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Vol.1, No.2

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

WELCOME TO THE BILLERICA GREEN NEWS, BILLERICA'S PREMIER MONTHLY NEWSPAPER MAGAZINE!



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A big HELLO AND WELCOME! My name is Liana Measmer and I'm the editor of The Billerica Green, Billerica's Premier Monthly News Magazine. This is Billerica's first full-color publication that goes to every mailbox in town.

Our first edition, Summer 2009, was mailed to businesses and put in central locations around town. Since we got an overwhelmingly positive response, future editions will be mailed directly to the 17,000 mailboxes in Billerica. The good news is it's free to residents!

When I moved here in 1997, I had all sorts of unfounded preconceptions of what I thought Billerica was but soon came to realize, as every one else does, the richness of this town. In its people, its schools, its government, its events, its services, its businesses. Having a goal of being All Billerica, All the Time, For Billerica, By Billerica will make this a venue for residents and businesses to shine.

This paper's vision came from the mentoring of some of the best editors around. Having written for various newspapers in the area, I was taught and guided as a journalist and advised about the newspaper business. Thus, as a result, I came to see, even in these tough economic times, that this was good for our town because it reaches everyone.

If you get your news elsewhere, we seek not to compete but rather to tell "the rest of the story" locally. Striving for neutrality, we'll generally stay outside the realm of topics lending themselves to controversy or showing favoritism in political arenas. Our features will be human interest pieces, looking at issues impacting us every day while shining light on the more positive side of life.

Our local photographers snapped some of the beautiful images you see and we also took some young people on location to mentor them as the next wave of "photojournalists". Our local organizations filled our email boxes with current programming for our "Out on the Town" and "Calendar of Events", two sections of the paper we hope you'll return to often. We even came up with a few fresh ideas we want to surprise you with.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my team. The first and most important is my Art Director/Graphic Designer, Tony Luongo. What I am with the pen, Tony is with design. He is my right arm. He designed almost all the ads you see. He laid out the features and painted the front cover. The "fresh surprising" sections are his creations. This paper would not be a reality if not for Tony. Thanks, Tony. I can't continue to do this without you and your amazing talent.

I'd like to also thank all my contributing writers and photographers: Gina, Dave, The Giroux's, The Lucozzi's, Todd, Jennifer, Jeff, Pri, The Livsey's, Nora, Jenn, and Bill. You probably saw the new talents of Nicole, Tom and Julia Van Kuilenburg behind the Billerica Green cameras capturing your images this summer. Without their contributions, this paper would be empty and without color. You all did a tremendous job!

Thanks to Media News Printing who, when called with yet one more question, simply offered solutions that made this process seamless. I'd also like to thank the countless others behind the scenes who were generous with their time, advice, and encouragement. Lastly, I must thank the many local businesses who are advertising with us. Please frequent their shops and establishments to keep Billerica dollars here.

If you like what you see (or even if you don't), email us. We want to make this paper the best it can be. If you have some ideas you want to pitch or an upcoming story you want covered, email me. I am looking for sports writers, senior writers and kid contributors.

Enjoy Billerica! You're the best.

Liana "

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THE FOLLY OF MARKET TIMING

Brought to you by Ronald V. Bazza CRPC
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These days, some people may have a "sure-fire" way to time the stock market. Just check out the Internet. You can find screens advertising market timing services. A trip to your local library will yield an equal abundance of market timing theories in books, magazines, and other periodicals. And some of these theories may or may not work.

THE PREMISE

The idea behind market timing is to buy stock when prices are low, hold onto your investment until the market peaks, and subsequently move your stock investments into cash until the market hits bottom. Then, the process begins all over again. It sounds simple enough. The problem, though, is that all timing theories are based, at least in part, on second guessing the stock market.

Different timing theories consider various "indicators" that may signal that the market is about to head up or down: margin debt, interest rates, employment data, manufacturing levels, number of advancing stocks versus number of declining stocks, and so on. However, even with the most sophisticated methods, hitting the exact highs and lows of the market is next to impossible.

REALITY

What happens if your timing is off and you don't reinvest in the market at the right time? The consequences of not being fully invested when a major market upturn occurs can be disastrous to your long-term investment plans. Studies of stock market history have shown that not being invested at the "right" times can be costly to an investor. Consider the following hypothetical example based on the return of the S&P 500.

On December 31, 1996, Susan invested \$10,000 in a stock index fund based on the S&P 500 Index. As noted in the chart below, by December 31, 2006 the \$10,000 would have grown to \$22,252.00 an average annual total return of 8.33%.

However, suppose Susan decided to get out of the market periodically during that five-year period, and as a result she missed the market's ten best single-day performances. If that were the case, her 8.33% return would have fallen to 3.32%. As well, if Susan missed the market's best 20 days, that 8.33% return would have dropped to -0.46%. Of course, the performance of an unmanaged index is not indicative of the performance of any particular investment. The performance of an index assumes no transaction costs, taxes, management fees or other expenses. It is not possible to invest directly in any index. Past performance cannot guarantee comparable future results.

THE PENALTY FOR MISSING THE MARKET

Trying to time the market can be an inexact – and costly – exercise. This chart illustrates a \$10,000 investment in the S&P 500 Index from Dec. 31, 1996 – Dec 31, 2006.

	Average Annual Period of Investment	Total Return Growth of \$10,000
Fully Invested	8.33%	\$22,252
Miss the Best 10 Days	3.321	3,864
Miss the Best 20 Days	-0.46	9,548
Miss the Best 30 Days	-3.71	6,849
Miss the Best 40 Days	-6.42	5,148
Miss the Best 60 Days	-10.98	3,125

Source: A I M Management Group Inc.;

THE BEST DEFENSE

Market fluctuations can make almost any investor nervous. But getting out of stocks when the market takes a downturn isn't the answer. Don't let short-term volatility drive your long-term investment planning. Your best defense against a fluctuating market is a well-diversified portfolio and a disciplined program of periodic investments.

Spreading your investments among stocks, bonds, and cash in a strategic asset allocation that takes into account your time horizon, risk tolerance, need for investment income, and long-term goals can help your portfolio produce more consistent returns, regardless of whether the stock market is up or down. When the stock market is not performing well, your returns from bond and cash investments can help supplement your stock returns.

Making regular investments in a stock or stock mutual fund when the market is down as well as when it is on the rise is a strategy known as dollar cost averaging. With dollar cost averaging, you invest a fixed amount monthly or quarterly. When the market is down, your money buys more shares. Over the long-term, the average price you pay per share generally may be lower than the average price of the stock investment during the same period. Investing regular amounts steadily over time may lower your average cost but cannot guarantee a profit or protect you from a loss in a declining market. Effectiveness requires continuous investing regardless of fluctuating prices. You should consider your ability to continue buying through periods of low prices.

Wise investors don't try to second-guess the financial markets. They take a structured, disciplined approach to investing that recognizes that market declines inevitably will occur.

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SPICE UP YOUR GARDEN

Fall is almost here and this year we had much more rain during a summer with many less 90 degree weather days. These days, garden centers are brimming with colors, reminding us to grow asters and flowering kale. However by the end of summer, most home gardeners neglect their yards except for growing few mums here and there.

As New England gardeners, we have the whole winter to rest so don't put away your lawn mower or the garden hose yet. It is the time to rake your leaves out of the lawn and keep mowing. You have to keep watering your plants and lawn until the hard frost gets here. Don't forget to fertilize your lawn for the last time and reseed if necessary. Fall is the best time to grow evergreens, spring flowering trees and deciduous shrubs. If you have grandma's favorite lilac, it is the time to transplant without giving it a shock.

Don't forget to add some bonemeal to the soil if you are planting shrubs or trees. Bonemeal helps develop stronger roots before the ground freezes.

can start them in a larger pot and bring them indoors when the weather gets cold. Also, if you had grown some hot peppers in the yard, choose a couple of your favorites and

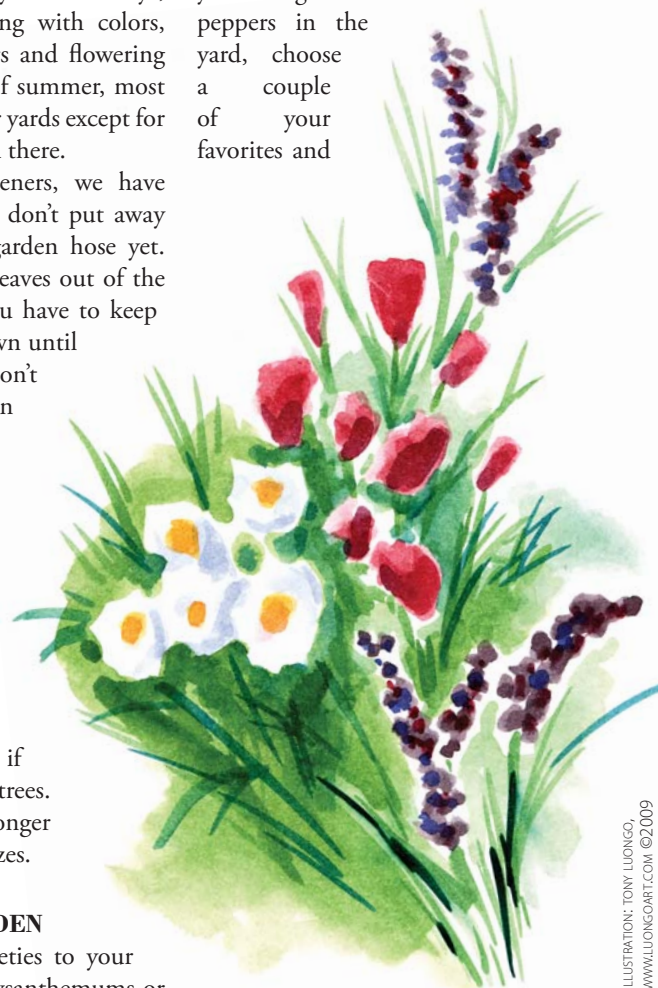


ILLUSTRATION: TONY LUONGO,
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IN THE FLOWER GARDEN

Why not add new varieties to your garden beds other than chrysanthemums or asters for fall color? There are lot of perennials that bloom in the autumn and which bring spectacular color to your yard. Aconitum, Boltonia, Cimicifuga and ever blooming Irises, are some.

Ornamental grasses and Colchium (Autumn Crocus) are also vibrant choices. Many people are not familiar with Colchium. It is a unique flower that blooms weeks after planting in the fall. This bulb is dormant while it is in bloom and there are many varieties on the market today to choose from.

Don't forget that some spring blooming bulbs still grow this time of the year. Allium, Bluebells, Camassia, Crocus, Daffodils, Hyacinths, Grape Hyacinths and Tulips are some varieties that can grow late into November until the ground freezes.

IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

If you have a vegetable garden, you still have time to start a patch of lettuce. Mesclun mix is the best choice which will germinate in 10-14 days and be ready to pick up in 28 days. Mesclun mix is made with 20 percent of lettuce, mustard, endive, radicchio and arugula seeds.

If you don't have a veggie garden, you

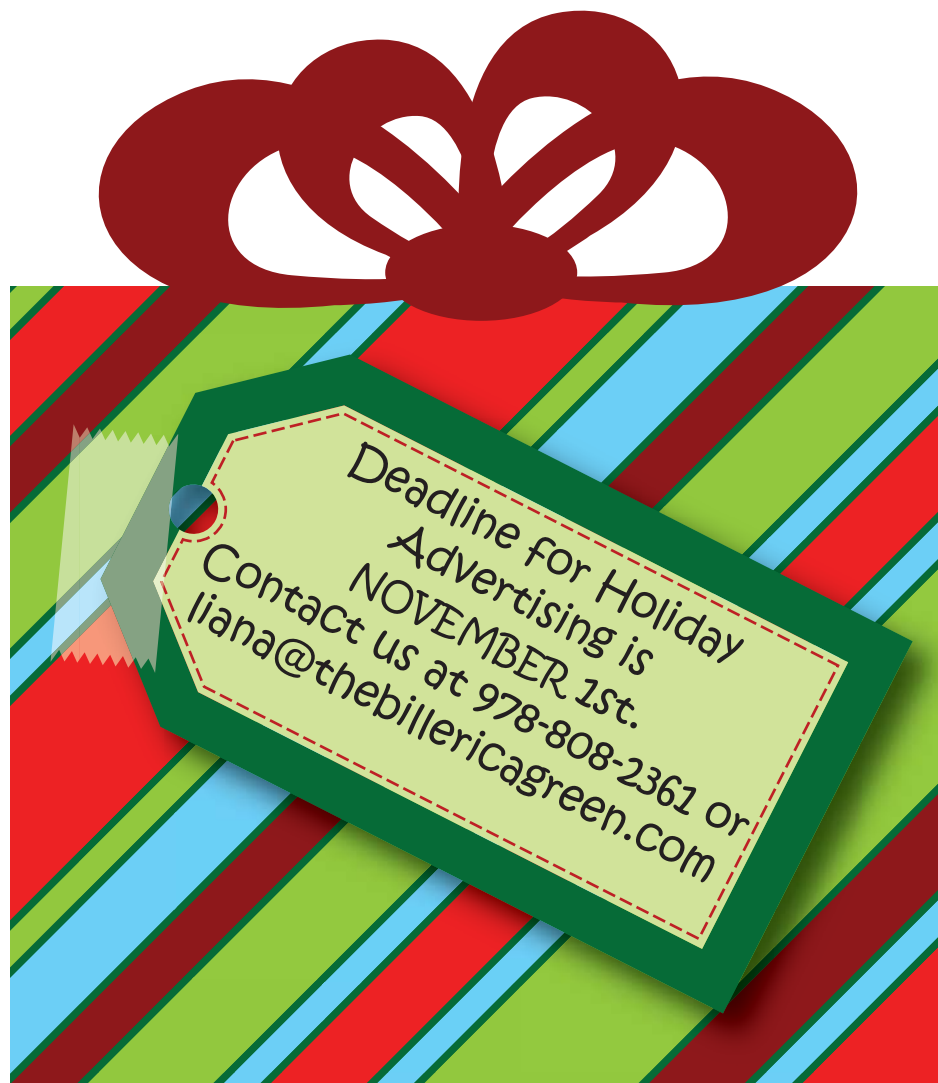
transplant them into plastic pots to bring indoors when a frost arrives. They will survive indoors for a couple of months and give you more peppers if you keep doing hand pollination.

