other side, we would swim toward the sub. Whenever he

came toward us, we formed a tight group and floated, holding still."

One hour went by. Two. Three... After six hours, with the hungry shark still circling the sub, the captain yelled, "It'll be dark soon. Come in, or I'll have to leave



Fred Pietrowski, U.S.N., served as electrician on WWII diesel submarines in the early 1960s. Like all submariners, he received in-depth cross-training in every job aboard the sub.



While crossing the North Atlantic in October 1962, Fred Pietrowski's submarine, USS Entemedor (SS340), ran straight into Hurricane Ella's 120-foot high waves. With air supply short, they could not submerge. When a rogue wave broadsided the sub, Fred became trapped in a sealed compartment that filled with 12 feet of water in 3 minutes. Horror-stricken crewmates watched helplessly through a 3-in. wide hatch window until Fred was finally able to open the 3,000-lb air pressure valve, allowing air to flow in and stop the flooding.

you here..."

"We had no choice but to swim toward our sub—and the hungry shark.

"When we were 100 feet from our boat, we made a dash for it. But there was only one set of foot holes leading up to the deck—and sixty-five men in the water!"

Fred was among the last twelve remaining in the water when he heard, "Here he comes!"

"Swim forward and stand on the diving planes," yelled the captain. Twelve men squeezed together on the diving plane—no bigger than a kitchen table—while knee-deep in water.

"The Great White headed straight for me, passing right under my bare feet! His mouth opened wide—exposing multiple rows of 300 serrated teeth!

"At one point he was only 8 feet away, staring at my chest!

"Miraculously, we all made it to safety."

Hurricane Ella

Leaving the Mediterranean from that mission, the Entemedor headed straight into the North Atlantic Ocean and into the teeth of Hurricane Ella, with its 115-mph winds that tossed them like a toy boat for days. "With less than one day's air supply, we could not submerge. We had to ride out the hurricane."

"On day four, a 120-ft high rogue wave—an almost vertical wall of water—slammed us broadside. I was tossed 20 feet through the air. Our sub rolled radically to the right—stopping at a 57-degree angle (a 54-degree angle is the point of no return). All oil drained out of engines. We lost power. There we hung, in total darkness!

At that radical angle, over a thousand gallons of sulfuric acid would spill out from batteries. If mixed with salt water, it would form a deadly chlorine gas that

spelled instant death.

"In that darkness, with hydraulic oil flowing all over the tiled deck, I crawled over pipes and cables, feeling my way to the main battery switch, finally found it and turned it on. Immediately the lights and power came on, the engine propellers began to turn. Slowly the submarine rose to a vertical position. The fact that we survived is a miracle."

It took them eleven days to cross the Atlantic.

"Before arriving in New London, we posted armed guards. This was unusual. Waiting at the gate were Marines, standing shoulder to shoulder, armed with machine guns. The Cuban Missile Crisis, we learned later, had begun."

Fred's escapes from death also include: Almost falling on the back of a 16-foot shark. Being trapped in a sealed compartment filled with 12 feet of water. Submarine rammed, cut in half, and sunk—twice. A head-long fall that split open his skull, with doctors giving him up for dead.

Fred bears witness to the Navy hymn, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save." From experience, he knows the Biblical truth: "The eternal God is your refuge, And underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

Thank you Fred for your service to our country. You are truly a Valley Patriot and a Hero in Our Midst



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



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News from John Lenotte of the American Legion

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

Here we are again, another year has passed. And for the short term, a fiscal crisis has been averted. At least depending upon which news analyst you read or listen to. Congress still has a lot of work to do and I hope you will let your representative know what you think about all of this!

Most of us have gone back to creating New Year resolutions that we will barely keep. I have my usual ones: Lose weight, eat more healthy, exercise more, spend less and save more. Along with those I will include spending more quality time with friends and relatives. The time just passes by so quickly. We will all be a year older at some point in 2013.

We also reflect on successes and failures of the last year. How can we do better? Personally, I was witness to and party to some job fairs for veterans that could have been better publicized, organized and received better participation. Some of this was the result of some many similar events throughout the state and even here in Essex County. Lack of

communication among veteran service providers and organizers seemed to be part of the problem. Hopefully this will be better in 2013. There is a large need for veterans and their families to be employed and a need from employers to hire workers. There is much work being done at the state and national level to recognize military training and experience toward required certifications. If you are a veteran in need, you should contact your local veterans agent who can point you in the direction of agencies that can assist you. If training is needed, it may be available.

Each year there is a memorial service called the 4 Chaplain's service. It recognizes 4 US Army Chaplains who gave up their lives while their troop ship the USS

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Dorchester sunk in the North Atlantic waters off Greenland on February 3, 1943. The four Chaplains on board, two Protestant pastors, a Catholic priest and a Jewish rabbi, were among the first on deck, calming the men and handing out life jackets. This year the service in Essex County will be conducted at Temple Emanu-El on Main Street in Haverhill. The program will begin promptly at 1pm and followed by a collation at Wilbur M. Comeau American Legion Post 4, 1314 Main Street, Haverhill. All veterans groups and the general public are invited to attend. We cannot forget the sacrifices that have been made for our freedom.

If you are a veteran I invite you to join The American Legion or one of the other veterans organizations. All have

various eligibility requirements which you can find on the Internet, example: www.masslegion.org. Even if you cannot be active at this time the numbers are needed. Local, state and national legislators recognize the power of numbers. Twice a year, members of The American Legion visit the Congressional offices in Washington, D.C. and outline priorities for the coming legislative session. With 2.3 million members nationwide and over 40 thousand members in Massachusetts, they recognize we represent a large block of voters. Perhaps you do not need help from the VA today, but what about tomorrow? What about those in need who have to wait several months for assistance? This is but part of what we do for veterans, the community and the nation.

