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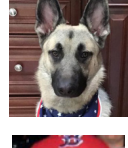

Lawrence Police Officer Jake Eyssi Finally Honored For His Sacrifice



PAGE 15

Lawrence Police officer Jake Eyssi died of injuries he sustained in the line of duty in 1986. His sacrifice was never recognized until last month when his name was added to the Massachusetts Police Memorial.

INDEX

 Senator Payano PAGE 4	 Beneath The Surface Paul Murano PAGE 23
Vets.....1,2,13,14,18	 Auditor DiZoglio In Your Corner PAGE 5
Editorial.....2	 Kane PAGE 13
Methuen.....2,4,-6,15,18	 Bill Cushing TV TALK PAGE 27
Haverhill.....2,4	
State.....2,4-6,8,16,18,20	
Lawrence.....4,6,9,11,15,18	
Dracut.....8,16	
Pets.....13	
Danvers.....18	
NOTEBOOK.....20	
Books.....21	
Religion.....23,27	
Health.....9,23	
Real Estate.....24	
TV.....27	

VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Our Silent Generation Speaks - Two-Service Vet Robert Lister

John Cuddy
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

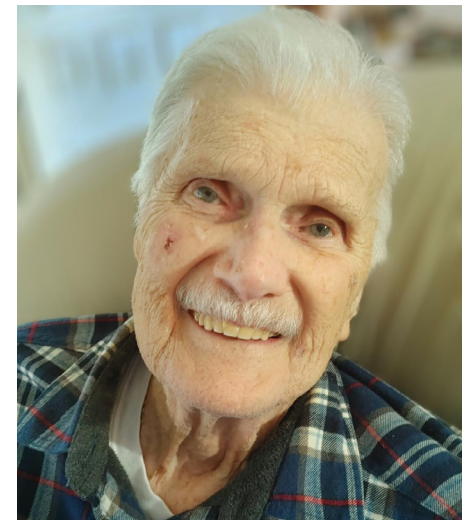
Raised in Methuen, Massachusetts, where he returned to over thirty years ago, ninety-year-old Robert Lister and his daughter Joan, recently met with the Valley Patriot to tell his story.

Growing up, he had three sisters and

one brother. Robert attended Lawrence High School for a while before joining the US Navy at age seventeen. A member of what historians are now calling the "Silent Generation," they are the younger siblings of America's "Greatest Generation." They were born between 1928 and 1945 and were too young to serve in World War II with their older

siblings. Many of the older members of this group, lied about their age, and served in the military during the Second World War, some serving while in their early teens. In his 2008 thesis for the University of Montana, Joshua Pollarine, interviewed many underaged World War II Veterans from the Silent Generation who served in the US Military, some in Combat, as teenagers. The youngest of those he interviewed, being four Veterans who served in the Army or Navy at thirteen. Another Veteran Pollarine interviewed was US Marine Jack Lucas, who enlisted at fourteen, and earned the Medal of Honor on Iwo Jima at fifteen.

During the Korean conflict, Robert served on several ships, including the USS General Stuart Heintzelman (AP-159) a military transport, the carrier USS Shangri-La (CV/CVA/CVS-38), and the carrier USS Antietam (CV-36). The USS Antietam was in war time reserve after the ship's World War II service. Robert was part of the crew that put the carrier back into commission after the North Koreans and their Chinese allies invaded South Korea. The ship was returned to active duty on January 17, 1951, with Captain George J. Dufek USN in command. When Robert joined the ship's crew, as the carrier was embarking on the only combat deployment of her career. During that tour, the USS Antietam made four cruises with US Navy Task Force 77 (TF 77), into the combat zone off the coast of the Korean peninsula.



After each of the vessel's combat missions, the USS Antietam returned to Yokosuka, Japan. The carrier's air group carried out a variety of missions in support of United Nations forces combating North Korean, Chinese and Soviet aggression. Those air missions included combat air patrol, logistics interdiction, particularly against railroad and highway traffic, reconnaissance, antisubmarine patrols, and night heckler missions. From late November 1951 to mid-March 1952, Antietam's air group flew nearly 6,000 sorties of all types. Robert and the rest of the crew returned to Yokosuka on March 21, 1952, after the conclusion of her fourth combat mission with Task Force 77. The crew then to begin preparations to sail back to the

HERO: PAGE 26



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Losing our Democracy at the Local Level

With local elections coming up in Lawrence, Methuen, Haverhill, and other cities in the Merrimack Valley, election experts are predicting a very low voter turnout ... again.

That means the vast majority of registered voters don't care enough about how their cities are run or who is going to run them.

Not to mention the fact that most people aren't even registered to vote.

The level of apathy, not just in the Merrimack Valley, but across the country is staggeringly dangerous.

When free people fail to participate in choosing their government leaders, it makes way for dishonest and corrupt activists to gain political power and use

our government services to achieve their own corrupt agendas.

We have seen this throughout the last decade in Lawrence, Haverhill, and Methuen.

When there is a high voter turnout, cities tend to elect more honest candidates who - for a time, at least - represent the public more effectively and efficiently than those who get elected in low turnout elections.

When asking potential candidates why they chose not to run for office this year, the most frequent response we got was that local politics - especially in Methuen and Haverhill - had become far too "dirty" and that the corrupt insiders were far too powerful for one person to fight.

We empathize with that line of thinking.

We realize that it's very hard for newcomers in the political arena to make any real difference with the embedded and corrupt political insiders having such a stranglehold on power. Especially when they are so willing to smear and destroy anyone who asks the right questions.

We also understand that giving up and not running for local office, not voting in local elections, and not paying attention to how our cities are being run only enables the corrupt powers who use government for nefarious purposes.

We want to urge every registered voter in Lawrence, Methuen, and Haverhill,

to take a little time to research the candidates on line, educate yourself as to who is seeking public office, and spend five minutes on November 7th casting an educated vote.

And while we truly want every voter to educate themselves and vote on election day, we also want to caution stupid people who don't do their homework, and don't understand the functions of government to stay home.

The last thing our local communities need is uninformed voters choosing more corrupt candidates to run our local governments.

This is how democracies are lost. Vote now, while you still have the choice. ◇

The Methuen Veterans Center: A New Vision for Veteran Services

Ryan Hamilton

STATE REP., METHUEN/HAVERHILL

I am proud to come from the Merrimack Valley, where we cherish and uplift our veterans and their families. I am also proud to come from a family who understands the sacrifice our veterans have made. My grandfather was a Korean War veteran and two of my uncles served in the Air Force in Iraq and Afghanistan. With Veterans Day coming up next month, our community will remember and honor the service of our veterans and their families through parades, breakfasts, and salutes. And while I look forward to attending these events, we know that only thanking our veterans for their service is not enough.

Over 6% of veterans in the Commonwealth are facing extreme poverty, with many experiencing homelessness and housing instability. As we celebrate our veterans in the coming weeks, we must also take real steps towards improving their quality of life. At the State House, I have filed and co-sponsored a number of bills that would put money back in the pockets

of our veterans and increase access to services. Since I took office in January, I have had the privilege of meeting with local veterans regularly, listening to their concerns and elevating their issues on Beacon Hill and at City Hall. Through these conversations it has become clear that there is more work to be done here in Methuen to help our veterans.

Currently, a small team in City Hall at the Veterans' Services Office (VSO), along with two member-based clubs (VFW and American Legion), provide the lion's share of services for veterans in Methuen. The services these groups provide are invaluable: healthcare support, employment assistance, mental health counseling, and educational programming, to name a few. Coming out of the pandemic, demand for greater veterans' services has only grown, stretching these three organizations thin. The demographics of our veteran population has also changed over time, as younger service members from more diverse backgrounds return to our community. Services must adapt to these changes and bring in those who are left out of current programs.

It is time for our community and our city to come together and create an all-encompassing space worthy of those who have served and sacrificed for this nation.

That is why I am partnering with Mayor Perry and the City of Methuen to create a dedicated Methuen Veterans Center in our community. By purchasing the space that the American Legion currently occupies on Broadway and renovating it into a permanent center open to all veterans, we can do better by those who fought for our freedoms. The center would still allow the Legion to operate its own meeting space downstairs, while the rest of the building would be open to all veterans and their families. With its three floors and central location, this space would increase the capacity of current programs and allow for the development of new, sorely needed services.

The center would also be home to Methuen's Office of Veterans' Services, led by Paul Jensen, who has been a steadfast partner in developing this project. By bringing everyone together under one roof, we can create a sense

of belonging and support among our veterans, many of whom are experiencing high rates of isolation and loneliness.

Our vision for this center includes a wide range of services. Accessing and affording healthcare, including mental health care, is a major barrier for veterans across age groups. The center would be able to provide personalized care and counseling to each veteran, ensuring that they are directed towards the best services. From workshops on financial planning and job trainings to peer mentorship groups and legal and VA claims assistance, the center will be an active hub for greater services, social gatherings, and supports for our veterans.

As we begin the initial stages of this project, I invite all members of our community to contribute to this vision. Residents can reach out to my office directly by emailing ryan.hamilton@mahouse.gov or calling (617) 722-2090. All veterans in Methuen deserve a space where they feel welcomed and supported. Let's come together as a city and make the Methuen Veterans Center a reality. ◇



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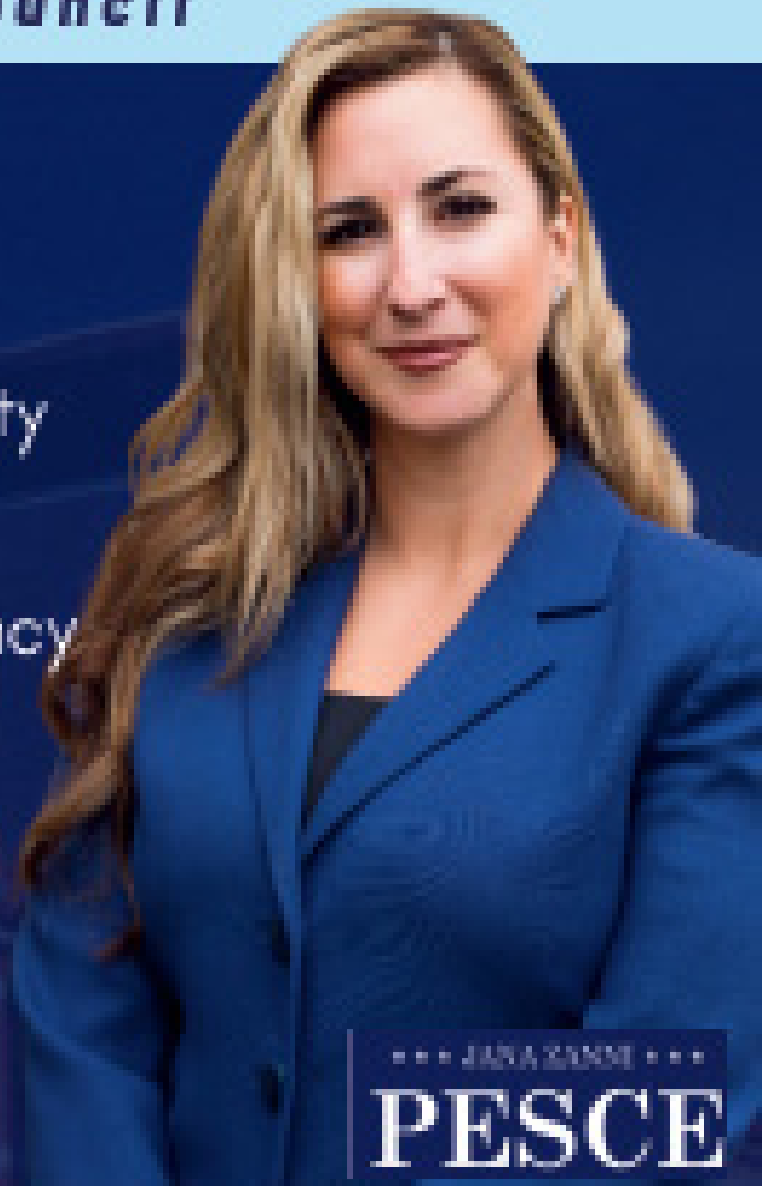
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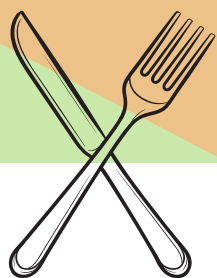
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Historic Compromise: Legislature Approves Comprehensive Tax Relief Package

Pavel Payano

STATE SENATOR, 1ST ESSEX DISTRICT

In a landmark achievement of bipartisan cooperation, the Massachusetts Legislature has reached a historic compromise on a comprehensive tax relief package, and I am proud to have cast my vote in favor of it. This extraordinary effort was a true compromise between Democrats and Republicans and between the Senate and the House. While no one found themselves in complete agreement with every provision, the result is a remarkable compromise that promises to provide much-needed financial relief to many working-class and middle-class families across the Commonwealth.

A Complex Tax Relief Package

The tax relief package is a multifaceted endeavor that addresses various pressing financial issues affecting Massachusetts residents. It is an intricate combination of tax reforms, adjustments, and enhancements aimed at empowering families and ensuring the state remains competitive. This article will endeavor to highlight several key components of this ambitious and far-reaching legislation.

Empowering Massachusetts Families

At its core, this tax relief package is designed to empower Massachusetts families who face financial challenges. It focuses on delivering real financial assistance to those who need it most, acknowledging the difficulties encountered by parents, seniors, young individuals, and middle-class households as they navigate rising costs.

Key Highlights of the Compromise Tax Relief Package

Child and Dependent Tax Credit: This provision significantly increases the refundable tax credit for dependents, disabled adults, and seniors. Starting at \$310 per dependent in taxable year 2023 and rising to \$440 in taxable year 2024 and beyond, it eliminates the child/dependent cap.

This expanded credit will benefit more than 565,000 families and establish Massachusetts as the home to the most generous universal child and dependent tax credit in the country.

Estate Tax: The compromise reduces

Massachusetts' estate tax and brings it in line with the tax structures of other states. It eliminates punitive elements for those with incomes slightly above the threshold. The estate tax will be reduced for all taxpayers and completely waived for estates valued under \$2 million, with a uniform credit of \$99,600.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC): This critical provision enhances the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) from 30% to 40% of the federal credit. This substantial increase will provide essential support to nearly 400,000 taxpayers with incomes below \$60,000.

Single Sales Factor Apportionment: Massachusetts is transitioning to a single sales factor apportionment system, aligning with the approach of 39 other states. This move encourages businesses to maintain their headquarters within the state.

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit: Doubling the refundable senior circuit breaker tax credit from \$1,200 to \$2,400 will offer vital support to limited-income seniors facing high rents or real estate taxes, benefiting over 100,000 seniors across the state.