If you love garlic, this is the time to plant them for next year harvest. Don't forget to mulch them over the winter. Garlic grown in the fall yields bigger bulbs.

PLANT A COVER CROP

Green Manure or cover crop is a crop that grown to improve the soil. It also protects the soil from winter erosion. Best cover crops for our New England weather are winter legumes such as White Clover or Winter Vetch. These will add nitrogen to the soil. Winter Rye is a grain that also can grow since it can stand extreme cold weather. After the fall harvest, clear the vegetable patch and turn the soil lightly with a tiller or a spade to scatter the seeds. It will grow until the weather gets too cold. Then you can till the cover crop for next spring before planting.

Remember, there are many things to do before the first frost arrives here in New England. So don't put away garden tools and lock the shed yet.



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Dave Says

•By Dave Ramsey



JOB HUNTING AND MORE

No experience, apply anyway?

Dear Dave,

Do you think it's a good idea to apply for a job if you have a degree in the proper field, but no real work experience in that area?

— Denise

Dear Denise,

Absolutely! Does this mean you'll get the job? No, but I can promise you one thing: The only sure-fire way to make sure you miss out on a job is by not applying for the position in the first place.

Line up all the interviews you can for jobs for which you have a reasonable chance of being hired. Then, go in there with your head held high, and impress them with how articulate you are and how you carry yourself. Use your style, intelligence, education, and confidence to sell yourself and your ability to jump in, learn quickly, and get the job done!

I've met lots of people who say they have 20 years of experience, but it's really more like one year of experience 20 times. That kind of "experience" is useless. I've also met lots of sharp people without experience, but you can tell they're the kind who will put their minds to work, think outside the box, and figure out a way to get things done. As an employer, if I've got a choice between the two, that's the one I want to bring onto my team!

— Dave

Short sale behind the scenes.

Dear Dave,

What goes on behind the scenes with a short sale? We're trying to buy a house that way, but it seems like it's taking forever.

— Jennifer

Dear Jennifer,

A short sale, of course, is when a mortgage lien holder sells a house short of what it takes to pay off the mortgage, but gives a full release and delivers a clear title to the purchaser anyway.

Let's say you want to buy a house with a \$250,000 mortgage for \$200,000. In that scenario the lien holder will be taking a \$50,000 hit, so it has to be convinced that this is as much as they'll be able to get for that particular house.

The lien holder will do what is called "due diligence." It will order inspections and appraisals, and maybe even collect comparables — statistics and documentation on how well homes in that area are selling, and at what price range. That kind of stuff takes time.

The main thing working against you right now, though, is that while the number of short sales has risen dramatically, the number of people handling these transactions has not. Many lien holders are simply overwhelmed and understaffed, and some of the folks they have handling these deals are not exactly experts when it comes to short sales. Hang in there, Jennifer. This could work out really well!

— Dave

What's included?

Dear Dave,

I've heard you say that your mortgage payment shouldn't be more than 25 percent of your take-home pay. Does this figure include taxes and insurance, or just principal and interest?

— Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

That figure includes taxes and insurance. Just remember, the whole idea is to make sure your house payment is manageable. You don't want to have so much money going toward your mortgage every month that you can't enjoy life or take care of your other financial responsibilities.

I figured out a long time ago that I've got more money when I don't have debt. It's a pretty simple formula, isn't it? If you want to build wealth, you have to get out of the payment business. I don't beat people up for getting a 15-year, fixed-rate mortgage, but you don't want all of your income going toward your house payment, either. If half of what you make every month goes straight to the bank, you'll have less money for other stuff. Plus, after a while that great house will stop looking so great. It'll be a chain around your neck instead of a place you love to call home.

Don't try to figure out how much debt you can get into. Instead, figure out how much debt you can get out of!

— Dave

*For more financial advice, plus special offers to our readers, please visit www.davesays.org.



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A HERO FOR BILLERICA'S SENIOR CITIZENS

Leader. Visionary. Dynamic. Compassionate. Confident. Bold. These are all the words used by those who work with and know Donna Popkin, the Council on Aging (COA) director. The Boys and Girls Club chose her as Woman of the Year for 2009 because of the incredible changes she has made at the senior center, and how she continues to grow its programs and activities, reaching out to a large part of the more than 6,600 seniors in Billerica.

It was the job of Julie Greene, Second Vice President on the Boards of Directors at the Boys and Girls Club, to inform Popkin of the good news. When she heard it, the shocked Popkin cried. "It was nice to be acknowledged," said Popkin.

Popkin has been and continues to be a strong force behind the growth of this center.

THE ANGEL WHO TURNED IT ALL AROUND

Donna Popkin grew up in the Italian Section of Newton called "The Lake" area and went to school in Waltham. Prior to coming to Billerica, Popkin had worked for Elder Services of the North Shore for 13 years. She had been looking for a director's position in a senior center when she was hired by Town Manager Rocco Longo in 2005.

Popkin was handed a senior center that was not very active. Housed previously at 248 Boston Rd, the current site of the Recreation Department, attendance was limited and there were few programs available. Plus the location was out of the way.

When Popkin came on, the COA was moved to its current location at 25 Concord Road, the previous site of the library. This building afforded a better location for seniors and had more space inside. Popkin's directive was clear: Fill it. Popkin said, "A senior center has to be welcoming or people won't come."

THROUGH THE EYES OF THOSE WHO KNOW HER

Many seniors come through the doors of the COA every day and Popkin touches many lives. For her outreach worker Marilyn Keating, Popkin finds amazing ways of making things happen. Because of Popkin's confidence, Keating is at ease when she is around her. People feel a part of the center and enjoy coming. Anytime Keating needs anything, Popkin's door is open. "She wants to make it easier for her staff. She stands up for you," said Keating.

Dan Hurley is the Chairman of the COA Board. He noted how well Popkin implemented so many programs and how she utilizes her budget to get things done. Popkin has been behind so much both in and out of the center. She brought in the wheelchair dancers from the TILL program in town. She threw her support behind the Senior of the Year Awards and made it a nice event. She works with companies to get donations for computers or furniture. She will get new ideas from other senior centers and try them. "She was the spark we needed. She has been very instrumental in making life better for seniors," said Hurley.

Nick Rosa, Chairman of the Friends of the COA, appreciates Popkin's involvement in all the fundraising efforts the Friends have made. She is about being hands on, not just seeking a hand out. Rosa sees Popkin instilling in the center a sense of community gathering as she continues accomplishing her directives. Rosa said, "She is dedicated to her vision. She has a sincere interest in seniors in this town."

Fred Kenyon, vice chairman of the board of directors, and his wife Janet have known Popkin since she began. He noted her community involvement and how cooperative she has worked with departments and organizations such as the police and fire department and the Sons of Italy. She works tirelessly to get the word out to seniors and their families through the mailing of the COA newsletter, the Outlook. She manages to keep the center looking pristine and welcoming. She smoothed out the relationship between the board and the Friends, getting them to work together and cooperate. Even though Popkin was not sure how the talent show would go, she was not afraid to try something new. Fred said, "It is a pleasure to work with her. She has gained the respect of people in this town."

Joanne Sheehan, the COA Director in Westford, is a friend and confidante of Popkin's. They will bounce ideas off each other on a regular basis. Sheehan feels Popkin has done a superlative job, going above and beyond the call of duty. As an advocate, Popkin is fantastic and as a peer she is wonderful. "I extend my congratulations to Donna. She is generous and cares for her seniors."

ROLLING UP HER SLEEVES AND GETTING TO WORK

To date, Popkin has five women on her staff that form her innovative team. Marilyn Keating, Linda Kiernan, Carol Wood, Lauren

Woman of the Year Donna Popkin

By Liana Measmer



Grey, and Mary Coakley hold various positions and share Popkin's vision for inclusiveness and vibrancy.

"I couldn't do it without their support. They are a strong staff," said Popkin.

Popkin's goals are to provide services and activities that draw in the senior population. Her three-part plan includes fun activities, needed services, and compassionate outreach.

Some of the more popular activities are foreign languages, line dancing, and pool tournaments. Popkin and her staff will access what's available in the community to meet these objectives. She currently has a college student teaching Italian. The line dancers pack the multi-purpose room every week. The pool table was originally put in to give the husbands something to do while they waited for their wives, but the women have taken it over.

Popkin and her staff are very concerned with their seniors' health and well-being. Since her tenure, discussion ensued about where to put a fitness room. Popkin gave up her large office because the gym equipment fit nicely there. There is a private room where a doctor and nurse meet with seniors to discuss health matters or take blood pressures. Hearing tests are offered and diet buddy clubs are formed. Meals on Wheels is regular and consistent. The Cardio Boost class is a big draw and Popkin broke new ground when she brought in Reiki, Tai Chi, and Yoga.

Part of ensuring health is addressing the social issues seniors face every day. The Registry of Motor Vehicles to brings in driver's safety programming. The Lowell Regional Transit Authority [LRTA] has rides available for seniors who don't drive. Since the LRTA was limited in the types of rides they give, Popkin worked diligently with the town to acquire a van to offer seniors more rides for their errands.

The senior center also houses a small staff of outreach workers that make home visits to seniors who can't get out. The outreach workers will refer seniors with serious health issues to the proper services, are supportive through family problems, will address elder abuse, and work with respite care companions for family members. Currently the respite companion care program has a dozen companions which allow for the senior to remain at home and not be moved to a nursing home or rehabilitation center. The COA partners with the Veteran's Administration, which has set up a medical foster home program that houses veterans with medical needs. All of these programs prove that Popkin and her staff have their finger on the pulse of what social issues face seniors and their families every day.

BRINGING YOUTH AND SENIORS TOGETHER

Popkin will utilize what she can to help her seniors. This includes Billerica's young people. Through the Boy and Girl Scouts, many new projects and improvements can be seen all over the COA. Popkin said, "It's good for kids to see seniors in another light."



DONNA POPKIN



DONNA POPKIN AND PAULA BALDWIN HOLDING UP THE NEWEST CREATION FROM THE QUILTING CLUB.



DONNA POPKIN AND HER SECRETARY, CAROL WOOD DISCUSS THE MATTERS OF THE DAY.

It was the Boy Scouts that created the library and computer space upstairs. Originally just an open area, Popkin worked with the Scouts to get donated computers, have the counter top desks built, and have the walls put up. Now, seniors enjoy classes and technology that otherwise was unavailable to them. On the other side of the wall is the lending library which is a popular quiet space where seniors sit and read.

The newest upcoming project from a Boy Scout will be to illuminate the outside flag pole. Popkin attributes this project to the informative requests that came her way from seniors who understood the importance of honoring the sign of our nation's freedom.

Through Bronze Award projects, Girl Scout troops have been instrumental in beautification of the grounds. Raking and adopting the island outside the front door for planting flowers has made a big difference. The girls have learned how much work it is to plant flowers but have been heard to say they enjoyed doing it so the seniors would have something nice to look at.

The youth of Billerica have also taught the seniors about technology. The Wii system hit the nation by storm and the COA was part of the craze. Used in rehabilitation centers as a means for physical therapy, the Wii system gets players out of their seats and into the game. Youth have taught the seniors how to use it and have been part of the popular COA Wii bowling tournaments.

Through the Intergenerational Program, Popkin and her staff have worked with the Billerica Recreation Department to bring summer camp counselors in training together with seniors in an interview forum. This allows the youth to find out all about generations past by asking questions of the senior they are paired with. Seniors learn a lot from their younger counterparts as well.