May God Bless our troops and their families. Bring them home safe.



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

My Journey To Jerusalem, PART I: One Woman's Trip to the Holy Land

Catherine Chang

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

My journey to Jerusalem began many years ago as a child. I was a lonely child and spent a lot of time at church or the library, both were close to my house. I enjoyed studying theology, archeology, medicine and different cultures. I was especially fascinated by the history of the Middle East and its ancient political, medicinal and religious cultures.

As many children do I grew up and away from my dreams and my passion for studying giving it up for a life of continuous chaos and victimization. After several years of living all over the states I married at the age of 20 years old jumping in another relationship that would turn out to be abusive. The most wonderful thing that came from this relationship was my two children. Peter the oldest Nelinda the youngest. Because of my new responsibilities I decided to grow up and begin the journey of discovering who Catherine really is. This journey has gone on for the last 25 years and I still haven't gotten "there" yet. I've learned that the Joy is in the journey and that one of my reasons for living is to experience Prosperity, Peace and Joy bringing the same to others. Another discovery was that Catherine is not happy working for someone else so I opened my own business after many years working as a nurse and apprenticing with a Grandmaster of Taekwondo.

As my dreams were naturally unfolding there was always this little pull I felt deep within my belly that something was missing. Sometimes when I have this feeling it causes me to spin into confusion not being able to see what "it" is. I am getting better at being patient and trusting God that all will be revealed at exactly the right time. During this "stuck" time and having stepped back into my old shoes for a while I came across BraveHeart Women on-line. I joined the site and began to explore. RISE was being promoted at the time and I knew that I had to be there. The first RISE I attended was in 2010. During this event I saw the short film of Middle Eastern Women asking us to visit in response to the violence between Palestine and Israel. My heart began pounding, tears began to stream down my face and I knew at that moment that if it were meant to be I would answer this calling.

A year went by and 2011 RISE went by. I stayed in relationship with my new found BraveHeart sisters and sure enough all of the preparation that was necessary for Ellie's vision was in place and it was time to gather the women and the fuel to make this vision a reality. There were many times during the months prior to the journey that I didn't think I would be going. I was wrong! I received an email from Ellie one day that said, "Are you called to be one of the 33?" Again my heart began to pound, my knees began to shake, the tears began to erupt and as frightened as I was that it would happen I was just as frightened that it wouldn't. I answered the question, "Yes, I am called to be one of the 33." And as we say in BraveHeart "and so it is, and so it is, and so it is".

Once the commitment was made I knew that meant I would go to any lengths taking the necessary action to



make this vision real. Then I got the email that said I had to raise \$4500.00 within a couple of months. Yikes! With all of the obstacles that I've overcome in my life to get to where I am today I was not going to make this a problem. With no time to waste I began fundraising and was able to meet the goal and create the necessary fuel for all of us to bring our Love to these beautiful women.

Although I hadn't met any of the BraveHeart sisters I felt connected to them before I finally met all of them in Tel Aviv. Dr. Ellie Drake, Founder of Braveheartwomen was very present with each one of us and I continued to feel a greater respect, Love and trust for her and her Global Vision.

All of the Harmonies, the seeds that descended upon Jerusalem

Leaving for the airport I thought of my family, my future grandchildren and many of the negative comments about visiting this "hot" spot with tension building between the two regions daily. We knew that at any time war could break out between the two regions. I didn't feel afraid knowing that we were doing something that was meant to be, that was historical and I felt a great sense of Peace and comfort from God, from within. I was feeling lifted as though I was finally going to bring Love to the oppressed, the wounded, the broken hearted, the lost on a much larger scale. I was honored to be part of this opportunity.

As I arrived in Tel Aviv I was a bit nervous about the entry process. An angel was presented to me in the form of an older gentleman from Israel who very kindly walked with me and gave me the scoop on the entry process. "Don't tell them anything except you are here visiting a friend. They will continue to pry but maintain that you are a visitor and touring with a friend." I thanked my friend and he went on his way. The phone rang and on the other end was the voice of a beautiful BraveHeart woman named

Lisa. She asked if I was wearing a pink shirt and I was. She and another sister Sylvia picked me out of hundreds of people! We entered Israel together without much difficulty and then it was off to the Cinema hotel.

When we arrived at the Cinema I was welcomed by several women whose faces I recognized but had never met. We all squeezed into our tiny rooms and began the process of getting to know each other.

I had a bit of a headache and Kendra, my roommate and a massage therapist worked on me until the headache disappeared. I am usually the one giving or making someone else feel better. Right from the beginning of our Journey I began to practice how to receive and to trust other women and the pure Love that can manifest itself through our relationships. When women are in harmony, men are in harmony. It's a beautiful and delicate balance of the Divine feminine and the Divine masculine.

The next morning we were off to the Everest Hotel in Bait Jalla. As we circled around an unfinished stadium one of our BraveHeart sisters remembered from her previous visit that the Everest Hotel was close by. She was also reminded that she had a vision of that stadium being filled with BraveHeart women. I could see that! I could see that possibility! I knew then and there that it would happen one day. We arrived at the Everest and the Ritz Carleton it was not. Graffiti on the wall to the right of the hotel beckoned PEACE with the colors of the Palestinian flag, I would later discover that this was the wall that separates the two regions and the Everest Hotel was the neutral meeting place right in the center between the two opposing regions.