Rental Deduction Cap: The cap for rental deductions will increase from \$3,000 to \$4,000, providing assistance to approximately 800,000 Massachusetts taxpayers.

Short-Term Capital Gains Tax: The compromise reduces the short-term capital gains tax rate from 12% to 8.5%, positioning Massachusetts as a more attractive destination for investment.

Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP): The package significantly enhances HDIP by raising the statewide cap from \$10 million to \$57 million for 2023, with subsequent annual increases to \$30 million. This substantial boost is anticipated to create 12,500 new homes in Gateway Cities and stimulate over \$4 billion in private investment.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit: The compromise raises the annual authorization from \$40 million to \$60 million, funding the creation of thousands of new units of affordable housing while also bolstering economic development.



Local Option Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing: This new policy empowers municipalities to adopt a local property tax exemption for affordable real estate, ensuring access to affordable housing for individuals with lower incomes.

Title V Cesspool or Septic System Tax Credit: The compromise triples the maximum credit from \$6,000 to \$18,000 and increases the amount claimable to \$4,000 per year, providing much-needed relief to homeowners facing the high cost of septic tank replacement or repair.

Additional Tax Changes: The tax relief package also incorporates additional changes, including doubling the credit for lead paint abatement, raising the Dairy Tax Credit cap, exempting

employer student loan payments from taxable compensation, expanding the commuter expense tax deduction, and raising the maximum alcohol content for certain classes of drinks.

The passage of this historic tax relief package signifies a new era of financial security, equity, and competitiveness for Massachusetts.

It underscores the ability of the Commonwealth's legislators to come together, find common ground, and enact meaningful change that will benefit countless residents and businesses.

Pavel Payano is a Massachusetts State Senator representing Lawrence, Methuen, and Haverhill. You can reach him at pavel.payano@masenate.gov. ♦



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Gaps in Testing Represent Weaknesses in Cannabis Control Commission

At the end of September, my office released an audit of the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC), diving into a commission that has the responsibility to build up oversight over a nascent industry. As this industry has evolved, so too has the CCC.

This most recent audit specifically honed in on whether the CCC is ensuring that recreational cannabis products are meeting the safety standards set by both law and regulation. This included a review of the processes used by the CCC to support the safety of products purchased by consumers.

Current laws and regulations provide for protocols meant to protect consumers, and include requirements that cannabis products are free from contaminants. Contaminants that the CCC tests for include metals, like lead, arsenic, and mercury; pesticides; solvents; and microbial agents, such as mycotoxins, which can be produced by molds or fungi.

The CCC is responsible for enforcing the retesting products after a certain period of time has passed. These tests hold retailers accountable to providing safe, quality products to consumers to

protect public health.

Our audit included the review of more than 160,000 packages that were tested by the CCC during the audit period. Almost 1% of those packages included some amount of product that had passed its expiration date regarding testing.

State regulations are clear – product that exceeds one year between testing shall be considered expired.

The audit also identified that the CCC did not properly ensure that all marijuana establishments and independent testing laboratories reported positive pesticide tests to the CCC within 72 hours, as required by law.

These gaps in testing represent weaknesses in the CCC’s current systems charged with protecting the public’s health regarding contaminated product. The CCC has confirmed that they are taking steps to implement changes and improve policies and procedures to reflect most of our recommendations, further strengthening safeguards for consumers.

We will be following up in the coming months to ensure accountability on behalf of taxpayers.

Yours in service, Diana ◇

IN YOUR CORNER with AUDITOR DIZOGLIO



State Auditor Diana DiZoglio is from Methuen and writes an exclusive column for The Valley Patriot every month.

Write-in Candidate for Methuen School Committee, Ken Willette

Kenneth Willette (10 Burnham Road, Apt. 506A) officially announced his campaign today as a write-in candidate for the Methuen School Committee. Willette previously served six years on the Methuen School Committee and

six years as a Methuen City Councilor at Large. Willette stated: “Based upon positive feedback from family and friends, I wanted to offer my experience and extensive public service to a position that is important to the education of

our future generation. I look forward to running a constructive and fact-based campaign.”

During his six years on the Methuen School Committee, Willette successfully achieved the following goals:

- Drafted the strongest residency enforcement policy in Methuen’s history, which has removed hundreds of out-of-district students and saved the community millions of dollars.
 - Recommended a police officer in every school.
 - Installed cameras on school buses to deter student mischief.
 - Organized an effective grassroots campaign to win support for the renovations at Methuen High School.
 - Introduced policy that banned counterproductive technological devices at schools.
 - Recommended that every School Committee meeting be televised for openness and transparency.
- During his six years on the Methuen City Council, Willette also promoted the following: ---
- Introduced the strongest Sex Offender notification and enforcement policies in the Merrimack Valley.
 - Suggested that speeding fines in school zones be doubled like construction sites.

Willette concluded: “When considering my policy decisions over 12 years of public service, I have always endeavored to keep the future of our children in mind. I have always sought the betterment of our community. I hope the voters will entrust me once again to directly serve their valid interests.”

WILLETTE’S PLATFORM

ELIMINATION OF STUDENT PARKING FEE FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Willette proposes the elimination of the student parking fee at Methuen High School. Students would still need to complete the online application in order to receive their parking decal, according to the student handbook, but Willette wants to forgo the current tiered student parking fee structure. The present fee system could potentially cost students \$100.

“The student parking fee is regressive and unnecessary as a school budget funding tool. Families in Methuen pay enough in taxes each year to be saddled with fees, especially since we really don’t charge fees for other student activities.”

Willette highlighted that the nearby community of Haverhill only charges a replacement fee of \$10 for their student decals. Willette would tailor Methuen’s policy to match Haverhill’s.

“The student parking fee is a relic of a misguided effort to balance the budget during a prior fiscal crisis. There is no justifiable purpose for it now.”

A NEW LITERACY PARTNERSHIP Proposed Voluntary Outreach Program Would Be Called “Biz for Kids”

Willette recently offered a proposed new partnership between local businesses and the Methuen Public Schools called “Biz for Kids” which is designed to tackle the problematic literacy rates of students. If elected to the school board on

Join The Methuen Republican Town Committee

The MRTC was formed to represent Methuen residents who share and support conservative values. Our mission is to build a strong presence in our community and support conservative candidates for local, state and federal offices.

If you are a registered Republican living in Methuen and want to learn more, please come and join our next meeting.

Meetings are held at the Nevins Library at 6:30Pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month. For more information, visit the MRTC website: methuenrepublicancommittee.org or contact methuenrepublican@gmail.com



Advocating a Brighter Future in the Merrimack Valley

Francisco Paulino
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Dear Friends and Neighbors of Methuen and Lawrence,

A few years back, when the halls of Suffolk University Law School were my daily walk, a fervent dream took root. I envisioned a community where everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, was afforded the same opportunities and treated with equal respect. It was then that I set out to draft the "Payroll Card Bill" in 2015. As I took my first steps in the State House last January, I made it a priority to file that bill, marked as H.1931. It wasn't just a piece of paper or a bureaucratic exercise. It was, and remains, a testament to my commitment to transparency and fairness in wage payments for every resident of Methuen and Lawrence.

Last week brought us another significant victory. On the 4th of October, the "Wage Equity Act", H.1849, which I proudly co-sponsored, received unanimous approval from the House. It's a moment of pride for all of us, reinforcing our shared belief that everyone in Massachusetts deserves

equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or any other discriminatory factor.

I'm also thrilled to share news about the grant from the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. Collaborating with the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board and the City of Lawrence, we've championed an impressive grant of \$849,587. This isn't just about numbers on a page. This funding will offer 33 community members a chance to gain essential skills for roles in Advanced Manufacturing CNC Machine Operation. It's a step forward, ensuring that members of our community are equipped to seize better job opportunities and fortifying Lawrence and Methuen's place in the state's economic landscape.

The work, however, doesn't stop here. Each day brings new challenges, but with it, new opportunities. My promise to you is to remain relentless, always advocating for our community's best interests. Every decision, every bill, and every late-night strategy session is fueled by our shared aspirations and the stories of resilience and ambition I've



had the privilege to hear from many of you.

Together, we are crafting a bright future. A future where Lawrence and Methuen are not just spots on a map, but shining examples of community-driven progress. Let's keep this momentum going, ensuring that our towns are synonymous with opportunity, fairness, and prosperity for all.

This isn't about declaring 'mission accomplished;' rather, it underscores a need that has become a top priority for me, your State Representative.

Thank you for your unwavering trust, support, and the belief you place in our shared vision. Here's to us, to Methuen, to Lawrence, and to the brighter days ahead. You can email me at

Francisco.Paulino@mahouse.gov ◇

Addiction, Endorsements, and Tax Breaks

Estela Reyes

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

First, I want to say how happy I am that my good friend, Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan is recovering from a near death experience that kept him in the hospital for over a month.

I truly appreciate his friendship and the fact that he gives members of the community - not just elected officials - a vehicle to have their voices heard in a media climate that shuts out and silences more and more people every day. Welcome home Tom!!

ENDORSEMENTS

I also want to let all of my constituents know that I have endorsed Attorney Jana Zanni-Pesce for Methuen City Council At-Large as well as Francisco Surillo.

Normally, I do not like to get involved in local races, but Methuen is in desperate need of leadership. Attorney Jana Zanni-Pesce and Francisco Surillo will bring a new perspective to the city council and will hopefully offset the environment of personal grudges that seem to dominate some of our current city council meetings.

Attorney Jana Zanni Pesce is a bundle of energy and has served the people of Methuen quite well on the Methuen School Committee. She has years of experience in finance and law and also stood up against paying former Superintendent Judy Scannell a golden parachute retirement package after it was learned that she had never received certification from the state.

Francisco Surillo is currently chairman of the Greater Lawrence Technical School Committee and works for Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena in the Community Development department.

My hope for Methuen is that they

both use their wealth of experience in education and finance to benefit the people of Methuen, so we can straighten out the city's finances and hold officials accountable for some of the excessive spending currently taking place.

PASSING THE BUDGET

Last month we started off quite busy and then slowed down a bit after the budget was signed by Governor Maura Healey. One of the most important parts of this year's state budget is the child and dependent tax credit. This is something that will directly benefit parents and their children in Methuen and Lawrence. With inflation rising every day, and the price of groceries and other goods straining household budgets, this will bring some needed relief to families in need.

LOCAL EVENTS

I did attend a number of events last month for local organizational in Methuen and Lawrence while it was slowing down at the State House. I love to attend these events because it gives me a chance to talk to constituents and business owners and bring their concerns back to the state house with me.

Among the many events I attended were

- Attended a couple of locations of Lawrence's National Night Out and got to meet with city officials and constituents

- Had lunch with the Suenos Basketball team

- Celebrated the grand opening of Methuen's new public school, built with funding from ARPA and ESSER. It will be used for pre-kindergarten and elementary schools and Methuen Public School's central offices.

- Recognized La Grekka's, a cafe, Grand Opening in Lawrence.
- Is looking forward to celebrating



Saint Alfio's 100 Years of "faith, family, and fun" over Labor Day weekend. This organization helps raise funds for the community through scholarships, outreach, and charities. Every Labor Day weekend they host an annual feast to celebrate their Italian culture and tradition.

- In personal office news- Rep. Reyes hired a new Legislative Aide, Laura Byman, who is largely in charge of constituent communications and scheduling.

In August, I took time to meet with local leaders, knowing I would soon be very busy with legislation. I was able to hear the needs of those I serve and will take that information into this session's work.

OPIOID ADDICTION

As for specific legislation, I have been considering the current resolution H.3486, which would make it easier for medical practitioners to prescribe buprenorphine. Buprenorphine is FDA-approved for acute pain, chronic pain, and opioid dependence. It is an agent used for treating addiction as a substitute for a stronger full agonist opioid (such as

heroin).

This bill is hoping to fight the national opioid epidemic, which also deeply affects the people of Lawrence and Methuen. There is no doubt that my district (Lawrence and Methuen) is being hit very hard by the homeless and opioid crisis. I believe we have an obligation to tackle these issues at the state house instead of paying lip service at election time and then closing our eyes until the next election.

This Buprenorphine Bill will be heard in the Joint Committee of Veterans and Federal Affairs (of which I am a member) next month.

We are very interested to hear your testimony on this legislation so please reach out and register for this hearing when it is scheduled.

Lastly, I would like to introduce my new Legislative Aide Laura Byman to all of my constituents and Valley Patriot readers to let you all know that you can call her at (617) 299-0191 or email her at laura.byman@mahouse.gov with any ideas or concerns you have about upcoming legislation or problems you are having in Lawrence and Methuen. ◇

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SEE OUR COUPON ON PAGE 22

Three Reasons to Dissolve Tri-Board in Dracut

By Brian Genest

VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

There can be a fine line between good government and bad government; in Dracut, a recent meeting of the so-called Tri-Board was an example of absurd government. At that gathering about town finances and potential future budget deficits, made up of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and members of the Finance Committee, accusations flew, tempers flared, and emotions ran high—and none of it was good for the town's image, taxpayers, or focus.

By the way, there's no certainty or clarity on whether there will be future deficits or what amounts they may be at this point. Town Manager Ann Vandal told board members the position has not changed since the previous Tri-Board meeting: town finance officials are currently estimating a \$2.2 million budget deficit for the 2025 fiscal year, but that figure is fluid and far from final. Vandal said there is no way to determine whether there will be a deficit or what the amount could be, based on the information available right now.

"We do not have enough information to comment on it for FY25," Vandal said. "We need to see where the chargebacks come in. We need to see where the revenues come in from the state. We need to understand what the net school spending is going to be next year."

When pressed by Finance Committee Acting Chairman Alyssa Nazzaro to provide a projected budget deficit estimate for FY25, Vandal declined.

"Like I said, we do not have enough information to have a solid answer for that question. We don't have the net school spending requirement for next year. We don't have other numbers that we need to make a full determination and commit to that. So, I will not commit to a full deficit of 2.2 million. We will do the best

EYE ON DRACUT

we can to close that gap with scouring the budgets, coming up with additional revenues of some kind. Outside of that, it is what it is. We have to look at the chargebacks. I know that's not the most popular thing, but the school has to pay their fair share and those chargebacks have to be amended to meet today's needs," Vandal said.

School Committee member Renee Young was triggered, apparently. She defiantly told Vandal that the School Committee wouldn't change the current chargeback agreement it has with the town. "I guess I can't speak for the whole board," Young said, adding that she was willing to bet that a majority of the board would not agree, either. She also nastily told the town manager not to interrupt her, when she pointed out she was off topic.

The discussion, despite the lack of clarity at this point, didn't stop some from calling for an override of Proposition 2 ½ and raising taxes—before we even know whether there's a need to do so and for how much additional revenue. Talk about putting the proverbial cart before the tax horse. Based on the current circumstances and see-through shenanigans, it's time to cool things down and put the Tri-board on ice.