There are some troubled youth required to do some community service who Popkin sees as well. She gets them involved with tasks around the center and has found them to be respectful toward the seniors. It's a win-win for everyone. The young person learns a valuable lesson from community service and the senior center benefits from the help.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

Popkin has a wish list that she hangs on to for the senior center. Each year, she does what she can to implement a little piece of it. Someday, she hopes to have enough funds to pay staff to be open on the weekends. This has been a request of many seniors as well.

The space outside, although nice, is getting cramped. Parking comes at a premium as more and more seniors flock to the center to enjoy its benefits. Popkin is looking at having new lines drawn that would allow for more cars to fit in the lot.

Her staff works hard and sometimes can't do it all. Popkin hopes to someday have the ability to hire additional staff, even if on a part-time basis, to ease the load and add more programs.

Popkin is far from done. Her vision has drawn people to the center and her energy has brought others forward to help. She will not let any barriers stop her from succeeding in meeting the needs of this most respected and treasured population of Billerica.

Donna Popkin will be honored at the Annual Man and Woman of the Year Dinner being held on Friday, Oct. 16, at 6 pm at The Elks Lodge on 14 Webb Brook Rd. The event, hosted by The Boys and Girls Club of Billerica, is open to anyone and tickets go on sale in the third week of September. Tickets are \$25 per person and can be purchased at the Boys and Girls Club on Campbell Road through Dave Bruce. Please register at www.billericabgc.com or call 978-667-2193, ext. 102 to order yours today.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS

When Julie Greene, Second Vice President on the Board of Directors of The Boys and Girls Club, walked up to Officer Dale Sarno of the Billerica Police to let him know that he had been chosen as the Boys and Girls Club Man of the Year, he had to sit down. Greene said, "He was humbled by it."

That was a pretty typical response by the gracious Sarno. He's not one for recognition. In fact, he thrives in shining the spotlight on others and their achievements.

Well known around town, simply as Dale, this police officer has made it his mission to be all about the kids. With an entire army of volunteers who support him 100 percent, Sarno heads up the Police Athletic League, or PAL.

HIS FRIENDS REMINISCE

Ask anyone who knows Sarno, and they will most likely describe him as one thing – a friend.

When looking up the term, it is defined by such words as supporter, confidante, advocate, backer, and ally. One who sympathizes and is compassionate. All of these words can be used to describe Sarno.

For John Yailaian, PAL was something happening at the Ditson School that his son could participate in. Sarno was running flag football and he asked Yailaian to help. Seven years later, Yailaian is still actively involved in PAL. He attributes this to Sarno.

"He's been mellow and easygoing. We became friends," said Yailaian. To date, Yailaian coaches street hockey, baseball, and flag football. Sarno has no problem handing over the reins and letting his volunteers run the show.

His boss, Police Chief Dan Rosa, went to the Police Academy with him and noted it was Sarno who built the street hockey rink at Marshall Middle School. It was an old set of tennis courts. Now, it's a vibrant and lively space that children enjoy. Sarno has also been instrumental in aiding the Billerica BMX program

and – when he started the flag football program – managed to get sponsorship from the National Football League and National Hockey League. Rosa said Sarno is good at forming a bond that takes down any wall between youth and police.

"Dale is a do-er and full of ideas. He's a good friend and officer," said Rosa.

Russ Boutwell, PAL volunteer of the year in 2008, talked about Sarno's compassion and beliefs. He has worked alongside Sarno for 10 years and knows he would help any child with a problem. Boutwell pointed out that Sarno won't turn away a child who can't pay and keeps the cost for activities very low. In order to continue to fund the program, Sarno applies for grants. Plus, Sarno likes to try new things and began a PAL baseball league last year. Sarno is even trying his hand at coaching the Cal Ripken Teams for the first time.

"I don't think there would be a PAL without Officer Sarno," said Boutwell.

Webmaster Peter Stack loved the value of these sports and how positive the attitudes were of all the coaches. He's been involved for four years and recently created the PAL website. He buys into Sarno's belief that kids need to have fun and everyone needs positive reinforcement. Stack sees this as a way to strengthen the police/child relationship.

"Don't be afraid of the police," said Stack.

When it comes to volunteers, Sarno always recognizes and appreciates what they do for and with him. For Paul Lascola, he wanted to coach football while his son played. Sarno gave him that chance, and Lascola has remained involved in for the last eight years. Sarno always puts others ahead of himself. Lascola said, "Dale is caring and concerned. He deserves it."

THE MAN BEHIND THE BASEBALL CAP

You pretty much know where Sarno is on any baseball field or basketball court. Just look for the mustache, the big smile and the green and white baseball cap.

Raised in Billerica, this local boy began playing PAL basketball when he was 12 years old. As a sixth-grader, Sarno was under the guidance of Bob Horners, Bill McNulty, and George Gracie. Sarno said, "They were the ones who started it."

After graduating from Billerica Memorial High School in the early 70s, Sarno took college courses at Bridgeton Academy, Dean Junior College, and the University of New Haven, Conn. He played lacrosse and football in college and never forgot

Man of the Year Dale Sarno

By Liana Measmer





some of the lessons he learned from some of his college coaches. They would work with the young men, talking or reasoning with them, but never yelling at or belittling them. Sarno believed this was the way to coach sports. This was why he brought back the PAL program in 1989 with colleague Officer John Mullen. PAL had slowly faded away but Sarno, knowing its benefits, believed and still believes it was worthwhile to bring families and the police together.

Sarno went on to graduate from The University of Massachusetts with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. From there, he worked as a prison guard at the Billerica House of Corrections for four years. He later went on to earn his Masters of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Anna Maria College in Paxon, Mass. After working for two years temporarily on the force, he completed his coursework at the Police Academy. He was officially hired by Billerica and this year will celebrate 23 years as a police officer.

Sarno's philosophy when it comes to PAL is give kids a place to go to have fun where everyone cheers them on. He can't tolerate to see a child not having a good time. If he sees a child upset, he will immediately stop what he is doing to go and talk to the child in order to get them back into the game. No child will ever be turned away for inability to pay or because there aren't enough teams. Sarno has added extra teams beforehand in order to allow for everyone to play.

"Kids need an outlet. We build a good relationship," said Sarno.

WHAT IS PAL?

According to the PAL website, the mission of the PAL is to bring police officers and children together to

work toward a better future. Police Athletic Leagues are national programs that exist to pro-actively prevent juvenile crimes by providing civic, athletic, recreational and educational opportunities.

By bringing police and kids together, it builds trust and understanding, especially if a child develops that connection at a young age. The hope is that by bringing youth under the caring influence of their local law enforcement agency, they will develop a strong positive attitude toward police officers.

Studies have shown that if a young person respects his local police officer on the ball field, gym or classroom, then he will be more likely to come to respect the laws that are enforced.

PAL IN BILLERICA

In Billerica, PAL hosts and organizes a number of sports and activities. Not meant to rival any of the other sports in town, the purpose is to reach the target group of 9 to 12-year-old boys and girls who otherwise would not participate in sports and activities, and get them together for some non-competitive fun.

These may be the children who sit home and are not active. Or they may be the ones who may not try other sports due to fear of competition. Billerica PAL boasts a relaxed environment where pick-up teams are formed at the time of the game. It gives kids another way to meet other children who may be from another school or neighborhood. Many friendships forged on the fields and courts of PAL last a long time.

The list of sports includes baseball, basketball, flag football, street hockey, quick pitch stickball, and open gym nights in the winter. Floor hockey happens in the winter as well but is coordinated through the Billerica Recreation Department. Much of what PAL does is in partnership with many other organizations in town, like The Recreation Department, The Boys and Girls Club and Billerica BMX.

I WANT TO THANK THE ACADEMY

Sarno described his crew of volunteers as one big family. He knows that everyone cares for everyone else and feels confident that he can go to anyone because they are there for him. Sarno pointed out that his volunteers work full time jobs yet still give up weekends to prepare the fields or coach football.

"It makes my job easier with them there. If it wasn't for those who work with me, I wouldn't be here," said Sarno.

For Sarno, there are no stars or VIPs in PAL. Everyone comes together for one common cause and works hard together. This shows in the big smiles on the faces of the many kids who are running the bases or shooting the baskets. Because as far as Sarno is concerned, the old adage remains true. There is no "I" in team.

Dale Sarno will be honored at the Annual Man and Woman of the Year Dinner being held on Friday, Oct. 16, at 6 pm at The Elks Lodge on 14 Webb Brook Rd. The event, hosted by The Boys and Girls Club of Billerica, is open to anyone and tickets go on sale in the third week of September. Tickets are \$25 per person and can be purchased at the Boys and Girls Club on Campbell Road through Dave Bruce. Please register at www.billericabgc.com or call 978-667-2193, ext. 102 to order yours today.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September

Sept. 18: 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Family Swim Night
The Boys and Girls Club, 19 Campbell Road
Members Free, Non-Members \$5.00
www.billericaboysandgirlsclub.com

Sept. 19: 6:00 pm

Movie Night
St. Theresa's Parish Center, 466 Boston Road
Refreshments, Showing The Sound of Music, Open
to the public-free event.
www.sttheresaparishbillerica.com

Sept. 19: 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Silver Cloud Store Grand Re-opening Celebration
Treble Cove Plaza, 199
Boston Road

Sept. 20: 1 – 4 pm

Preliminary open house
10-1 BMX Pablo Madera
and PAL
Beginner/Intermediate Clinic
BMX track, 500 Treble
Cove Road, Behind Vietnam
Vet Park Soccer Fields

Sept. 24: 7:00 pm – 8:45 pm

Vladislav Murnikov - Race to Freedom
Billerica Public Library
www.billericalibrary.org

Sept. 24: 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Literacy Night
Kennedy Elementary School, 20 Kimbrough Road
For more info www.kennedy.billerica.k12.ma.us

Sept. 27

Walk-a-thon
Dutile Elementary School, 10 Biagiotti Way,
For more info www.billerica.mec.edu/dutile

Sept. 27: 8:30 – 10:00 AM Registration/sign in
BILLERICA POLICE LT. WILLIAM C. WEST JR. ALS
MEMORIAL ROAD RACE

5K Road Race, 1K Kids Fun Run
Billerica Irish American Club - 616 Middlesex TPK
Kids Mini Fun Run \$5.00 pp. Start Time* 10:00 am
5K Road Race \$20.00 pp. Start Time* 11:00 am
(Only \$15 for pre-registration!)
For more information call Officer Dale Sarno or
William West at 978-667-1212.
www.billericapal.org

Sept. 27

3rd Annual Ditson
Open Golf Tournament
Billerica Country Club/
Billerica Elks

Tee time will be in the morning TBA based on
number of teams and holes being played. Food and
Outdoor Activities will immediately follow Golf Open.
www.ditson2.billerica.k12.ma.us

Sept. 30: 10:00 am

The Council on Aging
Transportation Day: LRTA Charlie Cards, RMV Safe
Driving Workshop and Dr. Duggan with Transporta-
tion Policies. The Council On Aging, 25 Concord Rd
Check website for updated times
www.billericacoa.org OR www.town.billerica.ma.us

October

Oct. 1-4: Thurs, Fri, Sat: 8:00 pm, Sun: 4:00 pm

Theater, music and dance festival
380 Cambridge St, Burlington
www.NEFringeFestival.com

Oct. 1

Back to School Night
Locke Middle School, 110 Allen Rd., For more info
www.locke.billerica.k12.ma.us

Oct. 3: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Bottle and Can Drive
Billerica Public Library, 15 Concord Road
www.billericalibrary.org

Oct. 3: 7:00 pm

COMEDY NIGHT Fundraiser for the Friends of
Billerica Recreation

*Is there an
upcoming event you
want to announce? Fall
or Halloween activities?
Go to thebillericagreen.com
and fill out our calendar
form. It will be online and
maybe in print next
month.*

Billerica Lodge of Elks Hall, 14 Webb Brook Rd
Donations accepted

Oct. 4: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

The Billerica Historical Society
The Clara Sexton Home, 36 Concord Rd
www.billericahistorical.com



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YOUR REQUEST TO WAYNE SMITH E-MAIL HIM AT WAYNE_
SMITH15@COMCAST.NET OR CALL 978-667-0615.