The Everest was very interesting as it was authentic. George, a big brawly guy carried all of our luggage up two flights of stairs (no elevator) and we settled in our rooms (3 to a rooms) About 40 minutes after arrival a bus filled

JERUSALEM: PAGE 30

FROM PAGE 29: My Trip to Jerusalem

with Israeli and Palestinian women pulled up and it was time to meet the women we would be living with for the next 3 days. I felt both excited and nervous as if a new class of brand new inexperienced white belt students from different cultures came all at once for their first class. What would happen? How could we get these women who have been fighting for thousands of years to become sister like us? I came to this place with an open heart and with the intention of planting a seed, planting it with ease, planting it without trying to "fix" anyone or "cure" anything.

Love would take care of that on its own it has nothing to do with me. Ellie and all of the other women all had the same intention so we were collectively pouring out our Love energy with the same intentions...to plant a seed with ease. Ellie also calls this energy S.H.E. energy (soul's highest purpose) and I have recently begun using this term myself. It is a term that will carry us through to the next step of our journey which will be to start the introductions of all those pioneer women that had the courage and the will to join us. Having

met so many women with so many different names to remember I was relieved at our first meeting that the brilliant Ellie would give us all a new name. Our new name was Harmony and that would be our names for the entire 3 days.

What a relief and what a great idea to keep the energy pure, simple and united as one. I was very aware of the energy between the Palestinian and Israeli women. At the beginning you could cut the dual energy with a knife. I could also tell the difference between the Israeli women and the Palestinian women. When we sang songs some of the women sang louder and even changed the song we were singing at one point. I was feeling compassion and sending Ellie some light because she had quite a job ahead of her. The martial artist in me started to jump and I wanted assist and manage the situation, I wanted to assist her but wasn't sure if I would impose on her strategy. After the first day we discovered through the Israeli women that the song the Palestinians sang out was a political song rising up Palestine, the Israeli women were very upset and some even threatened to leave. "We came here to

talk of Peace and would have never done something like that, so bold." one Israeli women stated.

What a challenge for us, for Ellie! "Through the heart, without the mind, bravely as one" We have to come together as one. I was given to go ahead to give my best at managing some of the women who stuck together, had their own conversations and were a little disruptive to the process. I gently sat between women and distracted them so that they and everyone else could begin to feel the Love and the connection between us. We all were excited about the Oxytocin circle. It was the best Oxytocin circle that I've ever experienced! Can you imagine a room full of women not talking, looking into each other's eyes, tears flowing, hearts opening up? Can you see that without words, without opinions, without blame, without reasons, without the mind thoughts how we as women all want the same for our families and our world? Do you know that after meeting each woman soul to soul the energy in the room went from dual energy to one smooth, flowing

and collective energy. There was a feeling of relief and of surrender in the room; new relationships were being developed toward creating harmony. Now that we were beginning to trust each other it was time to clean house, to release those blocks, cellular blocks that have been with us for so many years. We would take the women through a release process using visualization and bringing to the surface painful memories, relationships and grief over the separation of the two regions.

After this very difficult session we were able to come together and nurture each other with the knowing that all of us want the same thing...Peace on Earth. Personally I was changed forever seeing with my own eyes what is possible in this world. The most difficult character trait I've had to work on as a visionary is Patience; I tend to want things to manifest quickly. Our intention to plant this seed was also an opportunity for me to build patience and tolerance, with patience we were able to blend these very different energies together and become one. All of us felt it, and so it is, and so it is, and so it is.

More to Dropping Body Fat Than Calories

Tony Ferrao

VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

So, you're looking to drop some body fat and some inches from the waist line? You know the answer is diet and exercise, but do you know the variables involved in the equation? Let's focus specifically with diet and nutrition. Are you a calorie counter?

Think about the concept of counting the average amount of energy in a very specific amount and type of food you want to eat. Now think of every other animal on this planet that lives and eats in their natural environment. Have you ever seen a tiger in the wild with a pocket guide on how many calories are in an adult gazelle? How would the tiger measure his serving? How does it calculate the calories and know when to stop munching on the gazelle? These same questions come to mind when you think about humans before we knew as much about food energy as we do now. The answer is hormones and

enzymes!

Body weight, as much of what happens in our bodies, is regulated by hormones and feedback systems. And the food energy that is found in carbohydrates, protein and fats is converted to fuel that cells can actually use by substances called enzymes, which act as catalysts in a chemical reaction. Remember high school chemistry?

Still focused on calories? Let's say the average adult woman should consume between 1200 to 1500 calories a day. Take into account that a large Big Mac meal is 1370 calories, which puts you right in your range with great efficiency. One meal and done! Men could super-size it and be fine! Or, let's save the money and just eat butter in an amount equal to the exact calories you should eat.

I think we all know that is definitely not the way to go for proper nutrition, but it fits

the calorie range so nicely! So, it's not all about the calories, then, right? Right!



As with most things, quality is better than quantity. The quality of the food has to do more with nutrient content, both variety and density of nutrients, than with calories. Nutrition is all about delivering nutrients to the body without negatively affecting hormones. Hormones are

chemical messengers that allow tissues and cells of the body to communicate with each other for various processes to happen, like altering metabolism.

Insulin is a hormone that most people are familiar with. Its primary job is to get liver, muscle and fat cells to take sugar in from the blood stream. In the cells of the muscles and liver, sugar is stored as glycogen, the storage form of carbohydrate. In the fat (adipose) cells it is stored as triglycerides (fat).

This process is very natural and

important. Moreover, insulin should have a limited and part-time job with us. Unfortunately, it is a hormone that works over-time more often than not, unless you are limiting foods that call on insulin regularly. According to Leninger's Principles of Biochemistry, 5th edition, "High blood glucose elicits the release of insulin, which speeds the uptake of glucose by tissues and favors the storage of fuels as glycogen and triacylglycerols, while inhibiting fatty acid mobilization in adipose tissue." Said another way eating more carbohydrates than the muscle and liver can store in specific finite amounts will cause fat cells to take up the excess carbohydrate as fat in unlimited amounts. Scary, huh?