Exhibit A: The Tri-Board has accomplished what it was intended to do.

The Tri-Board was formed to give members of the three individual boards insight into town financial projections for five years. That mission has been accomplished; there's fiscal transparency. As Vandal pointed out, it's impossible to give concrete numbers when there are so many unknown variables at this time.

Even Selectman Tony Archinski, who's certainly no super sleuth, figured out the Tri-Board's work is done. After sitting through the previous Tri-Board

meeting, he told his colleagues that he wouldn't be attending any more. He kept his word and skipped the most recent meeting. Good choice. As a taxpayer, politico, and columnist, I wish I had never witnessed the behavior of some during that meeting because it was nothing less than unnecessary, unneeded, and unprofessional.

Exhibit B: The Town Manager, not the Tri-Board, is responsible for the town budget.

Some want to be able to set the town budget, but that responsibility belongs with the town manager, and rightly so. And speaking of unprofessional, School Committee member Renee Young went on a tirade about town-side spending. She wasted a bunch of time ranting and raving about closing town hall last July 3, until someone finally asked for a point of order and pointed out the discussion was off track from the agenda. Passion is one thing; not being able to control your emotions is another. Young acted like a spoiled child having a temper tantrum because she couldn't get her own way, not exactly the example she should be setting for school kids or anyone else.

One lowlight of the meeting was when Young accused the manager of being dishonest about the budget. She then denied doing so just a few minutes later. When Vandal promised net-school spending would be met, and that doing so was never in question, Young had no problem interrupting her, saying: "To fudge numbers to meet net school spending is disingenuous."

Finance Committee member Shawn Ashe, who can't resist chiming in with his two cents whenever there's a microphone available, pointed out that whenever the budget gets tight, the town splits. He also called out Young. "You see the anger. You



hear the school committee saying, 'she's fudging the numbers'," he said referring to Young's charges about Vandal.

"I didn't say she was fudging the numbers," Young interrupted.

"It was 10 minutes ago," Ashe reminded Young. He also called on the members of the Tri-Board to let the Town Manager and Finance Director Victor Garofalo do their jobs, work with Selectmen, and make a proposal to the town at the appropriate time.

Alison Genest, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, expressed similar sentiments. "Victor and Ann need to make these numbers work, and we need to wait and see what these numbers are going to look like before we start to panic about having a \$2 million budget deficit. That's what they're being charged with, and they're being paid to do."

Exhibit C: The Tri-Board has become a distraction from the serious business at hand. It wasn't just Young who was a distraction. Town resident Louise Bessler, a paraprofessional with an axe to grind with School Superintendent Stephen Stone about her salary, used the Community Input section of the meeting to make the case for a raise. As you may recall, at town meeting in June, Bessler tried to increase the school budget by a million dollars to

DRACUT: PAGE 9

Mass. SJC Gives Carte Blanche To Top AGO Attorneys

Bharani Padmanabhan, MD PhD
VALLEY PATRIOT CORRUPTION COLUMNIST

Back in the spring the Supreme Judicial Court called for amicus briefs in the case of the Attorney General's lawyers who hadn't cared about the fundamental American rights of 33,000 people, some of whom died in prison and some who were in prison when their loved ones died.

ANNOUNCEMENT: The Justices are soliciting amicus briefs. To what extent a supervising attorney may rely on the representations of a subordinate lawyer for purposes of Mass. R. Prof. C. 1.3 and 5.1 (b); the circumstances in which that reliance, even if not permitted by the rules, may serve as mitigation; and the extent to which a subordinate lawyer's reliance on a supervising lawyer's directions may serve as a defense under Mass. R. Prof. C. 5.2 (b) or as mitigation.

(<https://www.ma-appellatecourts.org/docket/SJC-13360>)

In a court brief I noted that this meant the AG's lawyers could lie to the court and still keep their law license, unlike doctors who get indefinite suspensions for reporting Medicaid fraud.

On August 31, 2023, the SJC issued its opinion in the matter of three AG attorneys who had lied in the Sonja Farak case. Sonja Farak was the state chemist who herself ate both the samples that police brought in from suspects as well as the lab's reference samples, then lied that the samples tested positive, and people should be incarcerated.

Kaczmarek lied to the court that the AG had turned over all documents to defense attorneys. Foster delivered that lie to the judge, and Vernon, as their supervisor, signed off on the lie without bothering to look.

This likely happens routinely at the Attorney General's given the people who work there, but this time a defense attorney was allowed by one good person within the AGO to come into HQ and go through file boxes. The lie was thus discovered.

One good person within the AGO can make a difference. Pity I haven't found one yet.

The scandal became a popular Netflix series. Newspapers and legal blogs weighed in. It became impossible to ignore the drumbeat that gasp! even an

AG attorney had to be held responsible at a level that would placate the masses.

The SJC's Bar Counsel thus brought charges. The AG predictably paid \$1 million for private lawyers to defend them. Bar Overseers decided that Anne Kaczmarek, the heartless un-American liar that the Attorney General paid to defend, should be disbarred. The other two got license suspensions for a few months.

The SJC agreed that Kaczmarek should be disbarred, and that Kris Foster's license should be suspended for one year and one day.

When it came to their boss at the AGO however, the SJC wrote "that in certain circumstances, reasonable and good faith reliance on another attorney's representations may be a special mitigating factor. Because Verner reasonably relied in good faith on Kaczmarek's misrepresentations that she had turned over exculpatory information, and his liability is limited to failing to follow up with her as to whether she had disclosed all such information, we differ with the board and conclude that anything more severe than a public

reprimand would be inappropriate."

This is an intentional mockery of the very concept of oversight. Just imagine this applied to a newspaper's Chief Editor who published a total fabrication on something or someone, and the court letting the Chief and all senior editors off for not checking the story and instead showing "reasonable and good faith reliance" on a fellow journalist. I guess senior auditors at Arthur Anderson showed "reasonable and good faith reliance" on Enron.

But for sunlight from Netflix, it is likely that the SJC would not have punished even Kaczmarek. After being forced by Netflix to throw the public a bone, the SJC has now intentionally granted carte blanche to Andrea Campbell and senior attorneys at the Attorney General's Office.

This will not be good for the people of Massachusetts.

Bharani Padmanabhan MD PhD is a neurologist whose license was indefinitely suspended because he reported Medicaid fraud that allows Massachusetts to steal from the US Treasury. scleroplex@gmail.com ♦

The Heroes at Lawrence General Hospital Performing One Miracle After Another

VALLEY PATRIOT STAFF

As most of you know by now, Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan is home and recovering from a near death illness that took the expertise, skills, and a few medical miracles from the teams of doctors and medical professionals who struggled for more than 10 days to keep Duggan alive.

WHAT THE DOCTORS FACED

When Duggan showed up at the Emergency Room at Lawrence General Hospital late on August 28th - neither he, nor the medical staff, had any idea what they would be faced with over the next 30 days.

Complaining that he couldn't breathe, Duggan was taken in right away and given a room in the E.R. As Dr. Laurel Barrett evaluated Duggan, he was given oxygen and eventually admitted to the intensive care unit by Dr. Michael Malik. But the doctors still didn't realize how serious Duggan's condition was.

In less than 24 hours, Duggan's condition rapidly deteriorated and he was bagged to help him breathe and eventually intubated on a ventilator and given a feeding tube.

Duggan was put into a drug-induced coma and given a paralytic to stop him from waking up and injuring himself.

From there, he was tended to by a team of doctors and medical professionals as well as dozens of nurses who worked around the clock to keep Duggan alive.

He was eventually diagnosed with communal pneumonia, acute respiratory failure, septic shock, fungal infections, and several other ailments.

Doctors gave him four different antibiotics. The mortality rate for patients in such respiratory failure is 43%-48%. Duggan struggled for days with no sign of improvement.

A TEN DAY COMA

"For the first five days Tom was in the coma, the doctors kept telling us that he wasn't getting any worse, but he also was not getting any better," one family member said. "They had tubes breathing for him, feeding him, monitoring his vitals, and keeping him out of pain, which was the only saving grace. I remember thinking at least he's not in pain but are we going to have to plan a funeral?"

Another family member told the Valley Patriot staff that Duggan's oxygen levels were near 80%, (which is close to fatal) and because he was in a coma, the doctors

and nurses had to monitor him every minute, 24-7 while they worked on a solution to getting rid of the pneumonia and the other infections.

"He was under constant care and supervision to make sure his body didn't form any blood clots. They pulled off more than a few miracles," Duggan's mother said. "We prayed and we prayed hard. These doctors were so amazing. I don't know how they did it but those people, all of them, are heroes for the way they saved him over and over."

Duggan's coma lasted for ten days.

"He showed almost no signs of improvement until that eighth or ninth day," Duggan's friend Joe Solomon told the Valley Patriot. "That's when the doctors and the respiratory teams were finally able to turn things around and get the infections under control. It finally seemed like he was out of the woods, and he was going to make it, but we were afraid to breathe a sigh of relief because everything was so inconsistent and unpredictable. We were all just taking a 'wait and see' attitude. I remember the doctor telling his mom that he actually was showing signs of improvement but that he wasn't improving fast enough for their liking. You could see that they were still worried."

OUT OF THE COMA

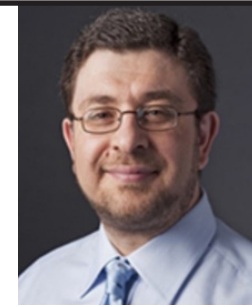
On the tenth day, Duggan was brought out of the drug-induced coma but was still on a ventilator and a breathing tube for a few more days, as doctors and nurses monitored his condition.

"I had just spent ten days hallucinating from the drugs they had me on," Duggan recalled later. "I literally had no idea where I was, or why I was there. I was confused. I was angry. I could tell I was in a hospital, but I couldn't remember why or what hospital. I didn't know what was real anymore. For two days I would wake up in this dark room with the TV on, trying to figure out what was going on. It was frightening. Even when a nurses would come in and talk to me I could barely remember what they had said seconds after they said it. I wasn't retaining anything. Every minute felt like an hour. Everything seemed to be happening in slow motion. I remember thinking, 'I may be going out but I'm not going out without a fight, then I realized I was tied down to this bed with tubes and machines invading my body and I wasn't going anywhere.'"

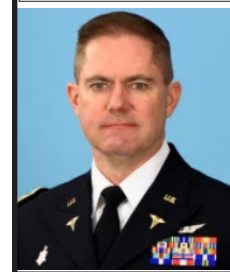
Duggan says on the second day he was out of the coma he was sleeping a lot but



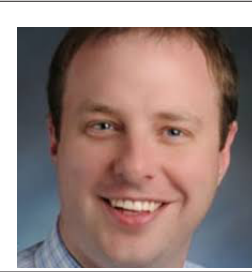
Dr. Morgan Moncada
Hospitalist



Dr. Shazwan Acash
Critical Care Medicine



Dr. John Brady
Pulmonologist



Dr. Patrick Scanlon
Critical Care Medicine

at one point he woke up and saw one of the ICU Doctors, Dr. Ghazwan Acash talking to one of the nurses.

"He's the one who made the decision to take me off the ventilator and feeding tube to see if I could breathe on my own. He was concerned that after so long I might not be able to, so he told me that they were removing the tubes, but if I can't breathe not to worry, they would put it right back in 'so don't panic,' he said. I had never felt so helpless in my life."

FINDING OUT THE CAUSE

Duggan was eventually released from the Intensive care unit and placed in a regular room in the Hamblet building of Lawrence General where his friends and family began to fill him in on what had happened.

"They said the doctors told them this all happened because of the biologic drug called Simponi that I was taking for a joint condition that I have. It decimated my immune system and made me unable to fight off anything my body came into contact with.

RECOVERING AND PUBLISHING AGAIN

Duggan said that over the next four weeks he had to re-learn how to write his name, tie his shoes, and perform simple tasks. "It was frustrating having to re-learn things that I did my whole life without even thinking about. I was mixing up words, saying phrases backwards, and at times I knew what I wanted to say but nothing was coming out. It was like I had a complete brain freeze."

Eventually Duggan was able to regain all of his faculties and with the help of two teams of writers and editors working remotely, Duggan was able to publish the

September edition of The Valley Patriot from his hospital bed at Hannah Duston Rehab facility in Haverhill.

"Once I figured out how to type - which I learned before I could even write my own name with a pen - I decided we were not going to let September go by without publishing something. And while I was pretty proud of myself for being able to pull that off, the whole time I was working on that paper I could not help but wonder if I was ever going to be able to thank the many doctors, nurses, respiratory specialists, and all the other medical professionals who saved my life."

"I just feel really blessed that I am able to do that in this edition of the paper, and while I may not have all the names of all the people who kept me alive those ten days, I want to publish the names of those I do have and thank everyone else whose name I never received.

They are: E.R. Doctors: Dr. Laurel Barrett, PA-C, and Michael Malek.

ICU Doctors: Dr. Patrick Scanlon, Dr. Chris Voscopoulos, Dr. Ghazwan Acash, Dr. John Brady, Dr. Maria Policelli, and Hospitalists Dr. Morgan Moncada and Dr. Tufiq Zaman. ICU, Respiratory & Hamblet Bldg. Nurses: Marissa, Kristen, Letty, Jamie, Holly, Yoli (Shakira), Chryl (Hamblet Bldg.), Ann, Maria Ryan, Tommy Faucher (admin) Bailey, and Gerry. "I also want to thank those whose names I did not get access to from the discharge papers", Duggan said.

"You are all true heroes who do this work every day on people who will never have a chance to say thank you. So, on behalf of every patient you have worked on, those who made it, and even those who did not ... THANK YOU!"

EYE ON DRACUT: FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

boost the pay for her and her colleagues. The motion was thankfully ruled out of order, considering it would have decimated the town's fire department or had some other similar, serious, and completely avoidable impact on Dracut.

During her time at the podium, Bessler called the current funding of the schools, which is at an all-time high when it comes to per-pupil spending, "smoke and mirrors." She accused town officials of "backroom posturing," "shortchanging" the kids, and not "fully funding the schools" by making the school department pay their fair share when it comes to chargebacks.

"While it is true that the

paraprofessionals are in salary negotiations with the school committee and have not accepted the previous offer that was made, the amount proposed did not meet the needs of our members," Bessler admitted between the accusations.

Town resident Angel Bacigalupo, a member of the lunatic fringe on social media in Dracut, also made an in-person appearance under Community Input to share her thoughts. She told Tri-Board members that the town has an identity crisis. "We're not a small farming community," she said. "I'm sorry."