Oct. 9: 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Elementary School Dances
Billerica Boys and Girls Club, 19 Campbell Road
Featuring DJ Todd Dellaporta
www.billericaboysandgirlsclub.com

Oct. 9: 7 pm – 12 am

80's Themed Fundraiser
Vining Elementary School, 121 Lexington Rd
For more info www.vining.billerica.k12.ma.us

Oct. 15

Billerica Art Council
Arts and Cultural Events Grant Deadline
For more information, call Sharon Lapham
978-667-1330
www.massculturalcouncil.org

Oct. 15: Deadline

OPEN Registration Billerica Little League Early
Registration. Online registration available at:
www.billericalittleleague.org. Or mail registration and
check to: Billerica Little League Attn: Keith Farrow
P.O. Box 267, Billerica, MA 01821
978-670-1549

Oct. 16: 5:45 – 7:00 pm or 7:15 – 8:30 pm

Halloween Family Night Billerica Public Library
Advanced ticket sales
\$12.00/family or \$4.00/person
Check website for current ticket sales and times.
www.billericalibrary.org

Oct. 16: 6:00 pm

2009 Boys and Girls Club
Man and Woman of the Year Annual Dinner
The Elks Lodge, 14 Webb Brook Road,
Tickets/\$25 per person Call 978-667-2193, ext.
102 or Register at www.billericabgc.com

Oct. 17: 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Pumpkin Festival
Vining Elementary School, 121 Lexington Rd.
For more info www.vining.billerica.k12.ma.us

Oct. 17: 10:00am-3:00pm

Billerica Boys and Girls Club
17th Annual Sea Wolves Swim Team Halloween
Festival fundraiser Salt Box Nursery Billerica, MA

Oct. 23: 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Halloween Happenings
Dutle Elementary School, 10 Biagiotti Way
For more info www.billerica.mec.edu/dutle

Oct. 30: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Elementary School Dances
Billerica Boys and Girls Club, 19 Campbell Road
Featuring DJ Todd Dellaporta
www.billericaboysandgirlsclub.com

PRICING YOUR HOME TO SELL

Correctly pricing your home for sale, right from the beginning, may be the single most important decision a seller has to make. Typically, urgency is greatest during the first few weeks a home is on the market so priced right the chances of getting the highest price for the home is key.

The following steps can help you determine how to set the selling price of your home and a REALTOR® has the tools available to help you achieve them:

1. Get a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) to help you accurately determine the selling price of similar homes. A CMA provides information about recent selling prices of similar properties in your market. They also include information about area homes that failed to sell in recent months along with their corresponding list prices
2. Analyze sales data and market research.
3. Make an impartial assessment of how homes for sale in your neighborhood compare to yours in terms of size, location, amenities and condition.
4. Hire a trained appraiser.

Appraisals generally are used by lenders to ensure they do not underwrite a property for more than it is worth. Appraisals also are used when a property's value is difficult to assess due to a lack of recent real estate activity in a specific market, for example. Always keep in mind that an appraisal is just the opinion of one trained professional based on past sales data, location, lot size and the condition of the property.

Source: Massachusetts Association of Realtors

TIGHT BUDGETS STILL MEAN HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES

By Liana Measmer

In these economic times, if families have been impacted by loss of jobs or pay cuts, providing kids' lunches each day can be challenging. Billerica Public Schools Food Services Department understand this and ensure healthy meals are offered in each school, regardless of ability to pay.

Elementary School lunch is \$2.25, Middle School lunch is \$2.50, High School lunch costs \$2.50-\$3.00. Reduced lunches are .40 cents.

"Children need healthy meals to learn," said Food Services Director, April Laskey. Laskey pointed out that milk, fruit and veggies are offered each day. Families who need to apply can feel comfortable about it. No matter how many different schools the children in a family attend, Laskey said only one application per family is required.

New this year, the reduced lunch applications can be completed online. To apply, go to www.lunchapp.com and follow the instructions. Applying online reduces approval processing time. Families applying online are entered in a drawing held on Oct. 2, where first prize is an I-Pod. Second prize is a back to school gift pack and third prize is a \$20 gift card. BPS works with Meal Magic and Lunchapp.com to ensure information remains confidential.

If you have any questions, contact Laskey directly at 978-528-8782.



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Featured Homes



Billerica: 9 Nile Street List Price: \$369,900
Outstanding vinyl 3+bedroom split. This home boasts replacement windows, central air, kitchen replaced in June 2009 featuring hardwood floors, wainscoting. French door leading to huge 3 season room overlooking landscaped fenced yard. New bath w/ granite counter, satin nickel fixtures and tile flooring. Hall, LR, DR & Kitchen have new woodwork and crown molding. New oak entry staircase & rail. Desirable area.



Billerica: 10 Doris Street List Price: \$399,900
Single Family Split Entry, Gambrel /Dutch. New Construction on a dead end street. Commuters Heaven—walk to the Train Station in minutes, Route 3, 495, and 93. Quality construction! 2 X 10 floor joists, 2 X 6 exterior walls, ¾ inch tongue and groove floor sheathing.



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Real Estate Today with Carol Woods!

With interesting guests and a mailbag full of questions the viewing audience mails or emails in, this interactive show will tell you everything you need to know about real estate in Billerica.

But...be on the lookout! You may even see Carol Woods, out on location with microphone in hand, in such places as O'Connor's Plaza finding out what matters most to you when it comes to buying and selling your home. Coming in September. Be sure to check your BATV schedules! You won't want to miss it!

Real Estate Licensing Courses

Thinking of a NEW Career?

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***Moving* in The Right Direction**

Employment resources to get you back on track

By Liana Measmer

In June 2009, Billerica's unemployment rate was 8.5 percent and over 2,000 residents were unemployed according to the Massachusetts Labor Force and Unemployment Data. This was up from 7.8 percent in May.

In this difficult economy, if you are working, you are lucky. You are even luckier if you consider yourself to be thriving. But if you aren't, you are not alone.

Unemployment has been on the rise for some time. In June 2009, Billerica's unemployment rate was 8.5 percent and over 2,000 residents were unemployed according to the Massachusetts Labor Force and Unemployment Data. This was up from 7.8 percent in May.

The good news is there are jobs in town and available resources, both in Billerica and beyond, which could get you back on track to working. If you own a business, there is a large labor force out there to choose from, and help to select the best workers for your needs.

THE LATEST FIGURES

It looks grim but its getting better. Massachusetts is at 8.6 percent. In comparison to the rest of the nation, the Bay State is somewhere in the middle. The state with the highest unemployment rate, according to U.S. Department of Labor statistics, is Michigan, with a staggering 15.2 percent. States like North and South Dakota have 5 percent and less unemployment rates as of July.

Nationally, almost all the industries have taken the hit. The biggest declines in jobs are in the fields of manufacturing, construction, and transportation. Employment in construction has declined by 76,000 jobs while manufacturing employment fell by 52,000 in July.

The good news is that health, education, hospitality, leisure, government, and other service fields have gained positions. Nationally, in education and health services, health care employment increased by 20,000 jobs in July. In Massachusetts, there was an overall net job gain of 3,300 jobs despite the unemployment rate increase.

So, what can you do if you are unemployed? Read on.

THE CAREER CENTER CAN HELP

In these economic times, finding a job can be challenging. For the unemployed, underemployed, or those looking to make a career change, look no further than The Career Center of Lowell. Located at 107 Merrimack St. in downtown Lowell, this is the regional office that handles Billerica customers.

The Career Center of Lowell is part of the Massachusetts One-Stop Career Center system.

The Career Center operates under the direction of the City of Lowell. There are 37 centers in Massachusetts.

The mission of the Career Center is to work closely with the business community to identify and meet its employment needs and to provide job seekers with a wide range of training services. The services of the Career Center of Lowell are available to both business and job seekers. For job seekers who become members, services are free. The centers are funded by state and federal grants and are open to the public.

If unemployment insurance benefits are needed, the Career Center has specialists who can help. Unemployment Insurance (UI) Representatives assist customers with any matters pertaining to their unemployment insurance claim, however customers should make every effort to file claims through the Commonwealth's Unemployment.

The center has a wide array of services for the job seeker, from a hot jobs list to computer systems available for job searches to daily workshops. Some of the more popular workshops include resume writing, networking etiquette, and self-marketing.

The goal of the workshops is to teach job seekers transferable skills they can use in more than one position. Some may be computer skills.

For the younger customers, who are learning job skills for the first time, they are taught about appropriate customer service, punctuality, and how to help colleagues.

If a one-on-one connection is preferred, a job specialist is be available. The one-on-one service allows for job seekers to receive direct assistance. Many job specialists have connections with the human resource departments of numerous companies and their employment needs in the Greater Lowell region.

The Career Center of Lowell is chartered by the Greater Lowell Workforce Investment Board (GLWIB), which is a private non-profit organization. The GLWIB Web site states it consists of private business representatives, educational leaders, community based organizations, local and state agencies, economic and other workforce development groups. Its mission is driven by securing and allocating public and private funds for high-quality, innovative, and collaborative workforce development programs. The GLWIB promotes an educated workforce which strives to meet the workforce needs of employers.

Barbara O'Neil is the Director of the GLWIB. She said, "We train people so employers will have highly skilled workers." The GLWIB manages the Workforce Investment Act grants and stimulus funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

SWITCHING GEARS

There is money set aside through the GLWIB and the Career Center for training individuals who may want to change careers. Through the Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), individuals who may be eligible to receive funding for education or training can complete a thorough process that will help them determine if this is the right path for them. All ITAs are approved on a case-by-case basis with eligibility requirements.

In beginning their research, they will meet with a Career Advisor. Some will be tested and some will be eligible for grants. Then the job seeker will find training providers that offer coursework in the desired field. The GLWIB holds contracts with numerous schools, colleges, and training centers to assist the job seeker.

Perhaps the job seeker has specific skills and wants to venture into becoming an entrepreneur. There is a workshop at the Career Center on starting one's own business. Taught by Russ Smith, the Executive Director of the Lowell Small Business Assistance Center, he explains everything one needs to know before launching a small business. A Right Start course is encouraged and learning to write a business plan is expected.

O'Neil said, "Entrepreneurship is a great thing. It is just not something we take lightly." O'Neil noted that 85 percent of businesses have less than 20 people in them.

Business hours for the Career Center are Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Thursday 8:30 to 7:00 pm and 9:30 am to 5:00 pm on Friday. For more information on the Career Center of Lowell, please visit the website, www.careercenteroflowell.org/ or call (978) 458-2503.

"Entrepreneurship is a great thing. It is just not something we take lightly."

TAKING CLASSES IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Maybe you prefer to take some classes from home. This could be due to financial, time, or family constraints. Billerica offers those too.

The Billerica Recreation Department has partnered with ed2go.com to offer hundreds of online, instructor-facilitated training courses that make it easy for people to access at their own time and complete at their own pace. Over 1,800 colleges and universities offer the exact same ed2go.com coursework but through Billerica, it will be at a fraction of the cost to you. Billerica Recreation Department began this program in 2002 with seven town residents taking classes. In 2008, 68 town residents completed a variety of courses. To date, there are 51 people currently enrolled.

Popular courses in town are Microsoft Office, Algebra, Writing for Children, Oracle, Dream Weaver, C++, Medical Terminology, Java, and Quick Books. A majority of the classes are \$79 with certificate programs running at \$99. For health care continuing education credits, the costs range from \$149 to \$199.

"You can update your professional skills if you are returning to work. This is great for moms," said Donna Hansen, Program Coordinator.

Recently, ed2go.com partnered with Madonna University to award Graduate Credit to teachers seeking renewal of certificates. Teachers need only enroll for an approved Teacher Professional Development online course and they will earn their graduate credit after passing in an essay at course end.

Some folks may not consider the online courses as genuine classes but the workload expected of them will challenge them.

"They have to complete assignments and turn them in. They will get feedback from teachers," said Hansen.

Classes start the middle of every month and run for six weeks. They are constantly available and students can sign up anytime.

To learn more about Ed2Go courses, call the Billerica Recreation Department at 978-671-0921 or visit them online at www.town.billerica.ma.us at the Recreation Department where a PDF formatted list of classes offered is available on the department's "Docs & Forms" web page. Information and registration can also be found at www.ed2go.com/billerica.

"It can help. It's a great resource," said Hansen.

JOBS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

So where are the jobs? There are many available right under your nose. Weekly hot jobs are listed by region at the Career Center. In early August, the hot

The mission of the Career Center is to work closely with the business community to identify and meet its employment needs and to provide job seekers with a wide range of training services.

jobs list had 100 job openings in Billerica. The range was vast with many of them listed as new positions. There were business analysts and administrative specialists. There were mechanical assemblers and Java developers. There were accounts payable clerks and HVAC supervisors. Even hair stylists and wireless account representatives are needed.

Perhaps managerial is what you seek? That too was on the list. Right along side software engineers, warehouse associates, financial analysts, and staff accountants.

For companies seeking qualified contractors, Billerica is home to a number of temporary staffing firms. Additional Contract Services on Treble Cove Road specializes in matching mechanical, software, and electrical engineers with client companies seeking consultants and contractors. Steve Tintle, President, and his team recruit, screen, and present the most qualified candidates to client companies in a timely and cost effective manner.

On Boston Road, tucked behind Sal's pizza, you'll find Triton Staffing Group. For four years, Henry Bonasera, President, and his staff have been specializing in placing skilled individuals in the disciplines of engineering, manufacturing, clerical support and executive administration. They have sent personnel to companies to assist with special projects, catch up on backlogs, or replace permanent staff on vacation or maternity leave.