As for the enzymes that convert food energy to cellular energy, there is one in particular to consider when an increase in fat metabolism is wanted, AMPK. That is Adenosine Monophosphate Kinase. Don't worry it won't be on the test. This enzyme basically tracks energy levels in the cells. When the energy levels drop, AMPK is activated to replenish the cellular energy in a similar way to recharging batteries. As you can imagine, this is a very important enzyme! What's interesting is that research from Colorado State University shows this enzyme responds best to low carbohydrate diets, regardless of how many calories are consumed. And you want this enzyme active, as it promotes increased fat metabolism and an increase in total number of mitochondria, the part of the cell that acts as the energy plant!

So, if you are looking to drop some body fat it is more important to look at the quality of the food you are choosing than the amount of calories in just anything. When you eat a diet based on clean and natural foods, your body's hormones will regulate metabolism and body fat. Just like the tiger in the wild.

To keep insulin production low and maximize AMPK, you must avoid foods with high concentrations of carbohydrates, like sugar, grains, potatoes, bread, pastries, processed foods, cereals and pasta. Instead chose fresh fruits, leafy greens and other vegetables that are high in nutrients and low in carbohydrates. Don't worry about getting "enough" carbohydrates in your diet. Your body can produce them through a process called gluconeogenesis, anyway.



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Dealing with Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Dr. Jin Sung

VALLEY PATRIOT CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common condition that many people struggle with. Statistics show that one in ten Americans display the symptoms of IBS, accounting for more than 2 million prescriptions and 35,000 hospitalizations each year. It is also the second highest cause of work absenteeism after the common cold.

Do You Have Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

It's important to realize that IBS is completely different from another condition that sounds very similar, namely inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Inflammatory bowel disease is an autoimmune disease that can have very serious consequences. But irritable bowel syndrome, even though it can cause debilitating pain, is a functional bowel disorder. In other words, there are no significant physical conditions that contribute to the problem; hence it's a functional disease.

So how do you know if you might be suffering from IBS?

Common signs and symptoms include frequent:

- Abdominal discomfort and/or pain
- Spastic colon (spastic contractions of the colon)
- Bloating
- Gas
- Diarrhea
- Constipation

How to Treat IBS Without Drugs

Fortunately, there are some simple, basic strategies you can use as an alternative to the drugs that are typically prescribed, such as antispasmodics and antidepressants. These drugs may help control the symptoms but do nothing to address the

underlying cause.

Avoid all sources of gluten -- The first step for any patient that comes to my clinic with this problem is to go on a gluten free diet. Most people understand this means avoiding all forms of wheat, but you also need to be aware that there are many other hidden sources of gluten in your diet.

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, but it's also found in other grains such as:

- Barley
- Rye
- Oats
- Spelt

Typically, avoiding gluten for a week or two is enough to see significant improvement.

In addition to gluten, food allergies can also play a role so be sensitive to that and start a trial and error process to determine which ones you have.

Get checked for parasites -- Another comprehensive strategy, to make sure you're not struggling with a physical condition that could be simulating IBS, is to have your stool checked for parasites. Some parasites, such as giardia, can sometimes be a contributing factor that needs to be treated.

Tailor your diet to your personal biochemistry -- Naturally, you'll want to pay close attention to your diet. Ideally, you'll

want to eat according to your nutritional type, as you have specific nutritional needs that are based on your personal biochemistry, metabolism, and genetic makeup.

Some people thrive on low-carbohydrate, high-protein and high-fat diets. A typical ratio for a Carb Type might be 40 percent protein and 30 percent each of fats and carbohydrates, but the amounts could easily shift to 50 percent fats and as little as 10 percent carbohydrates depending on individual genetic requirements.

Others require the converse: a high carb, low fat and low protein diet. (However, it's important to realize that there is a major difference between vegetable carbs and grain carbs, even though they're both referenced as

"carbs." Grains convert to sugar, which is not something anyone needs in their diet in high amounts.) Others fall somewhere in between these Protein and Carbohydrate types and can afford to be less strict with their ratios of carbs, fats and proteins.

It's important to realize that if you don't eat a diet that is suitable for you, you're likely to suffer health challenges, and a spastic colon is one possibility.

Part of nutritional typing is also to pay attention to the quality of your food. You'll want to consume high quality, unprocessed food. Remember, 90 percent of the money Americans spend on food is for processed foods. When you choose foods like this you're bound to experience physical complications, and it's no big surprise that one of those complications could be in your gut.

Boost healthy bacteria in your gut -- It's also important to make sure you have enough healthy bacteria in your gut. You can get healthy bacteria from fermented foods or a high quality supplement.

Now, once you lower the amounts of sugar and processed foods in your diet, you're automatically creating a milieu that will support the growth of good bacteria and diminish growth of bad bacteria. But you can enhance that process further by eating fermented foods or taking a high quality probiotic.

Take your fiber -- Taking additional fiber can also be very helpful to control IBS symptoms such as constipation and diarrhea. Fiber such as psyllium tends to be particularly helpful, and is my personal favorite. I use it nearly every day.

Psyllium is adaptogenic fiber, meaning if you're constipated it will soften your stool and help increase your bowel frequency, and if you have loose stools and frequent bowel movements, it will help with stool formation and decrease the frequency of bowel movements.

If you decide to use psyllium, make sure it is organic as nearly all the products out there are not, and the damage from the pesticide residue in most of the products far outweigh the benefit you would receive from the fiber itself. Metamucil is a classic non-organic psyllium.