Count me among those who are sorry that we didn't find Bacigalupo's ramblings about the value of "historical agro-

tourism" at all helpful or relevant to the discussion at hand.

Speaking of irrelevant, Village Idiot Rich Cowan, who is inexplicably an appointed member of the town's finance committee, didn't help matters when he took to the podium, either. Cowan, an extreme progressive who comes to Dracut by way of Cambridge, rambled on and on as he usually does, saying he disagrees that financial professionals should be making the decisions and bringing up issues related to town insurance premiums that he said happened in 2007. "We left it to the professionals and the professionals didn't follow the law and we got in trouble," Cowan said.

At that point, Garofolo interrupted Cowan, saying he was wrong and that his comments were ridiculous, which they were, as usual. Nazzaro quickly followed suit and shut down Cowan once and for all. For those who had the misfortune of seeing it, the short meeting felt like it lasted the length of a Bible.

It's beyond time to sunset the Tri-Board. Let the town's finance professionals do their jobs. Let the serious adults handle the critical town business. Let the politicians, fools, and the negative Nellies go blow smoke, elsewhere.

— Brian Genest is producer and host of Eye On Dracut, winner of the Hometown Media Award for News, sponsored by Lucky Oil. ♦

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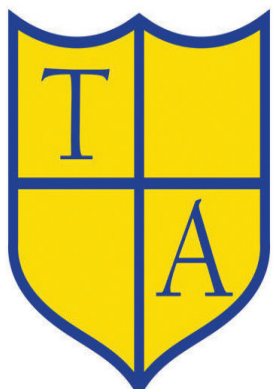


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City of Lawrence Mayor Brian Depena Announces ...

EMERGENCY PARKING BAN: Alternate Parking on Certain Streets between 12:01 AM to 6AM

The winter alternate parking ordinance shall only take effect during the dates and times specified in a "SNOW AND ICE EMERGENCY" issued by the Mayor or his/her designee, The snow emergency shall remain in effect until the Mayor rescinds it. Notice of any such rescission shall be given in the same manner as the issuance of the declaration.

Winter Alternate Parking shall mean that on the following streets, between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., daily, vehicles shall, unless otherwise prohibited by law, be parked on one side of the street only, so that on the even-numbered dates of the calendar, vehicles shall be parked on the even-numbered sides of the streets, and on the odd-numbered dates of the calendar, they shall be parked on the odd-numbered sides of the streets: **ORD 10.36.031 (*IF YOUR STREET IS NOT LISTED BELOW, NO PARKING IS ALLOWED*)**

Abbott St Allen St (General St To Angle) Allston St. Ames St. (Riverside Dr. to Haverhill St) Amesbury St Amherst St Appleton St Atkinson St Auburn St Bailey St Ballard St Barker St Barnard St Basswood St Bay State Rd (McFarlin St to Mater St) Beacon St Beaconsfield St Belknap St Bellevue St Bennett St Bennington St (Auburn St to Chestnut St) Beresford St Berkeley St Bigelow St Blanchard St Bodwell St Bowdoin St Boxford St Bradford St Brookfield St Bruce St Burke St Burlington St Butler St Byron Ave Cabot Rd Cambridge St Canal St Canterbury St Carleton St (Andover St to Everett St) Carver St Castle St Cedar St Chandler St Chester St (So. Bway. To Dunstable St.) Chestnut St Chickering St (Cutler St. to Pilgrim Rd.) Cleveland St Clifton St Clinton St	Colonial Dr Colonial Rd Colonial Terrace Columbus Ave (Haverhill St to Meadow St) Concord St Congress St Coolidge St Copley St County St Crescent St Crestwood Cir Crosby St Cross St Cutler St (Chickering St to Marlboro St) Cyr Drive Dana St Danforth St Dartmouth St Davis St. Debbie Lane Dorchester St Dracut St (So. Bway to Dunstable St) Dunstable St Durham St Durso Ave East Boxford St East Boxford Terrace East Haverhill St East Kingston St East Pleasant St East St Easton St (So. Bway to Jefferson St) Eastside St Eaton St Ellis St Elm St Emerald Ave. Erving Ave Eutaw St Everett St Exeter Pl Exeter St Exeter Terrace Fairmont St Fallon St Falmouth St Farley St Farnham St Ferry St Ferguson St	Forest St Foster St Foxcroft St Franklin St Frost Dr Furber St Garden St Garfield St (Cambridge St to Falmouth St) Gilbert St Glenn St Glenwood Drive Gorham St Grafton St Grainger St Grant Rd Green St Greenfield St Greenwood St Groton St Grove St Hamlet St Hancock St Hawley St High St (Except E. Haverhill St to Ferry St) Highgate St Hillside Ave Howard St Hudson Ave Hurst St Inman St Jamaica St Jefferson St Juniper St. (For its entire length on Odd Side of street (East Side only during effective period.) Kenneth St Kent St Kingston St Laurel St Lea St Lebanon St (Hampshire St to Amesbury St) Leeds Ter. Lenox Circle Lenox St Lincoln Ct Lisa Lane Lorenzo Rd Loring Street	Louisburgh St Lowell St (Lawrence St to W. Lowell St) Lynn St Manchester St Maple St Margin St Marie Lane Marion Ave (except Holly St to Spicket River) Marique Dr Mark Lane Market St Marlboro St Marston St Martha Lane Mason St May St Medford St Melrose St Melvin St Middlebury St (Olive Ave to Endicott St) Mill St Milton St (Haverhill St to Bodwell St) Monroe St Morton St Mt. Auburn St Mt. Vernon Cir Mt. Vernon St Mt. Vernon Terrace Newbury St Newton St No. Parish Rd Oak St (East Haverhill to Short St) Oakland Rd Olive Ave (W. Lowell St to Ames St) Orchard St Osgood St Oxford St Packard St Patton St Pembroke Dr Perry Ave Philips St Pilgrim Rd Pleasant St (Ferry St to High St) Portland St Powers St Proctor Rd Prospect St Providence St Railroad St	Richmond St Rita Lane Roberta Lane Rockwood Lane Rowe St Russell St Salem St Sanborn St Sargent St School St Shattuck St Shawsheen Rd Sheridan St Shepard St Short St (Chestnut to Maple St) So. Bowdoin St Sparkle Drive Springfield St Standish Rd Stevens St (Mt. Vernon St to Stevens Ave) Storrow St Summer St Summit Ave Swan St Sylvester St Taft St Temple St Tewksbury St Thomas Rd Tremont St Tyler St Valley St Vandergrift St Walnut St Warren St Water St Weare St West Hawley St West Kenneth St Westchester Drive Westwood Terrace White St Whitman St Wilmot St Winston Dr Winter St Woodland St Wyman St
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ON THE FOLLOWING STREETS BETWEEN 12:01 AM AND 6:00 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, ALTERNATE PARKING WILL BE ENFORCED YEAR-ROUND: ORD 10.36.190

Ames St, from Haverhill St. to Water St. Andover St Arlington St, from Broadway to the Methuen Line. Broadway, from the Methuen Line to Canal St. Canal St, from Prospect Street to Union St. Common St. East Haverhill St, from Steiner St. to Avon St. Eastside St, entire length. Essex St. Ferry St, from Marston St to East Haverhill St. General Street, from Prospect Street to Union Street. Hampshire St, from Lawrence St to Arlington St	Hampshire St, from Myrtle St to Canal St. Hampshire St, from Canal St to Arlington St. Haverhill St, except from Jackson St to Amesbury St and Broadway. Jackson St, from Canal St to Kendrick St and from Berkeley Street to Methuen Line. Lawrence St. Lowell St, from Ames St to Lawrence St. Market St, from Loring Street to Parker St. Merrimack St. Methuen St, from Broadway to Amesbury St. Methuen St, from Lawrence St to Union St.	Parker St, from Andover St to Merrimack St Prospect St, from the Methuen Line to Canal St. Salem St, from Emmett St to Shawsheen Road, with the exception of that portion of Salem St., between Newton St and Everett St.) Salem St, from Emmett St to South Union St. South Broadway South Union St. Tremont St, from Hampshire St to West St. Union St. Water St, from Ames St to Broadway. West St. Winthrop Avenue, from Chickering St to Parker St.
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The provisions of this section shall not apply to the portions of the following streets which are designated as State highways:

- Jackson Street, north of Berkley Street to Methuen Line-Route 110.
- Riverside Drive, west of Ames Street to the Methuen Line.
- Winthrop Avenue, from the junction of Osgood Street south to Interstate 495.

ALL NIGHT PARKING PERMITTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- Exterior of BREEN SCHOOL – Yard only
- CARL LINDQUIST PLAYGROUND –Emmett Street side only
- CHARLES STORROW PARK –High Street side only from Pleasant Street southerly to Storrow Terrace
- JAMES F. LEONARD SCHOOL PLAYGROUND –South side
- ARLINGTON SCHOOL –Arlington Street
- Exterior of LAHEY SCHOOL – Yard only
- Exterior of ROLLINS SCHOOL – Platt Street only
- PARTHUM SCHOOL – Playground area to E. Haverhill Street

It is very important that motorists cooperate and remove their vehicles out of all public areas no later than 7:00 A.M... All vehicles will be towed away at the OWNER'S EXPENSE who fails to comply with the above time schedule. Also, all vehicles immobilized by accident, mechanical, uninsured or uninsured left on all city owned land will be towed at OWNER'S EXPENSE. Any questions, call 978-620-3090 or 978-620-3350.

–Jorge Jaime, Director of DPW



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Michael Petterson, New England Mindfulness & Performance LLC, A Veteran-Owned Business

KANE

VALLEY PATRIOT MASCOT/COLUMNIST

Kane has the jitters and is having trouble concentrating because he can't decide what he should do on his "to do list." His energy increases in the fall due to the cooler weather. He has been worrying about which of the things on his schedule he should tackle first. This inability to concentrate resulted in Kane being overwhelmed, frozen in his worry, wandering around but not really being present and ultimately getting nothing done except eating. Kane always makes time to eat. However, since he isn't paying attention, he stubbed his toe and doesn't even remember his walk this afternoon. He knew he was missing precious time, so he called Michael Petterson at New England Mindfulness and Performance LLC.

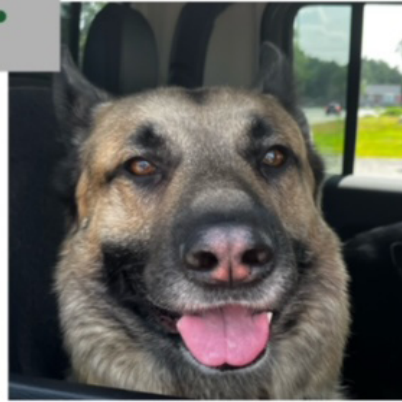
Kane met his friend Michael Petterson, a Federal Law Enforcement Officer and owner of New England Mindfulness LLC at a local coffee shop. Michael who practices and teaches Mindfulness, shares his expertise with first responders at presentations throughout the country, decided to bring his knowledge locally to police departments, fire departments, state police agencies and civilians in the general public. Kane has been having trouble concentrating so his meeting with Mike about practicing mindfulness was scheduled at the perfect time.

Kane asked Michael to explain what living mindfully means. Michael explained that living mindfully means living in the present moment. It means being more aware and awake to each moment and being fully engaged in what is happening in one's surroundings with acceptance and without judgement. Mike told Kane it would be an effective way to manage his everyday stress.

Besides being a Federal Law Enforcement Officer, Mike served with the Massachusetts Army National Guard for 21 years as Military Police,

KANE'S KORNER

Kane's Korner



completed 3 deployments, and is a retired Sergeant First Class. Both of these professions require being orientated to the present moment and require decompression at the end of the day. Practicing breathing skills relaxes the parasympathetic nervous system, which sends a signal to the brain that you are safe and don't need to be on high alert. Deep breathing is a learned skill that helps the brain receive additional oxygen in general. Kane practiced some deep breathing techniques to calm his nerves. He found himself slipping into a comfortable rhythm and an ability to concentrate on his breath. To bring even more awareness to his mind and body, Mike walked him through a body scan which allowed Kane to notice where he holds tension in his body and practice relaxing

each area that holds tension.

Kane found it helpful to have tools that work in the moment to relax his mind and body for greater comfort and renewed concentration. Kane realized he was missing some of the simple pleasures of his day by being caught up in all his thoughts. One thought at a time and one task at a time gets things done. The greater skill is learning to relax the mind and simply finding your breath. Kane could see why first responders enjoyed working with

Michael Petterson. Kane understands there is a special level of trust since he is a member of the profession. Also New England Mindfulness and Performance focuses on Education and Training instead of a counseling setting which is a more comfortable match for the general population as a whole.

In general, mindfulness has also been identified as being helpful for generalized anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and basic concentration. This is Kane's favorite season, and he wants to enjoy crunching the leaves on his walk and smelling all the smells. He is not a fan of Halloween decorations but maybe if he was more mindful, he wouldn't feel like they were sneaking up on him.

So, what workshops does Mike provide? New England Mindfulness and Performance LLC provides mindfulness, meditation, and wellness courses tailored to the needs of an individual or organization. They offer veteran and first responder discounts. Training courses are a half day, full day, two days, or 3 days. For more information on how to sign up for training, please contact Michael Petterson at nemindfulnessandperformance@gmail.com.

As for Kane, well he is getting his work done by practicing breathing, meditation, and mindfulness. He hopes you will take the time to feel better by practicing these skills too. Reach out to Mike if you would like to receive training. (nemindfulnessandperformance@gmail.com) or check out his Facebook page at New England Mindfulness and Performance LLC

Kane Peaslee, Columnist
Woof ♡

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Lawrence Officer Jake Eyssi Finally Honored for Losing his Life from Line of Duty Injuries



Last month, Lawrence citizens and police officers gathered in remembrance and honor of Lawrence Police Officer Jacob George Eyssi at the Massachusetts Law Enforcement Officer’s Memorial in Boston.

On September 21, 1986, Officer Eyssi displayed immense bravery while responding to a distressing domestic violence call on Crawford Street. He sustained severe injuries, leading to permanent brain damage, and was sadly never able to resume his duties. He died years later from complications of his injuries sustained in the line of duty.

After 26 dedicated years of service, the recognition of Officer Eyssi’s ultimate sacrifice became palpably real as his name was etched on the Massachusetts Law Enforcement Memorial in Boston. With Elaine, his widow, their two daughters, and the extended family in attendance, this long-awaited acknowledgment marked a poignant moment of closure and tribute.