"We are approved for government contracts through the CCR website," said Bonasera.

The Triton Staffing Group are on call seven days a week and twenty four hours per day. This is to ensure maximum customer service.

"I give out my home, cell and work numbers. Can't ask for anything better than that," said Bonasera.

OTHER INCOME EARNING OPTIONS

What if the 9-5 schedule is not for you and you want some flexibility? Maybe you're a mom who needs to work evenings. Or you have a day job but are looking to "try on" a new career while keeping your current position. Or you're a college student dreaming someday of owning and running your own business.

Independent Financial Service companies might be the answer for you. For Al Bianchini, sixteen years in Primerica, this has been the perfect solution for him and his family. Previously a successful mason contractor, Al saw working for a National Marketing Firm as an opportunity to try something new. Al now specializes in building local business and is looking to expand his office. He is seeking local people willing to work hard, be open to a new opportunity and a flexible schedule. Al now enjoys being his own boss and having that time to spend with his family that he didn't have in the past. Bianchini said, "The income potential is unlimited. Anybody who wants to win, give Primerica a try."

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Even though you may be unemployed or changing careers, still keeping a solid grip on your financial situation is critical. Bianchini can assist in this regard. By guiding you in proper money management, helping to develop taxation strategies, and managing credit, you can have a sense of control in a situation that may be outside yours. Bianchini advises, "Live within your means. As a society, we've lost this concept."

At Integrated Financial Partners, part of Lincoln Financial Group, Ron and Sandi Bazza can assist with 401(K) rollovers into an IRA. If your company goes out of business, accessing your 401(K) could be difficult. Plus an IRA offers more investment choices. Ron says, "My clients are serious about managing their money responsibly in order to achieve their financial goals."

Designing financial blueprints is the guiding principle at Frank M. Hynes and Associates, a Metlife office. The use a four step process to address seven financial areas since financial independence happens through careful preparation and developing a sound strategy. Hynes stated, "Our approach is about developing a trusted long term relationship that will allow our clients the opportunity to achieve financial independence."

Workshops. Career counseling. Financial assistance. Additional training online. Varied income earning options. Financial advice and planning. There are many avenues and means to keep you moving in the right direction. Whether unemployed, underemployed or changing careers, don't stand too long at the crossroads. Pick your path and take the journey. You are an integral part of boosting this economy by getting back to work or by finding the right job or career for you.

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MANAGING ANXIETY

We need to say goodbye to late nights, family barbeque's on the weekend, and lazy days. As we look ahead to cooler nights, changing leaves, and school beginning, it seems like a good time to think about how to manage all of the changes that will be occurring in our homes.

Beginnings can be difficult. Often a new start will mean taking on something that you have never done before. This can be a scary prospect for anyone. And with the fear, anxiety sometimes tags along for the ride. So how do you know when the fear and anxiety is too much? What do you do to help manage the feelings? Let's start our discussion with some of the basics.

Everyone experiences fear and anxiety at different points during their lifetime. This is to be expected and is completely normal. Often, anxiety and fear may increase when faced with a new task, environment, or experience. This type of anxiety, called the optimal arousal level, is actually helpful and quite useful. The increased anxiety helps you to be more observant of the experience and sharpens your reactions, which can make it easier to master the new experience because you are more tuned in to what is going on and what is expected of you. These are all positive

aspects to having the jitters before school starts or beginning a new job.

In contrast, too much anxiety and fear can be debilitating. When anxiety levels rise beyond a productive level, there is a high likelihood that you will be unable to be effective. This may result in what seems to others as an inability to be successful in the new situation. Now, here's where things

Ask Dr. Gina

•By Dr. Gina Aguayo, Ph D.



get a little murky. How do you determine if your anxiety is too much or optimal?

The best way to answer this is to be honest with yourself about what you are experiencing. Are you feeling like you have butterflies in your stomach or "ants in your pants" for a few days or a week before the event? Have you found yourself not sleeping quite as well or as easily? Are you sweating slightly at the thought of the new adventure a week before the occasion? Maybe your eating and stomach/gastrointestinal system is a little off, or you find yourself thinking about the upcoming experience more frequently as the day approaches. These are all normal reactions. These physical and cognitive experiences may be mildly to moderately uncomfortable, but not debilitating.

When the symptoms named above become a constant in your day, and you find yourself unable or completely unwilling to think/talk/plan for the new experience, you are now experiencing too much anxiety or fear. In order to combat some of these symptoms before they reach a debilitating state, the following techniques may be useful:

1.Diaphragmatic breathing (deep breathing): This is an effective and easy way to slow the body down. Sit and place your hand on your belly below your navel. Breathe in such a way that your hand is rising, not your chest. Breathe in for a count of 4 and exhale, through your nose, for a count of 5. Repeat 2 more times. Do as often as needed.

2.Exercise: Take a walk, go for a bike ride, lift weights. Any physical activity helps to reduce tension. Be aware that this is not cumulative; you must keep at it in order to receive the benefit.

Family Matters with Ed and Sandy

•By Sandra Giroux



BACK TO BASICS

I was looking forward to September this year for different reasons than you might think. I love the cooler weather, the start of the fall season, and back-to-school. It's not sending the kids back to school and getting the house clean again I like, but the break on my wallet.

Summer is a time of fun and frivolous behavior, a break from the norm. Many of us put extra money into the summer to make it special for our kids. We send them to day camps or specialty camps. We pick up extra activities to keep them busy. We take the girls to the mall and buy them all lunch because it makes them like us for the moment.

Our kids don't mean to drain our wallets and we're our own worst enemy. We, as adults set the bar for each other. We see "The Smiths" taking their girls on a cruise or "The Jones" sending the boys to baseball camp. Or "The other Smith & Jones" sending their kids to grandma's who might be a few states away. We all want our children to have happy memories of their summer and be able to retell, "What I Did Over my Summer Vacation."

We stress over the drain this causes since Moms and Dads work hard all year, but double their efforts over the summer while doing it with less. Some parents may face seasonal layoffs, reduced hours or even worse, the loss of jobs due to the economy.

When we were young, we can remember heading outside right after breakfast and traveling in a pack of kids. We'd bum a bologna or peanut butter sandwich for lunch at "the Smith's house" and then disappear for a couple more hours until "the Jones" called us in for snacks. We'd stay out until the streetlights came on to go home for dinner. Then we did it again the next day. We were happy to take week's vacation as a family to the mountain or a drive to Niagara Falls and we thought this was a great treat. Where did we lose the simplicity?

Don't get me wrong. I am just as guilty of this as anyone, and I am trying to correct it. I have found this summer I have been doing too much and now it is expected. I decided to let my daughter make choices this summer that cost her, monetarily, but I hope and pray she learned a lasting lesson from. She came to me after a trip to the mall with a girlfriend, bringing money she worked hard to earn. Out of her mouth came "Why didn't you tell me my money wouldn't go very far?" She wanted a book bag for school that cost \$50.00 but couldn't afford it because she had made other purchases. She was a little put out that I wouldn't just hand over the needed cash. She also didn't like the fact she had to work six hours as well as wait two weeks to the next payday in order to get that bag.

I was very pleased to see when the next payday came around, she asked me to go to the bank. She did go to the mall and bought the bag, but not before asking the sales clerk if it was going on sale soon. It's a start!

We can't rollback time to the simpler way of life because of the changes in the world, but we can and need to teach by example. Our actions speak louder than words and hopefully we show the right example to follow: say no when needed, attend church on Sunday and let God into our lives in not just words but more importantly, by how we live and love Monday through Saturday.

I received an e-mail the other day that contained a quote from Jay Leno I wanted to leave you with: "With hurricanes, tornadoes, fires out of control, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, and with the threat of bird flu and terrorist attacks, are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?"

Basically, I took it to say we need to get back to basics. So, as our kids are back in school, don't you think it is time we all brushed up on our family values?

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Court's In Session

•By Attorney Jennifer O'Brien

**LAI-D-OFF AND CHILD SUPPORT**

When I got divorced, the judge ordered me to pay child support for my two children. Recently, I was laid off and now can no longer make ends meet with the amount I was ordered to pay. Is there anything I can do?

Most people have been affected in some way by the status of the economy. As a result, some have been placed in the unfortunate position of either having to sell their homes or have lost it in a foreclosure. Others have not felt the sting of the economy as severely but have found they need to cut down on

In order to ask the court to increase or decrease child support, a party must prove there has been a "material change in circumstance." This means just as it sounds in that since the last child support order, there has been a material change in circumstance so as to warrant a reduction or increase. Normally, the loss of one's employment does qualify as such a change. In requesting an increase or decrease in support, one should be prepared to explain how he lost his employment, i.e., whether he was laid

...there seems to be more empathy toward applicants in light of the current financial times.

spending in a variety of ways, whether it be dining out less frequently, vacationing closer to home, or clipping coupons.

Regardless of the situation, because one falls upon a financial hardship does not give a person the right to unilaterally decide to decrease his current child support obligations. One must proceed with caution in decreasing any child support payment without court approval, as contempt could follow costing the obligor thousands of dollars in attorney fees or even serving a short sentence in jail.

There is no doubt that relief is often warranted to one who loses his job, whether he be the non custodial parent who pays child support or the custodial parent who receives child support. Although in the past, the courts appeared more reluctant to reduce or increase child support on the basis of a change in employment, there seems to be more empathy toward applicants in light of the current financial times.

Child support, unlike alimony, is based strictly on the gross incomes of the parties, rather than on their net incomes or other financial obligations. In order to determine how much an obligor should pay, the courts have developed Child Support Guidelines, which were recently changed in 2009. These guidelines take into account the gross pay of both parties, the cost of health insurance, childcare costs, prior child support obligations, and the number of children on which the payment is based. It is not often that a judge will deviate from these guidelines.

off or terminated. Some judges may also ask what measures one has taken to obtain new employment since the job was lost.

Once one loses his job and requires an increase or decrease in child support, it is important that he immediately file a Complaint for Modification in the Probate & Family Court. This is vital as the person is not entitled to relief prior to the date of filing the Complaint. In the event that a court date is not immediately scheduled, the judge has the power to grant a child support increase or reduction retroactively to the date the Complaint for Modification was filed. Once filed, the parties will be required to exchange financial information and appear in court. The judge will then make a determination about whether support should be increased or decreased. He may also order the non working parent to actively seek other employment and to notify the other when he does become employed so another Complaint for Modification can be filed as necessary.

In these difficult economic times, the courts are willing to alleviate some of the financial burden of parents upon the showing of certain hardships. Unfortunately, since there is less money for the parents, it also means there is less money to go around to support their children's needs but such is an inevitable effect of a downward economy.

Jennifer H. O'Brien is the owner of O'Brien Law Offices, a general practice located at 630 Boston Road, Billerica, MA 01821. She can be reached at (978) 262-9880 or at www.obrienlawoffices.org. This information should not be construed as legal advice nor is it intended as a substitute for obtaining legal advice from an attorney. No person should act or rely on any information in this article without seeking the advice of an attorney.

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Yankee Doodle

Father and I went down to camp
Along with Captain Gooding
And there we saw the men and boys
As thick as hasty pudding.

Chorus

And there was Captain Washington
And gentle folks about him
They say he's grown so ternal proud
He will not right without him.

Chorus

Yankee Doodle went to town
A-riding on a pony
He stuck a feather in his hat
And called it macaroni

Yankee Doodle, keep it up
Yankee Doodle dandy
Mind the music and the step
and with the girls be handy!