Another good fiber is whole, organic flax seed. You can take a few table spoons of freshly ground flax seed per day. Another benefit of flax is that it's also a high quality source of plant-based omega-3 fats, particularly ALA, which nearly everyone needs on a regular basis.

Address emotional challenges -- Last but certainly not least, I've found that many people with IBS have an unresolved emotional component that contributes to their physical problem. This is also one of the reasons why antidepressants are frequently prescribed. Meditation, prayer, and psychological techniques and tools like the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) are all strategies you can use to effectively address your emotional challenges.

Source: Mercola.com



Dr. Jin Sung is a chiropractic physician who helps his patients both neurologically and metabolically to solve complex health issues. He can be reached at 978-688-6999. Or visit his website at www.DrJinSung.com.

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Let's Talk About Food/Addiction

Pennie Hale

VALLEY PATRIOT FOOD COLUMNIST

It's a new year! Isn't January the best time to start a new diet and exercise routine? Last year's diet failures are history. This year's diet success is ahead of us. Being healthier in the New Year can only improve all aspects of life. Replacing bad habits with good ones and starting off each day with a clear plan and dedication is possible.

I recently heard a celebrity say that after struggling with her weight for years, she realized that she had to get happy first to lose weight, not lose weight to get happy. I can really identify with that. My outward appearance is definitely a reflection of how I feel on the inside. I think that's true for a lot of people.

So where do we start? Self-evaluation is difficult but necessary for weight loss.

Knowing what the number is on the scale as well as how you reached that number is so important. If you are overweight, it's good to explore all the reasons why. Figuring out if you are one who overeats when bored, tired, lonely or stressed will help you get through those times without overindulging.

My past weight-loss experience is

that I lost 75 pounds in a year. Since then I have gained back approximately 25 pounds. My future weight-loss goal is to lose another 50 pounds. I have definitely learned that I have an eating disorder. I don't eat like a "normal" person. I binge. I typically start the day with a plan. I know how many calories I can consume and I plan meals accordingly. Most days, I stay on task until after dinner. I sit and think - hey I did it, today was a good day and I didn't overeat. Within a short period of time the chocolate chip cookie dough in the refrigerator starts to speak to me. I tell myself that I should just go and throw it away. I tell myself to not think about it. But inevitably, I eat the cookie dough. Then I beat myself up for failing. And the next day the cycle continues. No one can lose weight like that.



This month, I decided to research eating disorders, eating trends in the US, food-related obsessions and other topics. I came across a website for Overeaters Anonymous. It's a website that lists meeting times and places for people who wish to share their stories about overeating. I remembered that years ago I attended one of those meetings. I remember that no one actually spoke about their problem. They didn't talk about how they obsessed over certain foods or had trouble losing weight. They did speak about how hard they were trying, how they only gained one pound this week but would lose five the next. I didn't feel they were being real. I remember one woman who at the end of the meeting said, "Produce is on sale at Market Basket everyone so go stock up!" Right then I knew that meeting was not for me.

If I was buying fruit at the grocery store,

I don't think I'd have the need to attend an Overeaters Anonymous meeting. If I decide to attend one of these meetings again, I want to talk about the real stuff. I want to talk about how I fell asleep once while eating Milk Duds and woke up the next morning with melted chocolate all over

my face and chest! I want to talk about how I used to buy candy at the dollar store so I get more for my money! I want to talk about sneak eating and that comforting sleepy feeling you get with you go to bed full! I want to talk about how I can smell a Dunkin Donuts a mile before seeing it! I want to talk about my addiction to sugar. I want to talk about my obsessive mind when it comes to food.

I want to start off this New Year being real. I want to call a thing a thing and decide if I am going to do nothing about my weight or if I'm going to get happy and become a healthier me.

I am not a diet or exercise expert. I wish only to share my stories with you and hope that you share yours with me. If you would like to contact me, please send an email to pennielacouture@verizon.net

Shawn Hansen's Comedy Corner

Talking to a friend, relative, or employee on any giving day there will various tones that will indicate the emotion someone is feeling. For example if Albert Granzio goes into work and cowardly said, "How's it going," it most likely is telling people without words that he is having a bad morning.

Delivering emotion through voice is one thing, but for Comedian Steven Wright it is the complete opposite.

Wright lit up a packed Wilbur Theatre on Sunday, Dec. 02 delivering one-liners and stories in his monotone voice had the crowd roaring with laughter for an hour and a half.

Delivering his one-liners fast paced, Wright said, "Let me ask you something, do you think in Europe Miles Davis is known as Kilometer Davis?"

Captivating the audience with a story from his childhood, Wright explained that his grandfather told him the reason all mailmen have steering wheels on the right side of their cars are because they are from England.

Putting his grandfather's false teeth on, Wright would go up to the mailman and say, "Excuse me sir..." as he then exclaimed that a young skinny kid would be talking with an English accent with large teeth to them.

According to Wright, he has never fallen asleep driving, but has woke up driving. Getting ready to go on vacation, Wright said, "So I call up the airlines to make a reservation, they say, 'How many will be traveling?' I said, 'How would I know? It's your plane.'"



Even with a monotone way of delivering his jokes, Wright picked the 'right' way to get the job done as everything fit perfectly in his act. After each story and one-liner, Wright would either give a minute to the audience to interpret the joke so they could digest it (understand it), or would make facial expressions or hand movements to carry things on.

Labeling Wright's airplane joke as one of my favorites, the other favorite was when he said, "The walls in my house have paintings of the rooms above them so I never have to go upstairs."

For more information about Comedian Steven Wright go to www.stevenwright.com.