Our hearts are with the Eyssi family as we remember a true hero’s legacy. ♦

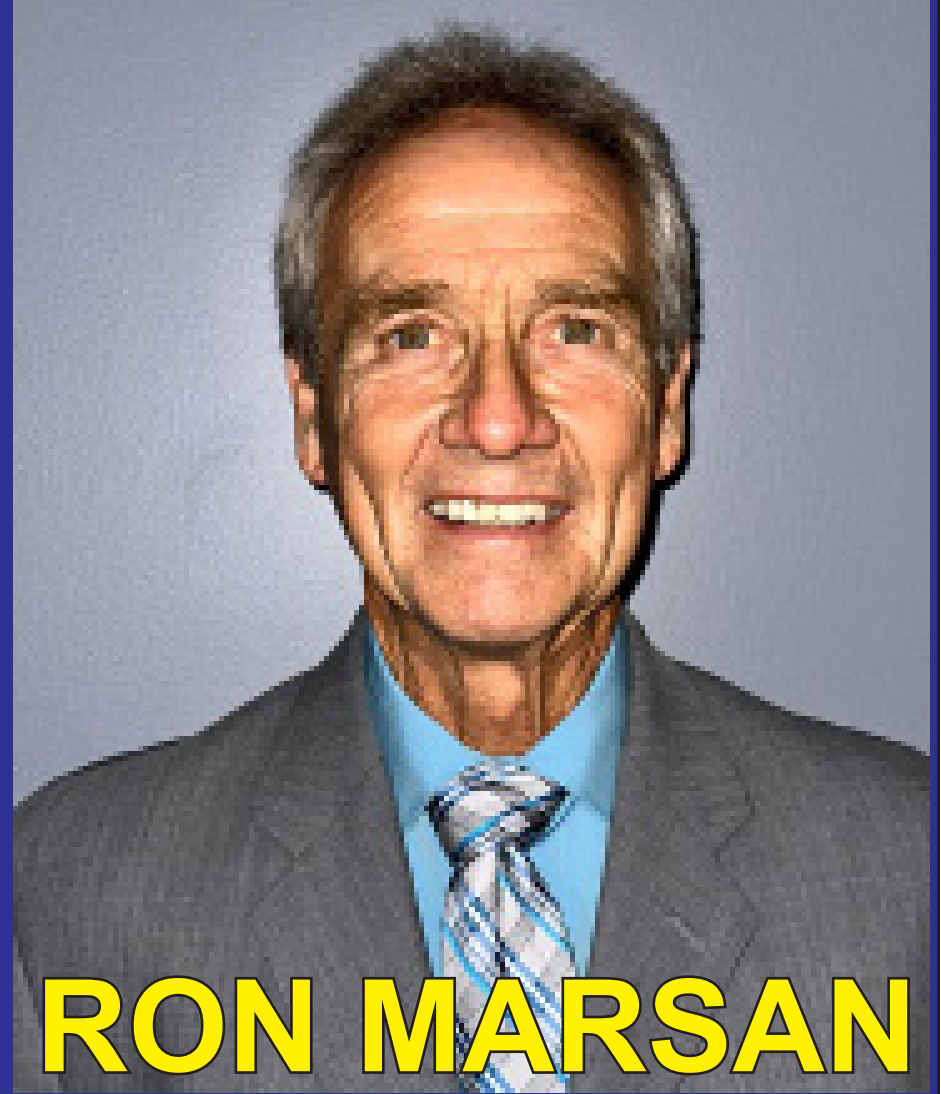


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RON MARSAN

*** METHUEN ***
EAST DISTRICT COUNCILOR

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Must Build Thousands of Apartments

Philippe Thibault

VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

All communities serviced by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and those communities adjacent to this public transit provider will be required to create zoning supporting the production of housing. A total of one hundred and seventy-seven communities in eastern Massachusetts are required to comply. Boston is exempt from the regulation. The requirement is codified as Section 3A of MGL c. 40A:

Section 3A. (a)(1) An MBTA community shall have a zoning ordinance or by-law that provides for at least 1 district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right; provided, however, that such multi-family housing shall be without age restrictions and shall be suitable for families with children. For the purposes of this section, a district of reasonable size shall: (i) have a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre, subject to any further limitations imposed by section 40 of chapter 131 and title 5 of the state environmental code established pursuant to section 13 of chapter 21A; and (ii) be located not more than 0.5 miles from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal or bus station, if applicable.

(b) An MBTA community that fails to comply with this section shall not be eligible for funds from: (i) the Housing Choice Initiative as described by the governor in a message to the general court dated December 11, 2017; (ii) the Local Capital Projects Fund established in section 2EEEE of chapter 29; or (iii) the MassWorks infrastructure program established in section 63 of chapter 23A.

For a community like Dracut, the law demands the creation of one thousand two hundred thirty-three dwelling units within a zone of eighty-three total acres. If there are multiple zones, one must be twenty-five contiguous acres; otherwise, zones must be a minimum of five contiguous acres. These residential projects must also be "by right," so no special permits are required. Just the land, construction plans and the permit fee if you meet zoning criteria. This looks like a big stick without any carrots.

There continues to be an outcry from the politicians in Dracut, who believe this law to be detrimental to the town. One selectman pondered if there was an area in Dracut that would be so restrictive that such a development would be impossible. The State has seen municipalities play these games before, and the zones will be reviewed for developability. So, the middle of Long Pond, Wheeler Pond, and the Dracut Tyngsborough State Forest are out. The politicians that decry the MBTA multi-family zone are the same that have been fighting the revisions to the Zoning Bylaws that remain substantially unchanged since adopted in 1985. These bylaws, if not updated, will be ruinous to the rural character so cherished by the citizens of Dracut. The existing bylaws promote sprawl into the farmlands and wooded groves of Dracut by restricting

the redevelopment of populated areas such as the Navy Yard, Collinsville, and Dracut Center.

The MBTA zone can be utilized to promote this type of redevelopment to the urban centers of Dracut. A recent project at the Dracut Center School to transform the dilapidated Town Hall Annex to affordable Veteran's Housing provided a comparable dwelling unit



density as proposed by the MBTA zoning. Nine residential dwellings on a parcel of land that is slightly over half an acre. By all accounts, a wonderful project that was even spotlighted on multiple episodes of This Old House. The key point being that Dracut must look at the MBTA

multifamily zone as an opportunity and not as a hurdle.

There is a need for family housing that the MBTA zone is trying to address. In a recent study by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, a regional planning organization that Dracut is a member, nearly three thousand households are living "house poor." A term used to illustrate the cost of housing alone requires much of a family's income, leaving nothing for savings. Dracut has had the benefit of being affordable through market forces in the past. A very desirable attribute, and one noted in a Boston Globe article a few years ago stating that "Dracut was one of the most affordable towns in Massachusetts." The other side of this coin is Dracut becomes desirable for affordability and an influx of construction and people are coming to town for that value. Supply and demand will make quick work of the open spaces and farms we are trying to maintain.

Economic development will also help boost the town's coffers through the MBTA zone. Additional amenities will be needed for the residents of these neighborhoods through merchant stores, restaurants, professional offices, and the like. Business promotes business and these neighborhoods will become walkable once more, rather than the car-centric districts there are now. Dracut's tax base is ninety-two percent residential and eight percent commercial/industrial. I do not foresee that changing dramatically with the MBTA zone at first, but there is a better chance of that change with the MBTA zones than without it.

Human nature prefers the familiar. Nobody likes to change when they are comfortable. Personal growth only comes through discomfort and venturing into the uncomfortable. Communities are no different in the fact that they are the collective of the people. Certainly, Dracut is not in a comfortable place with a projected town budget deficit of over two million dollars next year and seven million plus dollars the year after that. Preserving the physical town as it is presently may run in opposition to maintaining the character of the town without proper thought and planning. Dracut could be at a crossroad of holding on too tightly to the past and having it spill through its fingers for not embracing its future. ◇

Auditor DiZoglio Turning Beacon Hill on its Head

Lenny Mirra

VALLEY PATRIOT STATE HOUSE COLUMNIST

Every first time candidate for office promises to be "the most transparent" ever, and I'm sure many actually believe they will be, but a funny thing happens on their way to getting sworn in. Then their loyalty to voters, laws, and the Constitution suddenly takes a back seat to their loyalty to party leaders, and they'll conjure up all manner of excuses as to why we can't get records and information that every other state seems to provide with no problem.

This is especially common in corrupt one-party states and Massachusetts is certainly no exception.

For a very long time we've had the embarrassing notoriety of having one of the worst records in America when it comes to open records and transparency.

So, it was not surprising when our lopsided legislature refused to allow our Auditor, Diana DiZoglio (D-Methuen), to audit them just as she does every other agency and entity in our state government.

To be fair there's currently only two politicians currently standing in the way of this audit, House Speaker Ron Mariano (D-Quincy) and Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland). I say currently because they have so far spared their members the horrifying choice of having to vote to allow an audit or to keep their (our) finances secret. It's basically a choice between doing what's right and doing what their masters demand in exchange for chairmanships and bogus "leadership" positions that come with huge raises.

Anyone who knows DiZoglio knows she's not going away without a fight and it's turning into a large and public brawl that has escalated with her suing to force the legislature to submit to an audit, but she's not stopping there. She is taking the issue to the voters by filing a petition for a ballot question that would explicitly allow the Auditor's office to audit the legislature.

Best of all, she's turning to unlikely allies to help out. Mass GOP Chair Amy Carnevale says, "It's an initiative that we support, and we absolutely would

welcome the opportunity to work with her."

On the other end of the political spectrum, she's got the support of Our Revolution Massachusetts, a progressive group that backed her opponent in last year's Democratic primary.

"It's all hands-on deck and this is a nonpartisan, good-government issue," DiZoglio said. "I am grateful to have

folks of all political stripes joining our fight for greater transparency and accountability on Beacon Hill."

Well, it should be nonpartisan, but maybe someone should tell that to Mass Dems Chair Steven Kerrigan who was not going to let DiZoglio speak at their Convention. He

eventually relented and let her speak, but Democrats never did take up a resolution at their convention that would have put the party on record as either supporting or opposing Diana DiZoglio's effort to audit the Legislature. When she spoke of the "roadblocks" Democratic legislative leaders have put up to her proposed audit of their practices and procedures, activists booted. So much for putting principle above party.

"I have very clearly requested the same opportunity to speak that every other statewide elected has been given," DiZoglio stated. "Censorship of my comments or of my ability to speak does not serve the Democratic Party or anyone else."

It's a smart and gutsy move to reach out to all parties and ask for help on this effort. After a lengthy phone call with DiZoglio I'm happy to say that I'll be doing my part as well. I will personally be reaching out to friends on all sides to get the 75,000 signatures needed to get this question on the ballot. Those interested in signing, or maybe even collecting signatures, can contact me here or at my email: Lenny.Mirra@gmail.com.

Getting this question on the ballot is democracy in action, and anyone who cares about democracy should want our Auditor to be able to do her job. The public deserves to know where their tax dollars are going, and she deserves our help! ◇



★ ★ ★ **ELECT** ★ ★ ★

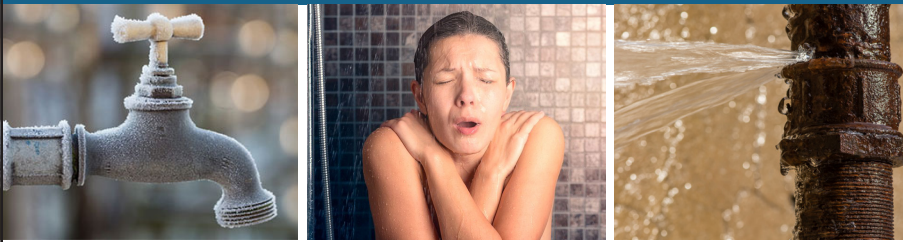
Francisco Surillo

For City Councilor At-large

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SATURDAY, NOV 11, 2023

Route: North on Broadway; left at clock tower onto Hampshire street; left onto Lowell Street past Central Fire Station; left on Grove Street to Legion Memorial plot in Walnut Grove Cemetery for brief ceremony. After ceremony, the parade will reform and return to Legion post via the same route.

GROUPS WILL FORM UP AT THE AMERICAN LEGION POST AT 9:30am AND PARADE BEGINS ON BROADWAY AT 10.



Join us in a celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

TO REGISTER, CONTACT:
TOM HARGREAVES (thargreaves@hotmail.com)

DEADLINE TO REGISTER : FRI, NOV 3

Beverage Industry Invests in Modernized Danvers Recycling Program

STEVE BOKSANSKI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - MASSACHUSETTS BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is incredibly beautiful, thanks in part to the efforts of its residents. Bay Staters know the importance of recycling and do it well. But more can be done to make recycling even more effective and efficient, including modernizing outdated recycling infrastructure that makes recycling more difficult than it should be.

At the Massachusetts Beverage Association we are working to find new ways to improve access to recycling and help keep valuable, recyclable materials out of our environment where they don't belong.

As an industry, we're taking action to reduce our use of new plastic by carefully designing our plastic bottles and cans to be 100% recyclable. We're also investing in communities to bring modernized, more efficient recycling programs to residents.

With that in mind, we're excited to announce a partnership with leaders in Danvers for an investment to upgrade the town's recycling infrastructure. In total, the near million-dollar investment is being made through Every Bottle Back, a first-of-its-kind partnership by America's leading beverage companies – The Coca-Cola Company, Keurig Dr Pepper, PepsiCo and Polar Beverages – along with matching funds to help make recycling work better through investments and innovation.

The Every Bottle Back investment in Danvers will provide 95-gallon recycling carts to residents and help to increase the collection of recyclable materials. Alongside this new recycling infrastructure, the town is also adjusting the frequency of recycling collection from weekly to every-other-week and introducing a robust education and outreach campaign to

raise awareness of this change and promote proper recycling.

The best part is that the recycling carts are being provided entirely free of charge for all eligible households. That means roughly 7,700 households will soon have these upgraded carts, which are projected to help to collect more than 6.7 million pounds of new recyclables over the next 10 years, including more than 87,000 pounds of aluminum and 262,000 pounds of PET, the highly valuable, lightweight and fully recyclable plastic from which our bottles are made.

Danvers is the third community in Massachusetts to receive funding through Every Bottle Back. Just last year, the Town of Falmouth and the City of Methuen received more than \$575,000 for new recycling carts.

These collective investments show the power of public-private partnerships to bring about change and are a promising sign for a future with a cohesive, modernized approach to recycling collection.

Around the nation Every Bottle Back investments are having a real impact. Since the start of Every Bottle Back, the beverage industry has committed to investing more than \$23.7 million in community recycling projects across the country.

These investments are projected to collect more than 754 million additional pounds of PET over the next 10 years and create a better recycling system that helps to ensure a bottle recycled, is a bottle that can be remade.