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www.billericalibrary.org



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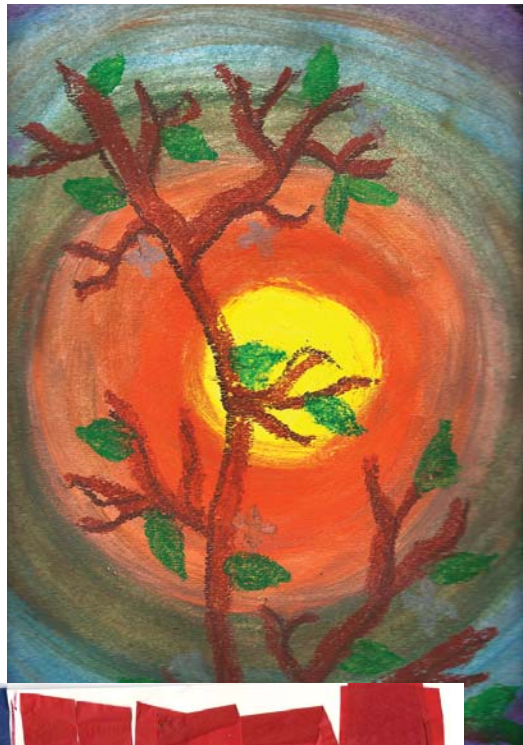
back-to-school

Can you find all the words?

art, cheer leading, crazy lunch lady, english,
field hockey, first day back, football, gym, history,
math, music, recess, science, school bus, soccer

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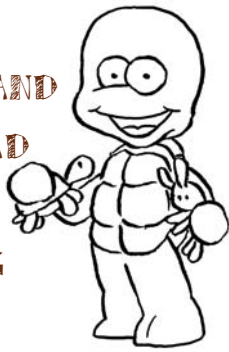
Rachelle, 13
Locke Middle School



Julia, 7



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Top Ten Things We Did Over The Summer

1. A lot of swimming
2. A lot of fishing
3. Played in the sand
4. Blueberry picking on Mt. Gorham
5. Dinner theater at the Deck House in Maine
6. Boys and Girl's Club and Basketball Camp
7. Free Fun Fridays at the Peabody Essex and Springfield Museums
8. Bike riding and roller blading
9. Water Country
10. Billerica Playground Tour

Top Five Favorite School Supplies

1. Book bags and one strap back packs
2. Three ring binders
3. Kennedy School Folders
4. Mechanical Pencils
5. Colorful stretchy fabric book covers

Top Five Things We Can't Wait to Do This Fall

1. Jump in leaf piles
2. Apple Picking
3. Hayrides
4. Pick out pumpkins at a farm
5. Make Jack O' Lanterns



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- 1/4 cup of raisins
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OUT ON THE TOWN

The Billerica Cat Care Coalition

Sept. 19th: Agway in South Chelmsford is sponsoring a barbecue when. BCCC volunteers will be grilling hot dogs and hamburgers as well as will be conducting a

Meet and Greet with BCCC adoptable cats and kittens.

Sept. 26th: There will be a BCCC yard sale table at 81 Littleton Rd (Rt 110) in Chelmsford.

Oct. 2nd: There will be a joint fund raiser between the Brush Art Gallery & Studios in Lowell and Billerica Cat Care Coalition to benefit homeless and feral cats. From 7 to 9 PM, the Herding Cats fund raiser will occur at the Brush Gallery in Lowell.

Oct. 3rd: The Brush Art Gallery exhibit opens again between 2 and 4 PM.

Oct. 17th: BCCC adoptable kittens and cats will join the other works of art at the Brush Art Gallery in Lowell for a Meet and Greet.

Oct. 17th: The BCCC will celebrate National Feral Cat Day. Tables will be set up with Spay/Neuter and Trap/Neuter/Release educational materials at three Market Basket supermarkets in Billerica.

Oct. 27th: Flatbread restaurant in Burlington will host Eat a Pizza, Save a Cat from 5 to 9 PM. Flatbread will donate a portion of the evening's dining receipts to BCCC. BCCC will conduct a raffle as part of the evening's festivities.

Please check our website www.billericacatcarecoalition.org for more information on all BCCC events.

Billerica C.A.R.E.S. Film Festival

"Bridging the Gap" All films shown at Billerica Memorial High School Auditorium, 35 River Street, Billerica, Massachusetts 01821, 978-528-8700

Five consecutive Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

Sept. 23: Paperclips

Sept. 30: Freedom Writers

Oct. 7: Slum Dog Millionaire

Oct. 14: To Kill a Mockingbird

Oct. 21: TBA focusing on issues facing senior citizens. This event is free and open to the public.

Police Athletic League (PAL) Fall Programming

Street Hockey/Flag Football: Registration is open for Street Hockey and Flag Football for grades 3-9. Both start on September 19th. No equipment is necessary. Teams will be organized on the first day. Check www.billericapal.org for weather cancellation notices. Registration is required. The cost is \$20 per person, \$40 per family unless you have a PAL Annual Membership. Check www.billericapal.org and click on the Registration page for more information.

Flag Football runs on Saturdays from 9/19 - 10/31 from 9:00AM-10:30AM. Games are played at the Marshall Middle School baseball field. PAL provides footballs, belts and flags.

Street Hockey runs on Saturdays from 9/19-10/31. Games are played at the Marshall Middle School outdoor rink. Grades 3-5 play from 12:00 - 1:30. Grades 6-9 play from 1:30 - 3:00. Check www.billericapal.org for weather cancellation notices. PAL provides sticks and goalie equipment.

Ye' Olde Meetinghouse Town Hall Meetings

Sept. 21: 7 pm: Planning Board, Room 210

Sept. 22: 5:30 pm: Town Manager Screening Committee, Collins Room

Sept. 23: 7 pm: Conservation Commission, Rm 210

Sept. 24: 5:30 pm: Town Manager Screening Committee, Collins Room

Sept. 28: 7 pm: Board of Selectmen, Conway Rm

Sept. 29: 5:30 pm: Town Manager Screening Committee, Collins Room

Oct. 1: 5:30 pm: Town Manager Screening Committee, Collins Room

Oct. 5: 7 pm: Board of Selectmen, Conway Room

Oct. 5: 7:30 pm: Board of Health, Rm 110

Oct. 6: 7:30 pm: Town Meeting, Buck Auditorium

Oct. 7: 7 pm: Conservation Commission, Rm 110

Oct. 8: 7:30 pm: Town Meeting, Buck Auditorium

Oct. 13: 7:30 pm: Town Meeting, Buck Auditorium

Oct. 14: 7 pm: Conservation Commission, Rm 210

Oct. 15: 7:30 pm: Town Meeting, Buck Auditorium

Oct. 19: 7 pm: Board of Selectmen, Conway Rm

Oct. 20: 7:30 pm: Town Meeting, Buck Auditorium

Oct. 21: 7 pm: Republican Town Committee, Rm 210

Oct. 21: 7:30 pm: Water Conservation Oversight Committee, Room 110

Oct. 22: 7:30 pm: Town Meeting, Buck Auditorium

School Calendar September and October 2009

Sept. 17: Back to School Night Ditson K-2

Sept. 23: Early Release - Elementary Only

Oct. 1: Back to School Night - Middle Schools

Oct. 12: Columbus Day - No School

Oct. 20: Early Release - ALL Schools

Oct. 22: Elementary Progress Reports Issued

The Billerica Boys & Girls Club

19 Campbell Rd., Billerica, MA 01821
 978-667-2193 www.billericabgc.com

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Billerica provides recreational, educational and social development programs at our Main Club at 19 Campbell Road and in after-school sites located at the 6 elementary schools in Billerica. Scholarship funds are available to assist children from families who genuinely cannot afford the fees.

Child Care Update: Registration for Childcare is now being taken for the Fall. Registrations after August 21 will have a start date of Tuesday, September 8th. Boys and Girls Club Child Care Programs are licensed and administered under the auspices of the Office of Early Education and Care.

The Board of Directors of the Club, recognizing that the present economy is placing many families in a tight financial bind, has voted to keep the rates for the program the same in school year 2009-10 as in the past year, despite increasing costs to the club.

Early Bird Program: Our before school program operates at the Boys and Girls Club from 6:30am until school bus pick up (our club is a bus stop for all elementary schools).

Fun Club Program: Our after school program that runs from school dismissal until 6:00pm. This is held at each elementary school (grades k-5).

Kindergarten Program: Our program operates in coordination with the school department. The children are at the Boys and Girls Club when they are not in school. They are able to stay until 3:00pm. If you need care after 3:00pm, we transport the children back to their school for Fun Club. If they are in the PM session, they come to the club in the morning after 7:45am until the school bus picks them up between 11:00 and 11:45 to take them to their school. If additional care is needed after school, the children can be enrolled in the Fun Club program until 6:00pm.

Childcare payments can now be made online at www.billericabgc.com.

Swim Lessons update: Fall 2009 swim sessions start September 8th. Adult and Progressive lessons are full for the fall session but registration for parent & child and pre-school classes are still going on. Open enrollment for the winter session will be Saturday, October 31st from 8am -12pm. For a complete list of classes, visit the website.

Session Prices:

Pre-School: \$9/class, Progressive: \$10/class
 Parent & Child: \$9/class, Adult: \$11/class

Annual Dinner: This year's Annual Dinner will be held at the Billerica Lodge of Elks on Friday October 16th. To register or purchase tickets, go to www.billericabgc.com.

Fall Family Outing/Ditson Open Golf

Sunday Sept. 27, 2009

Join the Ditson School Family as we Kick-off the

2009-10 School year with our first Family Event of the year. On Sunday Sept. 27, 2009 we will be having our 3rd Annual Fall Family Outing / Ditson Open. This is a 2-site event with the Family Outing taking place at the Billerica lodge of the Elks and the Ditson Open being held at the Billerica Country Club.

The Family Outing is a chance to meet new families and share summer stories with old friends. We will have food, games, activities, raffles and chances to win fun prizes.

The Ditson Open is a 2 part event, and registration includes a free shirt.

1) Ditson Open with a team scramble best ball to cup format on the Front nine and Individual on the Back nine. There will be prizes for Closest to the Pin and Longest Drive on both the Front and Back nine.

2) Junior Clinic for the kids run by Barry Bruce and his staff. Kids will learn the basics of hitting Irons and Woods as well as putting.

For more info. www.ditson2.billerica.k12.ma.us

Billerica Recreation Department

248 Boston Rd, Billerica, MA 01821
978-671-0921 www.town.billerica.ma.us

Fall 2009 Brochure Now On Line!

The Billerica Recreation Department's Fall Brochure is now available on the Recreation's Docs & Forms page. Remember that we will NOT be mailing paper copies of this brochure.

STARTING SOON SO REGISTER NOW:

PRE-SCHOOL:

Creative Play (ages 2-3 & 3-5)

NOTE: Change in day and time from Monday 9-10 AM to Tuesday 10:45-11:45 AM (Artists in Training class will remain unchanged)

Golf Lessons (ages 3-6), Kids Club (ages 3-5), Tiny Tots Tennis (ages 4-6)

YOUTH:

Drama (grades K-8), Outdoor and Indoor Tennis, Guitar Lessons (ages 8-15), Volleyball Clinic (grades 4-7), Friday Fishing for Middle School

ADULT:

Belly Dancing, Fit Dance Blast, Pilates, Cardio Kickboxing, Cardio Boot Camp, Yoga, Line Dancing, Basketball, Volleyball

FOR ALL AGES:

Golf, Tennis

SPECIAL OLYMPICS:

Bowling, Hockey, Soccer, Swimming

Billerica Public Library

Fall Youth Programs

Sept. 21: 6:30 pm

Birds of Prey (ages 4 and up)

Online registration required.

Sept. 25: 10:00 am

Sing Along With Scott (ages birth – 3 years old)

Online registration required.

Sept. 25: 3:30 pm

Time Travelers: The Race to Space (grades 3 – 8)

Online registration required.

Oct. 8: 6:30 pm

The Pirate's Missing Pumpkin (ages 3 – 9)

Online registration required.

Oct. 13: 6:30 pm

Creepy Tales Express (ages 5 – 10)

Online registration required.

Oct. 19: 6:30 pm

Pajama Jam (ages toddler – 4 years old)

Online registration required.

Oct. 20: 10:00 am

Sing Along With Scott (ages birth – 3 years old)

Online registration required.

Oct. 20: 3:30 pm, **Oct. 21:** 11:00 am – 6:00 pm,

Oct. 22: 10:00 am – 8:00 pm

Chemistry: It's Elemental (grades 2 – 4)

Online registration required.

Halloween Make-N-Take

(all ages – Drop-in) No Registration Required

Oct. 23: 3:30 pm

Time Travelers – Ancient China (grades 3 – 8)

Online registration required.

Oct. 28: 6:15 pm

Mr. Phil – Happy Haunting Magic Show

(grades K and up)

Online registration required.

Adult Programs

Sept. 24: 7:00 pm: Race To Freedom

Race to Freedom by author Vladislav Murnikov, tells the incredible story of the first and the only boat from the former Soviet Union to enter one of the most challenging and prestigious endurance races on the planet, the Whitbread Round the World Race.

Oct. 15: 7:00 – 8:45 pm: Coping With Stress!

Cindy Gittleman, MA, CAGS will present coping with stress and engage in specific relaxation practices that can be used in daily life.

The Council On Aging

ONGOING: Pick up your Friends of the COA Board nomination papers. Due by Oct. 7. No age requirements. Board elections will take place on Oct. 13.

Sept. 21: 10:30 am

Mediation Process Service Seminar on the mediation process used to help consumers resolve disputes, presented by Claire McCurley from Middlesex Community College Law Center. 978-656-3342.

Sept. 22: 12:30 pm

September Book Club: Book and author will be discussed with the group led by Paul Hogman.

Sept. 23: 10:15 am

Homestead Act Explained – Richard P. Howe Jr., Register of Deeds, will discuss Homestead law and practice. Blank Homestead forms will be available. Bring cash or check for the \$35 recording fee and a photo ID. For more information visit the Registry of Deeds website at www.lowelldeeds.com or call (978) 322-9000

Sept. 23: 12:30 pm

Chronic Disease Self-Management Series – Six-week, interactive Stanford University-designed program, teaches how to manage chronic illness through mutual support and goal setting. Limited to 12 participants. Registration at the front desk is \$20 and includes all materials.