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SHEILA'S RECIPE CORNER: HOLIDAY RECIPES

Sheila Mullins

VALLEY PATRIOT COOKING COLUMNIST

It's the January breather that comes after all the frenetic activities of November & December. I've been to a few holiday parties & still have a few to go here in January. Here's a dish that I prepared for Christmas dinner that would be perfect for one of those holiday parties or if you have, as I do, other reasons for a celebrations, say a birthday. I first made Tyler Florence's version last spring & this is my own version of the same. One needs to be home as it is very time consuming, so, however, there is little time required in the overall preparation; most of the time is the ham cooking.

This is so good & the final colour is a deep, dark walnut colour when it is finished. It also reheats beautifully in the microwave, a good thing!

Tangerine Glazed Ham

8-10 lb bone in, smoked ham with its skin

Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper

20 large fresh sage leaves

¼ c olive oil

2 sticks unsalted butter cut into chunks

3 cups tangerine juice

1.5 c light brown sugar, packed

½ c orange flavoured liquor such as Grand Mariner

2 cinnamon sticks

¼ t whole cloves

1 t ground cardamom

2 tangerines, seeded & sliced thin

Preheat oven to 300°F.



Place ham in a large roasting pan, fat side up. Using a sharp knife, score the

ham with cuts across the skin, about 2-inches apart and 1/2-inch deep. Cut diagonally down the slashes to form a diamond pattern; season the meat generously with salt and pepper. Chop ½ of the sage leaves & reserve the balance. Place chopped sage

leaves in a bowl; mix with the oil to make a paste. Rub the sage-oil all over the ham, being sure to get the flavor into all the slits. Bake the ham for 2 hours.

While the ham is baking, make the glaze. In a large saucepan, add the butter, juice, sugar, spices, & liquor. Reduce liquid over medium low heat until it is syrupy. It will take anywhere from 40-65 minutes.

After the ham has been cooking for 2 hours, pour the glaze all over it & baste. Scatter the remaining 10 sage leaves on top along with tangerine slices & return ham to oven to cook for 1.5 hours. Baste ham every 20 minutes.

Remove ham from oven, tent loosely with foil & let rest for 30 minutes. Remove & discard cinnamon sticks.

* a wonderful substitution is clementines. To make the amount of juice required would take at least one full box of clementines if not more.



Sheila Mullins lives in Newburyport & is a personal cook. She can be reached at sheila_a_mullins@hotmail.com.

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK: FROM 17

cations, Medical Terminology, Computer Skills, and College Success. There will be an emphasis on academic reading and writing. Students who complete the two semesters will be better prepared to enroll and succeed in a college-level coursework. "The Bridge classes are built around the healthcare certificate programs offered at NECC," says Kelly, the program coordinator. "We know non-native speakers learn English best in a contextualized environment. We selected one discipline – healthcare – because it is a rapidly growing field with lots of job opportunities."

This course is available on a first come, first served basis for eligible participants.

For additional information, contact Amanda Kelly at (978) 556-3259 or akelly@necc.mass.edu. Visit the Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/esolbridge>

INTRO TO STAND-UP COMEDY WRITING AND PERFORMING - FINDING YOUR FUNNY

Have you ever wanted to take the funny things you think to yourself or say to your friends onstage and make an audience laugh? Find Your Funny! Professional comedians and writers Ellen Moschetto and Jody Sloane will work with students on the important, basic elements of stand-up comedy. Via interactive critiques with fellow students, instructors and professional comedians that visit the class, we will tackle the following: Finding one's voice, Basic joke structure, Comedic delivery/ Timing, Writing exercises and tips and How to get on open mic shows in the area. All of this culminates with your "graduation performance" where you take the stage and deliver your honed 5-6 minute act.

Class runs Mondays, March 4th - April 8th (last class will be the performance show). 7 PM-8:15 PM at El Taller in Lawrence, MA. Cost is \$99.

For more info or to register, contact Jody Sloane at 617-233-6394 or jodysloane@gmail.com.

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January 22 - February 26, 2013, 1pm - 3:30 pm at Lowell General Hospital, Carlisle Room. 295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell, MA 01854. For More Info or To Register Call 978-946-1260. Visit us on line at: www.healthyliving4me.org

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MERRIMACK VALLEY QUILT GUILD TO MEET

The Merrimack Valley Quilt Guild will hold their Jan. 17th meeting at 7pm at Holy Angels Church Gym, in Plaistow NH. All are welcome. Guest fee is \$5. This month we will feature the Quilted Acorn Shop from Newbury, MA who will have a trunk show on Wool Applique penny rugs and other folk art quilts. For more information go to www.mvquilters.wordpress.com

Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop. Where: Amesbury Senior Center. When: March 7th thru April 11th (Workshop held once a week for 6 weeks) Time: 1pm to 3:30pm including a 20 minute break. Workshop is at "No charge" – Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register: 978-388-8138. Or visit our website at www.healthyliving4me.org

NECC ANNOUNCES BOARD GAME CONVENTION - NECC's Bacon Board Gamers, a student club led by Professor Mike Cross, is inviting the community to an all-day Board Game Convention on Tuesday, Jan. 22. Bring your own board games or choose from the club's vast selection! If you'd like to interview Mike Cross or student board gamers, please let me know.

Northern Essex Community College's Bacon Board Gamers, a student club, will host a Board Game Convention on Tuesday, Jan. 15 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Haverhill Campus, and everyone who enjoys board games is invited to attend.



Tom Duggan is the publisher of The Valley Patriot, a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP, 980AM, every Saturday from 10am-noon. You can email your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com.



Newly elected Massachusetts State Senator Katie O'Connor Ives (Left) being sworn in earlier this month with her colleagues.