It is our hope that through these community investments, we can make a difference that extends throughout Massachusetts and beyond. Improving recycling infrastructure and ensuring every household has the ability to recycle is the mandatory first step. We are optimistic that Danvers can serve as the latest example of how we can work to achieve positive outcomes for a circular economy. ◇

NICHOLAS DIZOGLIO
City Councilor At-Large

Thank you for the last 4 years! I hope to have your vote one last time on Nov 7th

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WATER COMMISSIONER

NOTICE

Prospect Hill Area Residents

STATE MANDATED FLUSHING PROGRAM

The City of Lawrence Water & Sewer Department will be flushing hydrants and operating valves in the Prospect Hill Area during:
September 1st, 2023 through September 31st, 2023

Businesses and residents should check for discolored water before use. The problem should be short-lived; however, if persistent problems occur please call 978-620-3110.
Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

THANK YOU

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WILLIAM C. HALE III
WATER COMMISSIONER

AVISO

Residentes del área de Prospect Hill



PROGRAMA ESTATAL DE LAVADO DEL SISTEMA DE HIDRANTES

El Departamento de Agua y Alcantarillado de la Ciudad de Lawrence, estará lavando el sistema de hidrantes y válvulas en el área de Prospect Hill durante:
septiembre 1, 2023 hasta septiembre 31, 2023

Los negocios y residentes del área deben revisar la decoloración del agua antes de usarla.
El proceso será por poco tiempo, pero, en caso de que la situación persista, favor llamar al: 978-620-3110.
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HAVERHILL CITY COUNCIL STILL ON THE HOOK

It's been a few months and a lot has happened, but the Haverhill City Council is not out of the woods as far as being fined or sanctioned by the Massachusetts Attorney General for admittedly holding an illegal meeting. Two months ago, councilors who support the mayoral campaign of Councilor Barrett drafted and circulated a letter condemning Barrett's chief rival in the mayor's race Scott Wood over unproven allegations that Wood used the "N" word in a text 25 years ago. After The Valley Patriot filed an official complaint with the Massachusetts Attorney General's office, the council met publicly and each took turns ADMITTING that they had indeed violated the state's open meeting law by secretly drafting, circulating, and unanimously signing a letter condemning mayoral candidate Wood.

Only one councilor (Bevilacqua) refrained from making excuses for their collective action. Every other councilor claimed that they had "no idea" it was a violation of the open meeting law for a majority of the council to conspire on a letter and approve it - without public input, without public notice, and without an official public vote.

The Attorney General is now in receipt of the city council's confession - where they claim they had no idea that they were breaking the law. The AG is also in receipt of The Valley Patriot's additional complaint and we expect the state to give us their ruling within the next few months. We will keep you posted.

METHUEN ELECTIONS

MAYOR (elect one)

Neil P. Perry* 121 Hampstead Street
Matthew Wicks 3 Ellis Street

COUNCILOR-AT-LARGE (elect three)

Nicholas DiZoglio* (31 Lisa Lane)
Jana Zanni Pesce (16 Pinetree Drive)
D.J. Beauregard, Jr.* (10 Fenwick Cir)
Francisco Surillo (824 Riverside Dr.)
EAST DISTRICT COUNCILOR
Precincts 3,7,9,12,13,13A

(elect two)

Neily Soto (71 Comet Rd.)
Ron Marsan (10 Hawkesbrook Lane)
William Hanefant (6 West Ayer Street)
Ruby Purohit (48 Meriline Avenue)
CENTRAL DIST. COUNCILOR
Precincts 1,2,6,10, 6A,14

(two to be elected)

Joel Faretra* 6 Closson Court
Joyce Campagnone 2 Currier Ave.,
Sharon Birchall 2 Mckinley Avenue,
Derrick Jones 98 Ashland Avenue
WEST DISTRICT COUNCILOR
Precincts 4,5,8,11,15

(two to be elected)

Allison Saffie* 5 Brown Court
Patricia Valley 21 Winstead Ave
METHUEN AT-LARGE DEBATE
The Paying Attention! Podcast is holding a debate in the Methuen City Council At-Large race between D.J. Beauregard, Jana Zanni-Pesce, Nick DiZoglio, and Francisco Surillo. The debate will be at 2pm on November 2nd and will podcast on The Valley Patriot Facebook page as well as YouTube. After airing live, the podcast will then be available on line whenever you want to watch it.

LAWRENCE ELECTIONS MATTER

With the Lawrence city elections taking place on November 7th, the expected low voter turnout means your vote matters more than ever and carries more weight. The voters of Lawrence will be choosing who will lead the city on the city council and school committee (which has no real power right now).

Since I have not covered any of

TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

Pictured: Gracemarie and Joyce Tomaselli, John and Sandra Lundgren, David Costanzo, and Georgia Kritikos who gave testimony on October 3rd at The State House before the Judiciary Committee. Senate Bill S.1131 is 'An Act to strengthen rules governing attorney conduct; penalties for misconduct.' presented by Sen. Bruce E. Tarr. (S.1131 formerly S.1017 presented by former Sen. Diana DiZoglio now State Auditor). END attorney immunity in MA - support Sen. Bill No. S.1131. Send written testimony to Judiciary Committee at 24 Beacon St., Rm #136, Boston, MA 02133 or by e-mail to michael.musto@mahouse.gov

the Lawrence campaigns this year (due to illness) I now feel free to endorse candidates in each race. Here are my recommendations for Lawrence City Council.

CITY COUNCIL AT-LARGE

(Elect three): Most of the time in an At-Large election, it's hard to find three good candidates. I usually have one or two and then struggle with coming up with a third. Not so this year as there are actually four candidates who deserve your vote so you are going to have to choose for yourself which three to vote for. They are; **Rich Russell, Celina Reyes, Ana Levy, and Jeovanny Rodriguez.**

I know my friends in the mayor's office may not like all of my picks but I have my reasons and I think they are good ones. Rich Russell and Jeovanny Rodriguez are not a team player and while that's usually a bad thing, on a board like a city council or school committee that can be a really good thing. When any public board finds themselves agreeing and most of the time they get stale and become rubber stamps. While that hasn't really happened with this current council, it's because of Rodriguez and Russell not always going along with the crowd. Celina Reyes and Ana Levy are both voices of reason that back the administration on important projects and proposals that benefit the city and when they have disagreement with the administration they do it privately and resolve the matter without public grandstanding.

DISTRICT A: (Elect 1) **Fidelina Santiago**, **DISTRICT B:** **Wendy Luzon**, **DISTRICT C:** **Gregory DelRosario**, **DISTRICT D:** **Vivian Marmol**, **DISTRICT E:** **Stephany Infante**, and **DISTRICT F:** **Marc Laplante**. For school committee

FOR THE GREATER LAWRENCE TECHNICAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The voters can choose three candidates. I am only endorsing two. **Leo Lamontagne** deserves your vote for the decades he has served on the board and his institutional knowledge of policies and procedures.

I am also supporting **Julio Mejia** in the hopes that the recent high school graduate can learn from Lamontagne. Julio works in the Lawrence Mayor's office and has the ear of the mayor as well as a genuine interest in making a difference.

MMV PLANNING COMMISSION

Haverhill -Thursday, October 19, 2023 - VIRTUAL Meeting (public)
The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission will hold its monthly virtual meeting on Thursday, October 19th at 11AM. The agenda includes updates on the commission's activities and is available at the MVPC website www.mvpc.org. For questions or details of this meeting contact Jodie Furey at jfurey@mvpc.org
PSYCHOLOGICAL CENTER

WINSTON SAYS!

Dog Owners Take note!

Jana Zanni-Pesce would make a GREAT Methuen City Councilor!

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GALA HONORS 7 LOCALS

Carina Pappalardo CEO of The Psychological Center, Inc., will host the 5th-Annual Overcoming Obstacles Gala on Thursday, Oct. 19th from 6-9pm in an effort to raise funding for Psychological Center programming. The event will be held at Salvatore's Italian Restaurant, 354 Merrimack St, Lawrence, MA 01843

The Gala will feature a theme of "A Trick or Treat Affair," with tricks and treats planned to keep participants on the edge of their seats, a variety of games and prizes, as well as an auction. A full buffet dinner and dessert will be served, along with endless coffee to keep participants energized throughout the evening. Tickets are \$100 per person or \$900 for a table of 10.

This year the Psychological Center Gala will be honoring; Tom Duggan, Juan "Manny" Gonzalez, Wendy Luzon, Jessica Philips, Stephanie Messina Sewade, Penny Hamel, Zoraida Rosado.

METHUEN VILLAGE VIRTUAL ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Hearts, Hugs & Hope: A Virtual Alzheimer's Support Group Offered by Methuen Village October 17TH, at 5:30PM. The event is hosted by Methuen Village Assisted Living and Memory Support Community, 4 Gleason Street, Methuen. Dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia isn't easy, so it is helpful to share your concerns and personal experiences with others who completely understand what you're going through. You will also learn about proven strategies to help you better care for your family member. Contact Director of Compass Programming, Jennifer Giedraitis, at jgiedraitis@methuenvillage.com or 978-685-2220 for more information and the virtual meeting invitation. Please note that this is a virtual event.

THE ROGER TWOMEY FOUNTAIN IN SOUTH LAWRENCE

Last month, Lawrence Mayor Brian DePeña, and members of the Lawrence City Council, State Delegation, DPW, friends, and families from the city had the distinct honor of dedicating

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Sue Piazza's Book Reviews

Bring Back The Deer
 Written By: Jeffrey Pruski © 19
 Illustrated By: Neil Waldman © 1988
 Published By: Gulliver Books
 Genre: Children
 Bookmarks: 0 of 5

This book was the Winner of The Parent's Choice Honors for 1983. Let me start off by saying that for the life of me, I cannot figure out how this book ever made anyone's top prize, for anything. This has to be one of the two most bizarre and troublesome books I've ever read.

The story takes place in the winter, its tribe members have dispersed. This particular family's food stores are very low, so the boy's father leaves to find food, to hunt a deer. When the father does not return in a timely manner the boy tells his grandfather that he will go 'bring back the deer'. The boy, like the other characters in this book, is given no name. The boy follows his father's footprints until they change into those of a wolf. He chases the departing wolf and locates a deer, a fine buck. Together the wolf and deer run past him. Knowing this may be his last chance to snag a deer the boy gives chase. He leaps over a stream running on all four legs. His antlers 'cradle the moon'. As he bursts through the woods, he's home, in human form again. The wolf has transmuted into his father, the deer into his grandfather. Huh? On reading the last page my brain could not pass 'huh'.

The first problem I have with this book is the issue of changelings vs. spirit. Having become immersed in American

Indian culture for over a decade while writing my Ongoing Indigenous Tale series I am dumbfounded by this book. Though people can take on the spirit of an animal and there is such a thing as a changeling, a changeling is not a reality in our current dimensional world. An example of spirit would be remote viewing. A human's essence can hitch their spirit onto a winged creature. But, the human does not physically become the winged creature.

In my book, A Bird Call That Isn't, the shaman's spirit, his essence, rides on his animal totem – the hawk. But, he does not physically become a hawk.

The second problem: animals being people. All I could think of was how were these people supposed to consume meat? Will they kill a friend's father? Will they end up eating someone's grandfather? According to this plotline, one could hunt, kill, and eat a relative, or a neighbor, or a friend. This book made no sense to my adult mind. I can only imagine what it did to a child's. Turn one vegan?

The fact that this book won an award, to me, is unbelievable.

I do not recommend this book—ever.

Susan Piazza, a Navy veteran, is an author, columnist, and blogger. "A Bird Call That Isn't," her first book in her Ongoing Indigenous Tale series can be found on Amazon at A Bird Call That Isn't : A Bird Call That Isn't: American Indian Interracial Historical Romance (An Ongoing Indigenous Tale Book 1) Destiny's Daughter her second book is on its way to the book formatter now.

WILLETTE: FROM PAGE 5

November 7th, Willette envisions three goals for "Biz for Kids" ---

1) On a voluntary basis, local businesses would be encouraged to purchase books for at-risk students. In exchange, the businesses could include a flyer or an attached sticker promoting their individual businesses. No businesses involved in the sale of liquor, vapes, cigarettes, cannabis and/or adult entertainment would be allowed to participate.

2) Students who participate in a book club and successfully read a certain number of books, which could be verified by teachers, would be rewarded with a booklet of free items offered by cooperative businesses. Again, the same restrictions on adult theme businesses would apply.

3) A display Wall of Achievement could be showcased at each school highlighting both the sponsoring businesses and the students who 'read to succeed' and received the booklets.

"This partnership could truly be a win-win situation for everyone involved. Students would have books that they otherwise would not be able to obtain. In turn, the businesses gain foot traffic and positive promotion from the booklets."

Willette concluded: "There are so many examples of local business owners already engaging in charitable and civic outreach to local groups who would love the opportunity to play a meaningful role in addressing student literacy on the frontlines."

A TWO YEAR COOLING OFF PERIOD FOR HIRING METHUEN OFFICIALS

Changes Needed to Create Firewall in Charter to Avoid Ethical Conflicts and Violations

If elected to the Methuen School Committee on November 7th, Willette promised to recommend the filing of a home rule petition by the City Council that would mandate a cooling off period of two years for any elected official in Methuen to be hired for a full-time position in either the school system or municipal government. The changes are needed to create a firewall in the Methuen City Charter to avoid potential ethical conflicts and violations.

"During my 12 years of public service, I have witnessed too many examples of elected officials, who voted favorably



on budgets and contracts for certain departments, who were then hired to work in that department, as the current charter language is weak, contradictory, and nebulous. Having a cooling off period of two years will remove the decision-making process of elected officials during budget and contract negotiations, especially if the ulterior goal is to be hired full-time."

Currently, elected officials, who are compensated, cannot work concurrently in the school department or municipal government. However, once a resignation takes effect or an official retires from office, the former official can be hired to work in the Methuen municipal government because the City Charter language is not legally binding on the subject. Previously, positions were created or augmented during budget debate that resulted in elected officials subsequently being hired for those newly created positions. This reform measure removes that past practice.

"If elected to the School Committee, I look forward to joint meetings with the City Council to work on meaningful and tangible budgetary, regulatory, and ethical reforms for the City of Methuen. We must continue to restore trust and integrity in our interactions as elected officials."

On November 7th write in Kenneth Willette for Methuen School Committee and always include the address 10 Burnham Road, Apt. 506A or the vote will not count. ♦

NOTEBOOK FROM PREV. PAGE

the "Roger A. Twomey Fountain" at Stockton Park in Lawrence on the five corners where a much larger fountain once stood.

Councilor Twomey was born in Lawrence in 1930 and was a lifelong resident of this city, graduated from Central Catholic High School & Merrimack College with a Bachelor's degree in Economics and an Associate's degree in Electrical Engineering.