Sept. 24: 10:30 am

Free Pharmacy Clinic

Dr. Carlton Chin from Walgreen's will host "Ask the

Pharmacist – Brown Bag Pharmacy Clinic". Bring all your medications with you for a one-on-one consultation. Resister at front desk.

Sept. 24: 10 am

Free History Lecture "Our Founding Fathers" – Paul Hogman will tell us what effect our founding fathers had on our nation's birth and how they interacted with one another.

Sept. 30:

Transportation and Driver Safety Awareness Day

10:00 am -- "Shifting Gears" Safe Driver

Presentation – Michele Ellicks of the Registry of Motor Vehicles will present this free, hour-long program for drivers aged 55 and older designed to educate and encourage elder drivers to be the best driver possible. The workshop will include safe driving tips and how age affects one's driving.

11:00 am – LRTA Road Runner Services and Charlie Card Enrollment presented by Felicia Webb.

1:30 pm – Presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Dugan, from UMass Boston. Panel discussion will follow with State Rep. Kay Khan, Michele Ellicks from Mass. RMV, and Erin Burns, Rehab. Service Manager for Life Care of Merrimack Valley.

Oct. 1:

Friends of the COA Membership Drive Day, For \$10, you can invest in your future.

Oct. 5: 11:00 am: Billerica Bandstand

Oct. 7: 10:00 am

It's not your Mother's Retirement, Presentation by Metlife addresses what we face as women throughout the phases of our lives

Oct. 8: 10:00 am

Making online banking easy for you

Presentation by TD Bank.

Oct. 13: 9:00 am-12 noon:

Flu shots at the Senior Center

Oct. 13:

Friends of The Council on Aging Annual Meeting and Board Elections

Call the senior center 978-671-0916 for times

Oct. 14: 10:30 am

The truth about budgeting: Presented by American Credit Counseling Services

Oct. 17: 9:00 am – 12 noon

Flu shots at

Town Hall

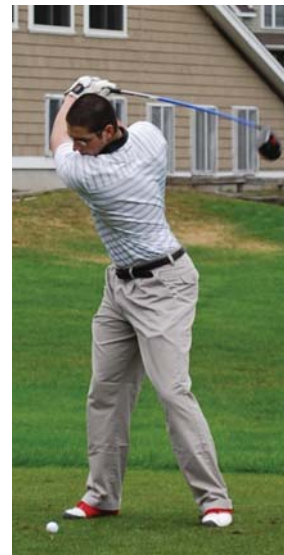
Oct. 19:

10:00 am

Hearing

Information

– Beltone will do free video ear scans, hearing screenings, and hearing instrument cleanings.



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It's NOT THE PARTY, It's THE PEOPLE

Growing reunion approaches 30th year in Billerica.

You weren't smelling hot dogs and hamburgers at the Debenedictus and Robbio 29th Annual Reunion held on Sept. 13. Instead the wafting of Italian fare filled the air as the large family gathering that has gone on for some time convened again in Billerica.

Originally started by Larry and Carol Debenedictus and relative Caroline "Honey" Vitale as a first cousins party, the get together has grown to 110 people spanning four generations some years. There are six sets of twins in this family and one member as old as 100.

Larry recalls Sunday afternoons as being a big deal in his family, with extended family stopping by during the day. Over 20 years ago, he spoke to his 11 other siblings and they all agreed that an annual reunion was a great way to capture that homey feel.

"We were losing aunts and uncles and were not seeing them like we'd like to," said Larry.

What makes this extraordinary is that it has gone on for this long annually. Such large parties resemble weddings in cost and size and take time to organize. But Carol finds this labor of love worth it. The family cuts down expenses by having their own tents and getting donation from relatives.

Also, the location has remained in Billerica although family members have moved to other cities in MA or other states like Ohio, Georgia, Florida and New Hampshire.

"Families aren't cohesive anymore," said Larry. "They are the most important thing and one way to keep them together is to have a party."

For the younger members, they find meeting new cousins or aunts and uncles the most rewarding part of coming. For the older, more seasoned relatives, they are just happy to have a gathering to come to.

For Anna Mason, one of Larry's 12 siblings, this event has been a central part of family for her. She had been very active with it and recalls how she'd handle the cooking indoors while the men would manage the grilling outside.

Mason has fond memories of the jelly bean and button games and raffles everyone would run because there's always been a lot of young children in attendance. What's remarkable is all 12 siblings, ranging in age from 62 to 82, are still living. Mason recalled it used to be in June but now is held in September in order to fall on Yankee Doodle weekend.

"The weather has cooperated 99 percent of the time," said Mason, as she noted the event never being hindered by Mother Nature.

The event is held at Larry's son's home which used to be their grand parents' old house.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Community. Acceptance. Respect. Enrichment. Support. As a larger community, we can embrace diversity through these values, characteristics or qualities since we all share these in our daily life. It is through these tenets that the Billerica C.A.R.E.S. organization was formed.

Organized by previous town manager Rocco Longo in late 2007, Billerica C.A.R.E.S. brings together a diverse group of educational, municipal, local business and religious leaders who envision Billerica as a welcoming community, promoting and celebrating diversity and respect for the heritage, culture and values of all its residents.

The group continues to implement various projects that highlight the diversity that exists in town. This is done to raise awareness, increase sensitivity, and enhance the climate of respect among all who live here.

This fall, starting in mid-September,

C.A.R.E.S. will be hosting a film festival, titled "Bridging the Gap". The film festival will concentrate on components of diversity and bridges to understanding that are forged as communities work toward common goals. Panel discussions will follow each showing to process the films'



content and open up dialog amongst participants.

The films will be shown at the Billerica Memorial High School Auditorium at 6:30 pm for five consecutive Wednesdays.

On Sept. 23, the movie shown will be "Paper clips". On Sept. 30, attendees

will see "Freedom Writers". On Oct. 7, "Slum Dog Millionaire" will air and "To Kill a Mockingbird" will be the feature on Oct. 14. The film on Oct. 21 will be announced but will focus on issues that face senior citizens.

In past efforts to introduce themselves, C.A.R.E.S. sponsored contests through the public schools for a song, their logo, and their branding slogan. The winning students were given savings bonds as their prizes.

In addition to their past presence in the Yankee Doodle Parade, they hosted an inaugural program in Feb. 2008 featuring Lura Smith, Assistant to the President of Middlesex Community College and founder of the Lura Smith

fund. Before 200 participants, Smith presented her reflections on the life and legacy of Rev. Martin Luther King jr. This program was met with an extremely positive response.

For the comprehensive list of movies, check out our Out On The Town section.

VETERAN'S OFFICE SECRETARY HONORED

Every year the President of the Massachusetts Veteran's Service Officers Association picks one person who has showed exemplary service to Veterans to honor. This year it was Billerica's own Marie O'Rourke, Secretary of the Office of Veteran's Services at town hall.



The event was held on June 24 at Cape Point Hotel in Cape Cod and was well attended. O'Rourke was surrounded by her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and her best friend, Joanne. Her children knew about the award but O'Rourke was kept in the dark until that day.

When Louis Cimalgia, IV, President of the association called her to the podium, O'Rourke was speechless. She said, "This award usually goes to a Vet's agent and not a staff person. My son said he never heard his mom say she was at a loss for words."

The plaque is proudly displayed on O'Rourke's windowsill and recognizes her passion, tireless efforts and 28 years of service. She said, "I was overwhelmed. I love my job."

O'Rourke has been active in assisting many veterans in the town. She opened the food pantry and is the main contact. With much thought, she designed the prominent sign on town common which welcomes our Vets home. O'Rourke believes in taking care of others. She said, "People come in because they need help."

If any veterans are in need of any assistance, they can reach Director Ken Buffum or Marie O'Rourke at the Office of Veteran's Services at town hall by calling 978-671-0968.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB GOLF TOURNAMENT 2009

After a summer full of rainy days, The Boys and Girls Club of Billerica got lucky on Aug. 14 for their annual golf tournament with a perfect day. Every year, the club hosts this fund raising event in order to raise money for their scholarship program.

"All the money raised goes toward financial aid for our families," said David Bruce, club business manager.

Currently, there are 3600 members of the Boys and Girls Club with more than 600 children participating daily in the various club activities.

The tournament started at 8:30 am with 110 golfers taking over the rolling hills at The Billerica Country Club. After the foursomes enjoyed themselves, a luncheon was provided, following both by a silent auction and auction. The most popular silent auction items were gift certificates to local restaurants and tickets to upcoming Red Sox games.



ATTORNEY JIM D'ANGORA LOOKS OVER A NEW TOOL BOX WHICH WAS ONE OF THE MANY SILENT AUCTION ITEMS AVAILABLE AT THE TOURNAMENT.

With Unit Director, Richard Ackroyd at the microphone, the live auction items went fast. A bidding war ensued over court side Celtics tickets but Kathy Fleurant and Jocelyn Busenburg proved victorious.

The day was a great success, with \$36,000 raised for the families of

Billerica who benefit from club programming.

The Boys and Girls Club expressed their gratitude to all their participants and sponsors who supported the event, especially Demoulas Markets, whose \$10,000 annual donation make this day possible.

KIDS KONNECTION SIGN DEDICATED TO DONORS

Before a handful of people on an unusually chilly July day, Playground Coordinator Sandy Libby unveiled the new rules sign which also thanked the organizations who've sponsored the large playground behind O'Connor's Hardware store. Libby said, "This sign marks ten years. It honors nine very important donors."

Representatives from the different donor groups, like Billerica Little League, The Community Alliance and AS&E were on hand.

The Community Funds Grants have assisted in funding the fencing surrounding the playground. The Billerica Community Alliance was responsible for two \$500 grants as well as coordinating volunteers on Comcast Cares Day last year and AS&E this year during Green Up Clean Up.

Billerica Little League was responsible for the lighting, the high netting, and the parking lot. Libby said, "It's



important to the safety of the playground."

The Friends of Billerica Recreation have given over \$50,000 worth of equipment. JP Murray provided machines and equipment as well as given time to help with set up.

Comcast donated \$600 and worked hard at beautification on Clean Up Day.

O'Connor's Hardware store has repeatedly been helpful over the years, especially with tools and equipment. Libby said, "Every playground should be next door to a hardware store."

AS&E, in addition to donating over \$15,000 town wide, gave the man power to put in the plants and bushes as well as a lot of new equipment in the 9-12 year old area. They donated \$3,000 toward landscaping and \$9,000 toward the equipment. Bronze Award Girl Scout, Jacqueline Maffeo, as part of her project, designed the landscape.

Extreme Landscaping provided the mulch and also came to do some of the planting. For more information on donations to the playgrounds, contact the Billerica Recreation Department located at 248 Boston Road at 978-671-0921. Their hours are between 8:30 am - 4:00 pm.



INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM BRINGS YOUNG AT HEART TOGETHER

For three years in a row, The Council on Aging, through sponsorship from Lahey Clinic, has brought seniors and teens to the table to talk. And talk. And talk. About the past and the present.

Through the Intergenerational Program: Yesterday and Today, seniors sign up to be interviewed by camp counselors-in-training through the Billerica Recreation Department. This exchange bridges the age gap, helping teens gain a better understanding about generations past as well as what life was like "back then". Likewise, teens teach their interviewees a thing or two.

Marie Turner was matched up with Tyler Cotreau. She wondered if his phone was one of those "Blueberries". He explained that it was actually a "Blackberry". Some teens return year after year and request to be matched up with the same senior. Jake Aufiero did just that, when he asked to work with Marion LeBlanc again.

The teens and seniors meet for three sessions over July and August. The organizing team of Margie Doyle, Peggy Tripoldi, and Nancy Arbeene put together and collect questionnaires after each session. The questionnaire responses go into a booklet titled after the program that is given to all the participants. Volunteers at the COA then take photos and put together elaborate scrapbooks of the experience. Those beautifully done scrapbooks are available to view at the COA.

In the first session, the teens ask basic information, like history on the senior's parents, where they came from and what they thought about school. The interviews in the second session pose the questions "How are we the same?" and "How are we different?" Session three is a celebration and gives the interviewer an opportunity to answer, "In what generation would you have wanted to grow up?" Generally, the teens say now due to technology. Only one chose the senior's generation so they could have met their counterpart when they were younger.

"There's very much a connection," said Doyle. For more information on this program, contact Lauren Gray at the Council On Aging at (978) 671-0916 or The Billerica Recreation Department at (978) 671-0921.