Kathleen O'Connor Ives Sworn in as State Senator

Kathleen O'Connor Ives Sworn in as Massachusetts State Senator New First Essex District legislator ready to get to work for constituents Boston, Mass. Kathleen O'Connor Ives was sworn in as First Essex District State Senator on Wednesday, January 2nd at the State House on Beacon Hill. She was elected to the seat in November and succeeds former State Senator Steven Baddour who resigned in April of last year. "I'm honored to join the State Senate and am ready to get to work," said O'Connor Ives after the ceremony. "In the immediate future, I'll be focused on meeting with municipal leaders to discuss their concerns and priorities so we can be effective partners. I also look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate." O'Connor Ives starts the 188th legislative session having completed staffing the First Essex District State Senate office. O'Connor Ives said, "Quality and

responsive constituents services in a top priority for me and I'm very happy with our team. I plan on having regular district office hours in each city and town in the district. Our first district office hours are on Friday, January 18th at the Haverhill Public Library, Milhender Room from 1:00 p.m. to 2 p.m. and Nevins Memorial Library, Trustee's Room in Methuen from 3 to 4 p.m." Background O'Connor Ives, 35, was elected to the Massachusetts State Senate on November 6, 2012. Previously, Senator O'Connor Ives was elected three times as City Councilor At-Large in Newburyport, beginning in 2007. She resigned from the City Council effective January 1, 2013. Staff List Hailey Klein - Chief of Staff Maria Szymiotis- Deputy Chief of Staff, Legislative Director Dennis Marcelo - District Director Michael Gallant - Constituent Services Coordinator Chris Power - Scheduler

FROM PAGE 21: GLOBAL WARMING

Massachusetts has already been named the most energy efficient state two years in a row, but there is still plenty of room to improve in this area especially in our buildings. With 90% of our energy still coming from dirty and dangerous energy sources in the Commonwealth, decreasing energy use means less air pollution and less global warming pollution. Finally, we must invest in clean renewable energy like wind and solar making them easier to install and more cost-effective through policies

like increasing net-metering and renewing the Production Tax Credit.

The basic building blocks to a low carbon future are already in place here in Massachusetts. But recent extreme weather episodes remind us that we cannot rest on our laurels. We need to build on our strong foundation to make even more progress in combating global warming in 2013. 2012 demonstrated that global warming is a force to be reckoned with. Let's make 2013 the year we take a real bite out of the global warming problem.

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FROM THE VAURA PATRIOT...

A New Year notebook by Vaura Consulting communications principal Alex Talcott

Alex Talcott

VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

* Go to hell or off fiscal cliff?: ABC News reporter Sunlen Miller, who has the U.S. Senate beat, noted on New Year's Eve the debate-opening prayer of Senate Chaplain Barry Black: "Lift them from the darkness of hopelessness." Amen. But aw heck—a public records search shows that in addition to cushy federal benefits, we pay the Chaplain a \$151,000 salary. The taxpayers pay his chief of staff \$127,000; his communications director \$75,000; and his assistant \$50,000.

* Loser-Bracket Liberal: I disfavor contested primary elections within parties with few elected. But if Scott Brown's "yes" vote on the 12/31 Senate tax-and-spend bill did not earn him a U.S. Senate special election primary should he run, then the MA Republican nominee will be a loser-bracket liberal versus the Democratic Party's choice.

In fairness, numerous Republican presidential and vice presidential aspirants, near candidates, and future short-listers voted for the bill: Senators Rob Portman (Ohio), Kelly Ayotte (New Hampshire), and John Thune (South Dakota), and Representative McMorris Rodgers (Washington). The Texas Senate delegation cast two votes for it three days before Senator-Elect Ted Cruz, a sure-fire no, was to be sworn in—a "lone star."

* Mass. GOP-uh-leez: The more I learned about the race for Massachusetts Republican Party Chair, the less I wanted to know. Asked in December whom I liked by a friend (who is in fact most qualified for the position), I replied, "I don't. Underwhelmed." The position of MA party chair has been de facto emptier than Eastwood's in recent years. The jockeying story in this year's horse race dates back to recruiting Mitt Romney, while in Salt Lake City, Utah running the 2002 Winter Olympics, to run for governor. A decade later and dollars shorter, who cares? It's inside baseball (and I don't even like that expression; only political insiders use it.) I don't know any of the four or so candidates personally and hardly think it's their bad for not knowing me. I'm starting to see more evidence of management ideas and public lobbying on RedMassGroup, Facebook, and Twitter. All are cogent and worthy of a seat with Jim Braude on NECN's Broadside representing the party and movement win, lose, or withdraw. They should take advantage of, and make, platforms to refine and get out the mes-

sage. I walked away from a column solely on the chair's race but will run to people with new ideas on political and public policy communication and organization.

* Smell the Roses, Thank a Thorn: Why isn't Andover State Rep. Jim Lyons more conspicuous? Isn't there supposed to be an established farm system to scout and tout star citizens? Lyons is a kind, well-spoken Main Street businessman (Dandi Lyons florist and ice cream, Reading and Tewksbury) who has twice beat competent incumbent and Treasurer's Office administrator Barbara L'Italien.