He served as a Staff Sergeant in the Air Force during the Korean War, and was honorably discharged in 1954. He worked at Lucent Technologies as a Senior Industrial Engineer where he retired after 36 years. He was elected as a Councilor-At-Large and served for eight years, and was dearly loved by all

his constituents whom he served with the utmost respect. He died in 2020, at the age of 89.

"I am extremely grateful to Mayor DePeña and the City Council for the rehabilitation of Stockton Park. It meant a lot to myself, my family, and Roger's campaign team to have the fountain dedicated in his honor. It was always Roger's passion to make the gateways to the city clean and welcoming, and today his dream came true", said Mrs. Marilyn Twomey.

"I'm glad for this event. Mr. Twomey deserves all this and more, I will remember him as a great person, and a great gentleman", said councilor Gregory Delrosario.

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**BENEATH THE SURFACE
WITH PAUL MURANO**

**Halloween and the
Obsession with Death**

I went to get my hair cut today, and walked into a shop filled with decorations of skeletons, ghosts, spiders, bats, disembodied skulls, and cemetery grave stones. When I was a kid, Halloween seemed less morbid. Do kids dress up anymore as clowns, pirates, princesses, hobos, and Superman?

It got me pondering. Let's go beneath the surface.

Humanity seems to react to morbidity in two extreme ways: fearing death and glorifying it. They're opposites, yet the same. Like Fascism and Communism in the political realm, they metaphorically go down opposite sides of the circle and meet at the bottom. Fear and glorification as opposite and similar reactions to death fit neatly within two different eras.

Before we continue, people who have read some of my writings know I loosely categorize recorded history into three distinct eras: pre-Christian, Christian, and post-Christian. Some of the world is still pre-Christian, as in areas within the Middle East and Far East. The Western world is post-Christian. Much of Africa and some of Asia are entering their Christian era. The difference between pre- and post-Christian is the difference between a subconscious anticipation of hope and a rejection of hope – personified in incarnate Son of God. It is no coincidence that our abortion age began at the beginning of our post-Christian era, when academia began changing B.C. and A.D. (Before Christ and Anno Domini – Latin for “year of our Lord”) to B.C.E. and A.C.E (Before the Common Era and The Common Era) to identify history. The change is fitting, since a culture of death and a Christian era cannot co-exist.

In pre-Christian cultures, fear of death dominated life. In post-Christian cultures we tend to glorify death. The two reactions are born of the spiritual maladies of fear and pride, the opposites of faith and love. Pre-Christian obsessive fear of death points to a recognition of a dark mystery over which we have no control, and being intimidated by forces higher than ourselves. The post-Christian glorification of death obstinately stands in the face of heaven and foolishly cries out “Death is mine!” as we abort millions of babies and legalize euthanasia. Pre-Christians didn't know God, post-



Christians claim to be God.

As a child, when our country was at the tail end of the Christian era with its ethos still somewhat permeating the culture, Halloween was fun. There was no common obsessive fear of death, nor was it glorified. Halloween was an enjoyable holiday for kids, which many adults saw in context of being the eve of All Saints Day (All Hallows-Eve), when the souls of the just who are now in Heaven are celebrated. Faith in Christ conquering death offered hope that one day we will join them in that unending bliss.

However, when Christ is rejected, hope is unwittingly rejected. This quiet post-Christian despair of our age spurs on the arrogant claim that we are the ultimate arbiters of life as belligerent purveyors of a culture of death. It is a foolish and self-destructive display of pride born out of a deep emptiness and lack of meaning.

Fear and glorification, the pre- and post-Christian reactions to death, are obsessions that express a lack of hope and inevitably lead to grave injustices. Both miss the point of life and neither should be the central theme of Halloween.

Paul Murano is producer and host of Beneath the Surface video podcasts, and has taught college philosophy & theology for over 15 years. Check out some of his work at Paulmurano.com and Youtube.com/Veritas3737. E-mail Paul at PJDM@aol.com

THE DOCTOR IS IN!

Chemicals Everywhere

Dr. Pierre Ghassibi
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

I do not know why we do not talk more about the effect on our health of the chemicals that surround us every day.

Many of us are turning vegan because we know about the cruelty to animals in our slaughterhouses, because animal farming has a worse effect on pollution and greenhouse effect than using petrol and coal for energy, but also because we can use more land to harvest more food for the growing world population. But there is a more selfish pressing reason: cancer.

In addition to diabetes and heart disease, our industrial chemicals are a big cause of cancer.

The rate of cancer has increased many folds in the past many years.

Chemicals that leach out of many plastics, insecticides, fire retardant products, cosmetics, alcoholic beverages, air pollution, industrial wastes that are discarded in our rivers and oceans, etc., have been known to increase the risk of cancer many fold.

I do not know why this fact is not more public or studied in medical

school or even in our undergraduate levels, in high school. Genetics and viruses are only a small part of the causes of cancer; the hundreds of chemicals that we are exposed to are the major cause.

They could also be the cause of our autoimmune diseases like MS, lupus, ulcerative colitis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Tissue biopsies reveal that our flesh these days contains hundreds of chemicals that the body cannot metabolize (how would it know, since these are not natural biological substances).

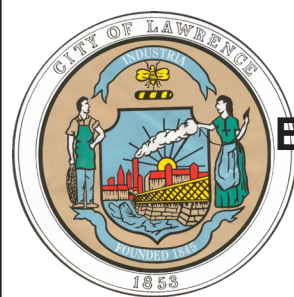
Let me refer you to the book of Donald Hoernschemeyer, Ph.D. “Healthy Living In A Contaminated World.” It is very easy to read and practical.

Let us use less plastics, not heat plastics in the microwave, throw away old plastic containers, use as little detergents, perfumes, and makeup as possible, less cleaning chemicals, less supplements (the great majority of which are useless), less sugary drinks, less alcohol.

Let us eat a plant-based diet.

P. Ghassibi, MD

ghassibi@hotmail.com ◊



**NOTICE OF WINTER
DEADLINES FOR STREET
EXCAVATION PERMITS IN THE
CITY OF LAWRENCE, MA**

**The last day street and sidewalk
excavation permits can be
taken out is October 31, 2023.**

**All excavation work and
patching done under the 30
day permit must be completed
by November 30, 2023.**

**After November 1, 2023 only
emergency permit requests
supported by a written
justification will be approved by
the City Engineer.**

**~ Theo Rosario
Acting City Engineer**

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ANDOVER

David & Mary Ann Geaslen Trs & David Geaslen 2014 Revocable Trust & Mary Ann Geaslen 2014 Revocable Trust, Jennifer Hubbard, \$2,450,000, 43 Abbot St

David J Richards, David Arrigg & Alyssa Courtney Arrigg, \$1,705,000, 6 David Dr

Yvon Comier Tr & CA Investment Trust, Richard T & Martha A Hyslip Trs & R & Muirfield Realty Trust, \$1,650,000, 19 Robert Dr Unit 5-2

Andrea Lee Surette Est & William J Heffron, Sean F & Deana M McGovern & Ann R DiMare, \$1,550,000, 15 Rennie Dr

Joyce N Leary Tr & Leary Realty Trust, Regina Sullivan, \$1,500,000, 32 Hidden Rd

Leonard C & Janis B Banos, John F Correia, \$1,500,000, 3 Westinister Rdw

Bruce M & Nancy Landay, Heather & Phillip Davis, \$1,475,000, 6 Stinson Rd

Berta & Ross Krupnik Trs & Ross Krupnik Revocable Trust & Berta Krupnik Revocable Trust, Jagat Parekh, \$1,470,000, 14 Chongris Cir

Jennifer Hubbard, Mark D & Tracey S Kauffman, \$1,420,000, 19 Wolcott Ave

Doreen M Bushashia, Prasanth Perugupalli & Sandhya Tadepalli, \$1,370,000, 28 Crenshaw Ln Unit 11-2

Fang Zue, Edward C & Gayle D Nieburger Trs & Nieburger 2017 Trust, \$1,330,000, 3 Ivana Dr Unit 10-2

Christopher & Renee Friel, Michael W & Kristin Bell, \$1,300,000, 11 Belle Haven Dr

Alp Dibirdi & Esin Seref, Junfei Xia & Ya Guo, \$1,300,000, 26 Brundrett Ave
Sanaa Ibrahim Shafik, Nishant Aggarwal & Ruhi Jain, \$1,280,000, 10 Whittemore Ter

Christopher Verro Tr & Danielle Viscomi Verro Tr & Verro Family Revocable Trust, Dinesh Chandra & Aryana Ray, \$1,235,000, 6 Keystone Way
Mark T Shepherd, Derek & Carolyn Glynn, \$1,205,000, 27 Hemlock Rd

Aaron & Tricia A Callaway, Keith M Doucot & Michael Marquis, \$1,205,000, 237 Highland Rd

Stanislav Margolin & Luba Margolin Zaslavsky, Svitozar & Maryna Omelko, \$1,200,000, 7 Belle Isle Way

Lisa C Starkweather Tr & Starkweather 2016 Trust, Brian M & Stacey D Murray, \$1,200,000, 6 Candlewood Dr

Anne Tobler Spangenberg Tr & Karen Postal Revocable Trust, Jason & Brenda Meek, \$1,160,000, 16 Bobby Jones Dr Unit 3-2

Greg Dacey Properties LLC, Rory & Mikayla Cohoon, \$1,075,000, 5 Furnari Farm Ln

Dorairaju & Perin Thavaseelan, Keith Bell & Deborah R R M Lema, \$1,070,000, 27 Rutgers Rd

Patricia C Booth, Daniel Chan & Alice Young, \$1,070,000, 12 Regis Rd

David T Vining, Greg Dacey Properties LLC, \$1,050,000, 12 Patriot Dr

John W & Martha Reeder, Renee Minott, \$1,050,000, 80 Salem St

Constitution Properties LLC, Igor Iwanek & Divya Shakti, \$999,000, 61 Wild Rose Dr

Henry J Zanoni & Carol L Chapman-Zanoni, Dhananjay B Ghevde & Asha D Ghevde, \$950,000, 8 Nicoll Dr

Mark & Tracey Kauffman, John D & Wendy Nevin, \$850,000, 2 Power Mill Sq Unit 3B

Miceal G & Pauline B Flanagan, Francis Romeo & Melanie Scanlan, \$800,000, 48 Gray Rd

Ellery & Jade Sachs/Jade Dorsi, Daniel Arturo Delsalto & Sandra Paola Alvite Castellanos, \$797,000, 7 Canterbury St

Konstandinos Chongris Tr & Jacob/Patrick Realty Trust, Andrew & Katelyn Noiles, \$785,000, 33 Ballardvale Rd

Patricia M Page, Margaret Jean Walker Henry & James Merton Henry, \$755,000, 2 High Plain Rd

Peter M & Deborah A Garone, Regina M Carusi Tr & Regina M Carusi Revocable Trust of 2013, \$750,000, 207 Salem St

Richard & Ilena J Montanino, Jose Vicente Teixeira Neto & Sabrina Correa Domingos Teixeira, \$670,000, 492 South Main St

Elizabeth Tannerbring Tr & 66 Woburn Street Realty Trust, Jennifer & Brian Martin Montgomery, \$615,000, 66 Woburn St

Vineet & Isha Agarwal, Michelle M & David G Clark, \$550,000, 170 Haverhill St Unit 124

Katina Pantelis Tr & Katina Pantelis Family Irrevocable Trust & Paul N Pantelis Family Irrevocable Trust, Evergrain Orchard LLC, \$525,000, 302 High St

Robert J & Sarah A Reynolds, Sarah A Hewitt & Adnan Salam, \$520,000, 8 Binney St

Bryan Bannon & Erinn Gilson, Sarah J Cottone, \$475,000, 38A Maple Ave Unit 2

Michael Lee & Angela Moon, Trupti Gupte & Sudheer Ram Elapavuluru, \$475,000, 300 Brookside Dr Unit F

Stephen C Hoctor Tr & Stephen C Hoctor Revocable Trust, Fermin Caro Del Castillo Tr & Sharda Mehta Tr & Caro-Mehta Family Trust, \$475,000, 5 Porter Rd Unit 101

Cuticchia Revocable Trust & Mary Louise Cuticchia Tr, 125 Greenwood Road CBC LLC, \$425,000, 125 Greenwood Rd

Caroline E Obert, Maureen M Heinze, \$363,000, 80 B Washington Park Dr Unit 7

Alex Sloboda, Anni Oliveira Marques, \$360,000, A1-4 Colonial Dr Unit A1-4

Constitution Properties LLC, Joseph C Toto Jr & Marcia Gouveia-Toto, \$210,000, 108 Colonial Dr Unit 1081

LAWRENCE

24-30 Summer St LLC, Summer & Orchard Apartments LLC, \$2,000,000, 19 Orchard St, 24-26, 28-30 Summer St

1 Doyle Street LLC, Raul Caz Bano, \$950,000, 1 Doyle St

Dario & Glendy Perez, Paola M Santana Hernandez & Mariana Hernandez & Marcos Santana Gonzalez, \$917,000, 320-322 Ames St

Antolin Perez, Carlos A Cabrera, \$870,000, 344 Haverhill St

Zeona Rosario & Mario Hugo Placido, Roberto Villalba & Geraldyn M Nunez Gomez, \$840,000, 82-84 Margin St

Czeslaw Pelczar Tr & Pelczar Realty Trust, Francisco I Batista Gomez & Roselien M Reyez Gonzalez, \$790,000, 115 Allston St

Edward Reyes & Xiomary Reyes & Leandro Omar & Leticia Arriaga, Melania Ramirez De Corona, \$780,000, 8 Fulton St

David Guzman Tr & Guzman Family

Irrevocable Trust, Teodoro Nunez De Leon & George De Leon Anziani, \$770,000, 15-17 Thorndike St

Henry Nguyen & Lan Pham, Abimael Pizoni, \$750,000, 54-56 Bodwell St

Ever Javier & Katty Alcantara, Glenys Caceres & Aneurys Giraldo-Jimenez & Danilson Almonte, \$750,000, 9 Carleton St

Jessica Letourneau, Arideny Lopez & Denilson Santos & Darionel Santos, \$740,000, 17 Garfield St

Barbara Hobbs, Windarlin Gonzalez Ayala/Wildany Gonzalez Ayala, \$703,000, 108-110 Exeter St

Tannis Perez & Jose O Munoz, Evena Millien Lamour & Abigail Mervil, \$675,000, 66-68 Crescent St

Edmund F & Doris A Dechane, Luis Manuel Dominguez, \$589,000, 26-28 Stearns Ave

Debora Bunkartas & Theresa LaFollette & Charles LaFollette Jr & Wanda Smith & Linda Meli & June Sobanek, Carlo R Matos, \$580,000, 5-7 Pleasant Ter

Dora Pereira & Julia Alvernaz Est, Marcus Irizarry, \$577,500, 76 Bunkerhill St

Jordany Vargas & Sujehiry Hernandez, Edwin Diaz & Waira Diaz, \$565,000, 17 Glenwood Dr

Daher Group Inc, Alex Dominguez & Alba Nunez Dominguez, \$550,000, 25 Boston St

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Newton Delacruz, Jae Rivas Inc, \$405,000, 8 Cranshaw Pl

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Oslyn Atkins, TMH Properties LLC, \$270,000, 107 Greenwood St

Anthony Ansaldi Tr & Cameron-Bishop/Janton Trust, Arafeen Quazi & Shaila Parvin, \$260,000, 24-26 Inman St Unit 28

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Kyle Regan, Joel Martinez, \$141,500, 11 Lawrence St Unit 509

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Kyle E Regan, Joel Martinez, \$135,000, 11 Lawrence St Unit 601

Kyle Regan, Abeer Massri, \$125,000, 11 Lawrence St Unit 810

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METHUEN

Carl A Backman III, Sanjay Singh & Vaidehi Sanjay Singh, \$935,000, 10 Morgan Dr

Toll MA Land III LP, Margo P & Bruce Goldman Trs & Margo P Goldman Revocable Trust & Bruce J Goldman Revocable Trust, \$916,084, 2 Wren Way Unit 160

Adam Aakil & Aicha Berrada, Edward Zhu & Mei Sophia Lu, \$910,000, 61 Pine Tree Dr Unit 79

Toll MA Land III LP, Josep & Brenda J Jodar, \$877,501, 8 Cardinal Rd Unit 183

Siamak Yassini-Fard & Nasrin Ahmadpour-Alamdari, Roger Mortel, \$825,000, 11 Maple Ridge Rd

Maria E Torrisi Tr & Maria E Torrisi Revocable Trust, Richard Felago, \$821,000, 22 Valley View Way

Melanie Gogjian-Augusta, Czeslawa Pleczar Tr & Pelczar Realty Trust, \$819,000, 53 Sorrento Ave

Toll MA Land III, James Molloy & Denise Parksikian-Molloy, \$816,184, 4 Wren Way Unit 159

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Peris Ngendo Mbaria & David Ndungu, Guymerrin D & Yolande L Djampou, \$759,000, 31 Booth Rd

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Maribel M Borgen Tr & Ventura Borgen Real Estate Trust, Jolmi Minaya, \$700,000, 176 Broadway

Eddy I Guzman Tr & E & G Realty Trust, Nurys Mateo & Richard Ramos, \$690,000, 42-44 Haverhill St

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16 Stoneybrook Road LLC, Carlene Jop, \$675,000, 16 Stoneybrook Rd

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Marianne E Lentini Tr & Nana Lentini Revocable Trust, Sun Cha Yun, \$635,000, 30 Hopkins Cir Unit 24

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Grace L Namanda & Charles Sebuma, Socrates Vargas, \$605,000, 123 Pleasant Valley St

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REAL ESTATE: NEXT PAGE

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 Russell P & Kathleen E Coppola & Brian J Coppola & Joyce Coppola, Nunez Properties LLC, \$575,000, 400 Merrimack St
 Maria C Bertolone Tr & Bertolone Family Irrevocable Trust, Raul Rodriguez Paulino, \$565,000, 68 Derry Rd
 John Wilkinson, Jonathon Simpson, \$555,000, 50 Howe St
 Adam R & Tracy Lucas, Serina J Vancour & Hewerd Gomez, \$555,000, 83 Derry Rd
 Kelli M Gilbert & Paul R Atkinson Jr, Edson Jose & Gabriele V Barbosa, \$540,000, 62 Ayers Village Rd
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 Ann Marie Liddell, Mihaela & Calin Leordean, \$540,000, 2 Joy Ter
 Vaidehee V & Shivam Patel, Manuel Gerardo Ayala Ortiz & Abneris Marie Lugo Morales, \$540,000, 15 Hampshire Rd Unit 5B
 Shannon M Russell/Shannon M Willis & Stephen J Willis Jr, Kyle Mills & Meghan M Lakis, \$530,000, 16 Tyler St
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 Angela Keith, Troy T Rurak, \$515,000, 185-187 Edgewood Ave Unit 2
 Teresa Tomola, Magdala Derney & Sonique Fortune, \$510,000, 35 Elmwood Rd
 Goldwetha Investments LLC, Stephen S Asamoah & Rose-Ann Williams, \$507,000, 7 Tyler St
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80 Chickering Rd
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 Frances M Lembo, Mark Munroe, \$239,770, 129 Cortland Dr Unit 12
 203 Turnpike Street Realty LLC, Merrimack College, \$150,000, 203 Turnpike St Unit 403
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HERO: FROM PAGE 1

United States. Before returning to the United States, Robert also spent some time assigned to the US Navy seaplane tender, the USS Salisbury Sound (AV-13). This ship was named after a spot in the State of Alaska, not the famous Merrimack Valley vacation spot.

Even decades after his US Navy service, Robert proudly spoke of the carrier USS Antietam being fitted with a British invented port sponson (Canted Deck) in 1952. This made the ship the world's first true angled-deck aircraft carrier. He recalls being on board while the carrier tested this new flight deck, and experience he found harrowing. Robert and his shipmates earned the Korean Service Medal with two battle stars for service during the conflict. At the end of his Naval Career Robert also earned the Good Conduct, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal.

After leaving the Navy, Robert attended the now closed Coyne College of Electrical Technology, worked several jobs to support his family, and decided to reconsider service to his Nation by joining the US Army. Ironic, because when he first joined the military in 1950, the US Army rejected him, due to a suspected heart murmur. After being rejected by the US Army, Robert simply walked down the hall and joined the US Navy. He trained as a US Army Infantryman, completing both the Basic Airborne course and the US Army's Jungle Training Center in Panama. Robert also served with the US Army's legendary 101st Airborne, based at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

During his service in the US Army, he also attended the grueling seven-week Combat Diver Qualification Course, or CDQC, at the Special Forces Underwater Operations School in Key West, Florida. He completed the US Army Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) or, informally, the Q Course, earning him a coveted "Green Beret."

After leaving the active US Army, he completed fifteen years of service in the US Army Reserves. Finished with active service in both the US Army and US Navy, Robert started a career at then Western Electric. The company operated a plant in the Merrimack Valley from 1860, until the North Andover facility closed its doors in 2011. The site in North Andover was once one of the largest employers in Massachusetts.

Robert talked at length to me about his two sons, three daughters, thirteen grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and seven great-great, grandchildren. He is very proud of his qualification as one of the earliest US Army scuba divers, and at the age of eighty-six, made one last parachute jump from a plane. As a civilian he did some scuba work with the State of New Hampshire's Fish and Game Department. He went hang-gliding off the cliffs of North Carolina.

Robert qualified as an airplane pilot and flew out of several of the local airfields including Lawrence. He retired from Western Electric/AT&T as a Licensed Practical Nurse. Studying at Northern Essex Community College, he became an LPN. Robert served at several hospitals and nursing homes between Boston and the Merrimack Valley. Bob says it seems like he has spent his whole life in one school or class of some kind. He gets very emotional talking about parachuting, diving, flying, and especially earning a Green Beret. Korean War Veteran, two service Military Veteran, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and great-great grandfather, a proud member of the Merrimack Valley's Silent Generation, Robert Lister is a "hero in our midst."

The Haverhill, Methuen, Andover, and Dracut American Legion Posts ask all World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans, to call (603) 518-5368 and sign up for an Honor Flight to the Memorials in Washington DC! Veterans of all eras are asked to go to the American Legion's Web site www.legion.org, and join the American Legion, our mission is working with Congress, Veterans, and the Community, preserving our Veteran's Benefits for future generations and serving all Veterans and their families.



John Cuddy served in the US Navy's Construction Battalions (also known as the Seabees) after retiring from the US Navy; he earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in economics from the

University of Massachusetts on the Lowell Campus. He has been employed in Logistics at FedEx for the last 26 years. If you know a World War II, Korean War, or Vietnam War Veteran who would like their story told, please email him at John.Cuddy@Yahoo.com.

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TV TALK with BILL CUSHING



“Tulsa King”

Bill Cushing

VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

Yellowstone’ creator Taylor Sheridan has a whole slew of shows on TV these days. 3 different ‘Yellowstone’ series along with Jeremy Renner’s ‘Mayor of Kingstown,’ ‘Special Ops: Lioness,’ and ‘Lawman: Bass Reeves.’ But the one I’m recommending this month was released back in November 2022 and stars Sylvester Stallone in his first TV role, ‘Tulsa King.’

The series follows Stallone as Dwight Manfredi, a mob captain who just finished doing twenty-five years of hard time as the fall guy for his don. He kept his mouth shut in prison and now that he’s out he expects to be rewarded for his loyalty. Unfortunately for Dwight, things have changed since he’s been gone, and his boss has a short memory. The only reward he gets is to be sent to Tulsa, Oklahoma to establish criminal operations for the family. Manfredi is not just a man out of time, needing to learn about iPhones and Uber and social media, but now he’s a man out of his territory. A true fish out of water.

Upon his arrival in Tulsa, after he encounters a cab driver named Tyson (Jay Will) who becomes his personal chauffeur, Dwight decides to stick with what he knows best. The drug trade. But even that comes with a twist since pot is now legal. So, he uses another strength of his, intimidation. He walks into a dispensary and informs Bodhi, the owner, under the threat of bodily harm, that he will now be paying 20% of his profits to Dwight, and in return Dwight will protect the business. You might say that it’s an offer that Bodhi can’t refuse.

From there, Dwight goes to a local cowboy bar and ingratiates himself with the owner (Garrett Hedlund). He meets an attractive divorcee (Andrea Savage) and strikes up a romance with her. Even that gets complicated when it turns out she’s a federal agent.

But don’t worry, the action and tension in the show soon escalate when Dwight has a run in with a Tulsa motorcycle gang who think they run the town. Dwight doesn’t take kindly to the way they handle things and lets them know that things are going to change.

The showrunner is Terence Winter, an Emmy winner as a writer on ‘The Sopranos’ and was the creator of Boardwalk Empire. Along with Sheridan, that’s a solid pedigree, to build on. But some real star power doesn’t hurt. It’s not unreasonable to think that if ‘Tulsa King’ starred just about any other actor, it might not pack such a punch. Stallone is just the veteran heavyweight that the show needed. He’s a star who has taken some knocks in his career but is still here. And he delivers big time, giving a terrific and charming performance as Dwight. He’s clearly having a great time playing this character.

‘Tulsa King’ doesn’t take itself too seriously. It’s wild and fast moving and loaded with humor and amusing situations along with its violent serious side. It shows us a mobster contending with not just how the world has changed over the last 25 years, but a city whose understanding of the mob is entirely limited to gangster movies, while still never treating the New York or Tulsa characters as cliches or stereotypes.

If you’re a fan of Stallone, this show will not disappoint, It’s a total blast and a perfect binge watch on a rainy weekend.

‘Tulsa King’ has been renewed for a second season and all episodes are available to stream on Paramount +.

If you have any questions about TV, you can email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future Mailbag column.

Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @BillsTVTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk for daily up-to-the-minute TV news and discussion. ◇

Your True Identity!

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Greetings my friends and God Bless every one of you in the wonderful Name of Jesus Christ! Wow! Time is flying by so fast; we find ourselves in October of 2023 already! Before I go any further into this column, I want to say that I am very happy to hear that my friend Tommy Duggan is doing well and getting back to fighting condition.

According to the dictionary, the definition of Identity is the fact of being who a person is, who they are as an individual. How does one find their true identity? Good question!

Since I am a believer in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, I believe one’s identity comes from God. Our Identity is received in community [not in isolation, God doesn’t work in isolation] through the imagination from God. What specific unique name does God call you? For example, Jesus got His Identity from His Father, in community when He was baptized which, we can read about in Matthew 3:16-17, “When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” NKJV. Here we read that God, His Father called Him Beloved Son and Well-Pleasing! Notice that Jesus received His Identity from His Father before He did any miracles! Now, how did Jesus live in His Identity? What did Jesus do? What was Jesus’ vocation, not His Identity? Identity and Vocation are not the same thing, they are two separate things. Vocation is something we do, and Identity is who we are. We are not what we do! Removing what we do does not affect who we are! God gave Jesus His Identity calling Him Beloved Son and Well-Pleasing and He lived this out as Messiah! His vocation was Messiah! We read in Matthew 4:23, “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” NKJV. Jesus in His Vocation as the Messiah went around Teaching, Preaching, and Healing. Again, before Jesus did any of these things, His Identity was God’s Beloved Son and Well-Pleasing!

Going back even more, Jesus was prompted by the Spirit to go into the wilderness which we read in Matthew 4:1, “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” NKJV. Here we see the enemy attacking His Identity, not His vocation. Why? If the devil can get Jesus to live in a False Identity His vocation wouldn’t matter. Let’s look at Matthew 4:3, “Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these

stones become bread.” NKJV. The devil knew that Jesus as the Messiah could speak these stones into bread, but that was not how he attacked Jesus. He attacked His Identity! “If you are the Son of God?” The devil does the same to us by attacking our Identity getting us to live a lie which is a False Identity, if he succeeds, everything after that doesn’t matter.

What is your True Identity? I am not asking what do you do as a vocation, I am asking you what name does God distinctly call you? We read in Psalms 139:13-14, “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.” NKJV. God knew David in his mother’s womb!

Next, read what God tells Jacob/Israel in Isaiah 44:1-2, “Yet hear me now, O Jacob My servant, And Israel whom I have chosen. 2 Thus says the LORD who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you: Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, [Israel] whom I have chosen.” NKJV. Furthermore, let’s read what God told the prophet Jeremiah, Jeremiah 1:5, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” NKJV. Before Jeremiah was formed and born, God knew Him and called him Prophet! I say to you that God knew you in your mother’s womb too because He is not a respecter of persons. This makes the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in the Book of John unique, especially when Jesus tells him in John 3:5, “Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water [referring to the womb] and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” NKJV.

Jesus said in John 10:3, “To him the doorkeeper [Jesus] opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.” NKJV. Then verse 4 says, “And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.” NKJV. Jesus calls them by name and they know His voice! Jesus did not go around giving people things to do. Jesus went around helping people to walk in their Identity! And as a side note to parents, your job is to coach your children into their Identity, they will know because God calls them by name. Remember this old question, what do you want to be [not do] when you grow up? Identity is received in community through the imagination from God!

Well, I gave you a lot to contemplate and consider. Try this spiritual exercise for yourselves, get quiet, ask God what distinct name He calls you, and write down what He says. I did it and one of the names God called me was Encourager.

I love you all, Peter Larocque
peterlarocque@hotmail.com ◇



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