*NH off another Cliff: In New Hampshire, Cliff Hurst was the consensus candidate in waiting for Republican state chair. Already vice chair, he's a conservative (state co-chair for Rick Perry up to the New Hampshire primary, chair for Mike Huckabee in '08), a self-made businessman, the leader of religious invocations at events, father of the state Young Republicans chair and a friend to many Young Guns. Cliff was uniquely positioned to bridge the Establishment and Tea Party factions, white-hair-rim bald yet 5,000 Facebook friends. Two-time Republican congressional candidate Jennifer Horn announced her intentions and quickly rolled out endorsements, from establishment as well as conservatives and, most impressively, Senator Ayotte. Clearing the field is more difficult nowhere than New Hampshire. Thirty-year-old new-media entrepreneur Andrew Hemingway, a state chair and national digital communications and development director for Newt Gingrich and former Bristol town budget chair, entered the race. Goodwill for my friend and past collaborator Andrew, according to pledged delegates, stems in part from endorsements and grassroots support from the Republican Liberty Caucus, whose NH chapter he chaired through the 2010 elections. I missed Jennifer's Nashua radio work, but I have been a guest in her home for a debate watch and at speaker events she organized through her "We the People" organization. She offered kind congratulations for a gubernatorial primary debate I moderated with the NH House Speaker and steps up as an eager candidate spokeswoman (Pawlenty, Romney, Kevin Smith). I still wish Cliff got the (unpaid) job. He appreciates corny jokes, so here goes: His chairmanship would be one step for a small man, but a giant leap for the GOP.

"The party" is a pile-of-bricks roadside house-HQ, a paid staff of three (compared to fourteen professional Democrats), and a

cycle-delayed, myopic voter identification regime. The chair cannot be a recliner. The position as an institution should be thankful, not thankless; it has bred more contempt than the NH and MA Democratic equivalents and at present is worth less than a bucket of frozen spit (LBJ said the phlegm of the vice presidency was at least warm). The real party is a grassroots group of neighbors who do not "Bowl Alone"—they are otherwise engaged in — indeed, creators of — their community life. A motley crew, they would do well to proceed as a summer-camp color war team; do-nothing, uninformed orthodoxy is failing.

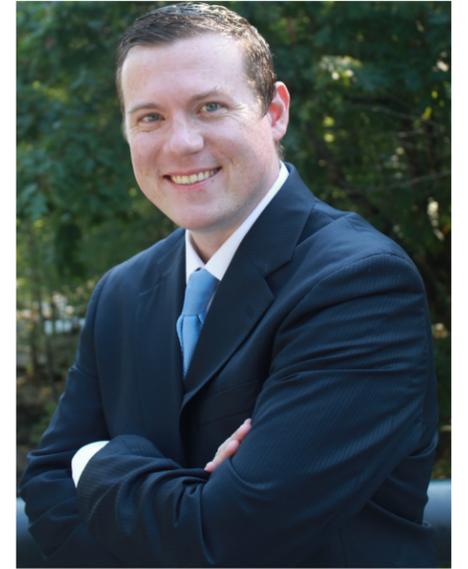
* I want a rhinoceros for New Year's: National Review Online contributor Jonah Goldberg shared a prediction that Huntsmanism will spread to the House: "Someone in the House GOP will try to revive the 'gypsy moth' Republican caucus. This Republican will get lavish media coverage for his (or her) efforts. In 2014, this same Republican will announce his retirement from Congress and his exciting new post at Harvard's Kennedy School." I call RINOs (Republicans in Name Only) unicorns; both have a point, or they would if they existed.

* Social media civics: If you won or lost an election on November 6 and haven't tweeted or posted to your Facebook page since, you are still sending a message—that you care(d) more about "having the job than doing the job," as Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick likes to say.

* A radio star: Evaporating talk radio, AM and FM "dial" alike, is bad for all of us, not just the likes of Valley Patriot columnist Jeff Katz, a former Talk 1200 morning host. He consistently aired national guests along with his Swampscott cynicism.

* Heal, Hillary: I share New York Times columnist Nick Kristof's concern that Hillary Clinton works too hard. The next example the 11-years-running Gallup poll most admired woman can set is to take care of her health before national health care or international cancers. I do not share ABC News senior foreign affairs correspondent Martha Raddatz's tweeted sentiment "Really seems we should be told more about the condition or our sec-state." What are the precedents and where is the line drawn? Even Valley Patriot editor Tom Duggan, with his ignored FOIA requests, probably doesn't want the HUD Secretary's full medical records, for example.

* Force Estate: Kristof was detained in Bahrain in late 2012 the same week NBC News chief foreign correspondent Richard



Engel and crew were kidnapped in Syria. Earlier, but reported later, a journalist with North Andover family was kidnapped in Syria. American media, even from elite outlets, are hardly untouchable. For all that plagues the press, what they do abroad — and even what Duggan does here — is not safe.

* Tora Bora? Anyone? Bueller?: With "Zero Dark Thirty" on the bin Laden kill in theaters and as history teacher for my day (and night) job, I wonder if the modern asymmetric War on Terror will yield any "battles" for the textbooks or common curriculum. It's been 11-plus years.

* Kuster's Stand: WMUR9 (NH ABC affiliate) wunderkind James Pindell predicts new NH-02 Rep. Annie Kuster will serve in Congress for a long time. The Democrat came back from a narrow loss in 2010 to unseat Rep. Charlie Bass by really, truly "wuharkin' hahd," not by just riding President Obama's coattails. Colin van Ostern, who managed Kuster's first campaign, won a seat on New Hampshire's Executive Council and is a name to watch. If you find an insider's Intrade, bet on him for a future governor.

* "Paying Attention!": If you've paid attention this far, you're likely a listener of Tommy's radio program on 980WCAP. I went to hear the singer-songwriter of the show's eponymous theme song, Lowell's Melvern Taylor, at no-cover TOAD in Cambridge last month. He plays the ukulele non-ironically and might be the only hip hipster I know.

Alex Talcott, Durham NH, is the public affairs principal of Vaura Consulting LLC and a college and college preparatory history instructor. Email: VauraConsulting@gmail.com

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