COPS FOR KIDS WITH CANCER CHARITY MOTORCYCLE RIDE

Annually, the Billerica Police, lead by Officers Dale Sarno, Gerry Roache, and Craig Grogan, host and organize the Cops for Kids with Cancer ride. Each year, well over 100 riders take to the streets of Billerica and surrounding areas like Chelmsford to raise money for this worthy cause. Japanese bikes and Harleys alike were seen on July 19 side by side on Middlesex Turnpike as the riders took this enjoyable scenic ride for over an hour.

The ride ended with a celebratory cookout back at the Irish American Club where riders and police got the opportunity to relax and socialize.



PHOTO COURTESY OF COSMO CAVICCHIO

LET'S RIDE: BMX STATE QUALIFIER DRAWS RECORD NUMBERS

This year, Billerica BMX welcomed 119 riders on July 26 to their track behind the Vietnam Veteran's park soccer fields, which was 62 more than last year. After a wait in the scorching heat, riders lined up and moto, or race, after moto, riders of all ages and gender flew over hills and bumps to whiz through the finish line and qualify. What they were qualifying for was a spot in the state finals.

According to the American Bicycle Association (ABA), Bicycle Motocross, or BMX for short, came about in California during the early 70's. A group of young riders modified their Stingray bicycles, went out into vacant lots and created a sport of their own. Boys and girls on their modified bicycles were seen driving through the dirt emulating their motorcycle motocross heroes. They would perform tricks and "catch air". It was in 1977 that the ABA was formed.

The ABA is a national sanctioning body that created a system of qualifying riders in organized racing. The sport is competitive but it affords each

rider the chance to be a winner. The transfer system was formed for qualifying races where the winner of each moto advances to the next round.

Kerry and Bob Pottle, two avid BMX-ers and the coordinators for Billerica BMX, were excited about the turnout. The couple can be found every Sunday morning during riding season getting the track ready to race. Kerry said, "This is more riders than Billerica has ever seen." Last year there were only 57 riders.

Since Massachusetts holds the state finals, riders travel from all over the state as well as from Rhode Island, Connecticut, and

New Hampshire. Many of the riders at the July 26 state qualifier in Billerica had been qualifying in other races before arriving that day.

The BMX season runs until Nov. 1 and more participants and volunteers are welcome. Check out www.billerica-bmx.com for upcoming races and events. Or email questions to BillericaTrack@gmail.com.



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IT'S BETTER THAN YOU THINK

Nervous. Scared. Overwhelmed. Those are words used in conversations about transitioning from Elementary School to Middle School here in Billerica. What you might not know is these are words also used by the parents of soon-to-be middle schoolers.

Looking back over the 2008/2009 school year, I realized it wasn't nearly as traumatic as I anticipated. On the heels of my epiphany that my daughter, my husband, and I had made it through the first year of Middle School unscathed, I wondered what my daughter and her friends, the outgoing 6th graders, might say about the transition to the incoming 6th graders.

The first day of school was GREAT! The kids loved the new adventure of filling out their class schedule cards and getting familiar with their new school. Be sure to save info packets given to you by your teachers since they contain information you'll be referred to over the upcoming months.

Dress codes are similar to Elementary schools' but are more strongly enforced. In particular, no muscle shirts on boys; minimum 2-finger width straps on girls t-shirts or tank tops; shorts and skirts need to be fingertip length; no high heels; no jeans on gym days. Refer to your school handbook for all the dress code rules.

As expected, new friendships were forged as students from different schools came together. Sometimes old friendships changed, with students drifting apart as interests change and evolve. Gossip is rampant but surprisingly, cliques aren't much of an issue. There are a few, but the boundaries are more blurred than they were in 5th grade.

Being the youngest in school again isn't an issue. The 6th graders don't interact much with the older kids, and they lose the back seats on the bus which didn't bother them much.

Rumors run rampant, so let's address some. There is an indoor track in the basement of the Marshall, but there is no pool on the roof as some claim. Middle school drama is rumored to be out of control, but in actuality was less than in Elementary – probably due to less “clique-iness”.

Supposedly, kids get pushed into lockers a lot. One rumor went so far as to claim a kid who was pushed into a locker died. The students never believed that rumor, but it's included here to dispel it in case it's still circulating on the elementary school playground.

Middle School kids smoke and others have PDA's (public displays of affection). The kids say this is true. 6th grade is a good time to reinforce your values on smoking and dating since peer pressure begins this early, folks.

After a brief adjustment period, changing classes became one of the kids' favorite things

about being in Middle School. In fact, it was named the “Best Thing” about middle school. (Surprised? I was, too.) Don't be overly concerned about getting from one class to another. Sixth graders are assigned to a “pod” that travels as a pack so you'll have one another to lean on. Learning to unlock the combination locks is a challenge so until the kids got that down, they ran the risk of being late to class. At the beginning of the year, the teachers understand this.

Plan bathroom breaks. With 2-3 minutes between classes, it's tough to fit them in. Plan a lunchtime and end of day visit to the loo. There are longer breaks at the beginning of the day (10 minutes between arriving and the start of school, typically), and after lunch (5 minutes).

Nervous. Scared. Overwhelmed.
What you might not know is these are
the words used by the parents of
soon to be middle schoolers

Initially the kids worried if they'd have anyone to eat lunch with. Their advice is to look for someone you know who's already sitting and sit with them, or link up with a friend who's also looking for a seat.

Once established, kids tend to sit at the same table each day. There isn't assigned seating in the cafeteria, but there is a quasi student-imposed practice on who sits where. An interesting dynamic happens when there's a falling out between friends. A minor re-shuffling takes place in the seating arrangements of the estranged friends and can have a ripple effect overall.

Lockers are small. Be aware of that when buying school supplies and/or a winter coat. Puffy jackets are going to be hard to fit into the locker. Huge backpacks may not fit into the locker, and the students are not allowed to carry their backpacks all day. The girls suggested using a purse large enough to fit an 8"x10" book, for carrying what they need during class.

6th graders are not in a separate gym class. It's likely they'll be in gym with 7th graders, and sometimes both 7th and 8th graders. Gym gives the 6th graders, who are getting used to not having recess to break up the day, a way to exercise and burn off any heebie-jeebies that have built up during the school day.

The teachers within a pod have their own style of teaching, of course, but there's a shared method of turning in homework and getting assignments which allows the 6th graders learn one consistent set of rules.

Nightly homework assignments and

longer-range projects are tracked in an Agenda Book, which is 8" x 10". It includes a calendar for tracking due dates, hallway passes, and has a place for parents to sign finished assignments. The agenda book is a great tool to teach the Middle Schoolers how to track, organize, and plan their school work. Students must have the agenda book with them if they are in the halls during class time. If a student forgets their agenda book at home, they can use notebook paper that day but should transfer the info into the agenda book when they get home, since they quickly learn to rely on the agenda book to keep track of things.

Keep up with your homework, catching up later is hard. Take good notes during class since they are key to finishing that night's homework. Plan on one project per month on average. To avoid an 11th hour rush, do a little bit of it every week. Stay organized, it'll help make finding and doing your homework easier. Keep your locker uncluttered, so you don't lose homework amongst the debris. Don't forget finished homework at home. You may not get credit if you try to pass it in late.

Grades are important, but don't stress too much about one bad grade. There are enough grades over the course of a semester that you'll have a chance to bring your average for that class back up.

Seventh period is known as Free Period. Unless the student is involved in an extra-curricular activity (e.g., band), this time is used to get a jump on homework. Students focus on the homework in the heaviest books, to avoid having to carry those home overnight!

Students in extra-curricular activities often end up taking home more books than students who are not, since they used the 7th period for activities rather than homework. If there's equipment or instruments involved in these activities, getting on the bus is a bit more challenging. Be sure to have a backpack that can handle the extra load. You may be able to leave your instrument in the office during the school day – so ask.

The end of the day can be chaotic at the lockers. Everyone is at their locker, trying to catch the bus, and trading books they'll need to do that night's homework. Advice here is to take a few minutes during 7th period to plan what books you need and which you don't, based on what you've written in your agenda book.

For those in after school programs at the Boy's and Girl's Club, vans bring students to the Club after school. The vans make multiple trips, so don't panic if you miss the first one.

Middle School is a big time of transition but it is also a time for a lot of fun.

Middle School Survival 101

•By Jenn Gervais



The Power from Within

•By Liana Measmer



ANGELS IN THE BACKGROUND

"I have heard it said that the first ingredient of success - the earliest spark in the dreaming youth - is this: Dream a Great Dream."

— John A. Appleman

When you look back over your life, are there people who have stood by you and supported you? Maybe as you embarked on a new endeavor? Perhaps at times when you felt as if you had come to the end of the road? Or to the end of YOUR ROPE? Have you remembered to thank them? Or perhaps in your busyness, have taken them for granted? Do you wish you hadn't?

These are your angels. Images of angels go as far back as Biblical times and there have been articles written and news shows claiming that angels walk among us. These stories claim that we can't see them but they exist. Ethereal beings, many times depicted as apparitions, just waiting behind the scenes to help us.

Although this may be true, I have come to believe that angels are in fact visible in the here and now. I also believe each of us has the ability to earn our wings while we roam planet Earth. There's probably one sitting next to you on the couch right now. Angels are everywhere. I know because I have seen them.

So many of us would not be where we are today if not for those angels in the background. Those people who believe in us, our dreams, and in being there no matter what. A whole 'Wind beneath my wings' sort of thing. Could have been a first grade teacher who sat and read with us. Could have been a grandparent who pushed us on a swing. Could have been a coach that gave us that one chance which changed everything. Or our buddies who spent hours laughing with us. Our parents who came and picked us up when we got into trouble. Your spouse who took on your dream as their dream too. That's unconditional love, one of the most perfect gifts we fallible humans can offer each other.

I have so many angels in the background. I have not appreciated them more than right now. Now as I have embarked to live my dream. A dream that is not without struggles or fear. Fear of failing. A dream that is a lot of work. But you know what they say. Anything worth having is worth working for.

Speaking of work, I'm a lot of work for my angels. They have to be of the ultra patient type. The ones who really get to know me know I mean well always. I just get overly focused, with my blinders on and I forget that I'm not alone on the planet. I am also thankful for other people's angels in the background. It's these supportive souls who allow those closest to me to do all they do.

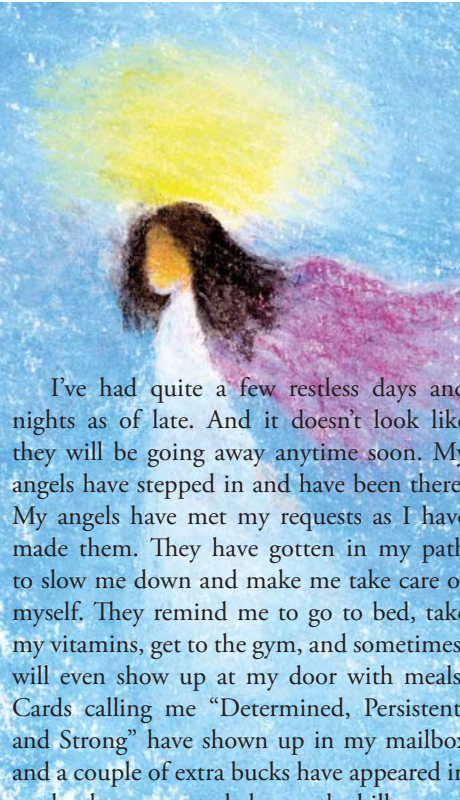
I've had quite a few restless days and nights as of late. And it doesn't look like they will be going away anytime soon. My angels have stepped in and have been there. My angels have met my requests as I have made them. They have gotten in my path to slow me down and make me take care of myself. They remind me to go to bed, take my vitamins, get to the gym, and sometimes, will even show up at my door with meals. Cards calling me "Determined, Persistent, and Strong" have shown up in my mailbox and a couple of extra bucks have appeared in my bank account to help pay the bills.

I am amazed at the plethora of information and experience that is out there. So many people—or angels—have been in my shoes and are willing to coach me, encourage me, redirect me. I am like a sponge, soaking in everything anyone will share with me. I have so much to learn but I am so willing.

So, when fear grips me, what do I do? I do the things that normal everyday people do. I fold lots and lots of laundry. I do laps around the baseball field. Since my children will always restore balance in my life, we especially enjoy baking cookies or a good snuggle on the couch with a favorite movie. I had an old boss tell me once when life got overwhelming, she would clean something. That way she felt like she had full control of her world, even if it was only for that moment. All these things I learned from my angels.

The good news is that it is never too late to thank your angels. Not just with words but with actions. Invite them over. Send them a card. Call them up and tell them how wonderful they are. Offer to help them out. Encourage and support them. Buy them an iced coffee. Become an angel yourself. The rewards of feeling needed are greater than a vault full of money. Okay, well, maybe in this economy a vault full of money would be pretty good but trust me, it will feel great. And you'll be well on your way toward earning your wings.

Beside being Editor of The Billerica Green, Liana Measmer is a Licensed Social Worker, Billerica resident and Mom to three great kids.



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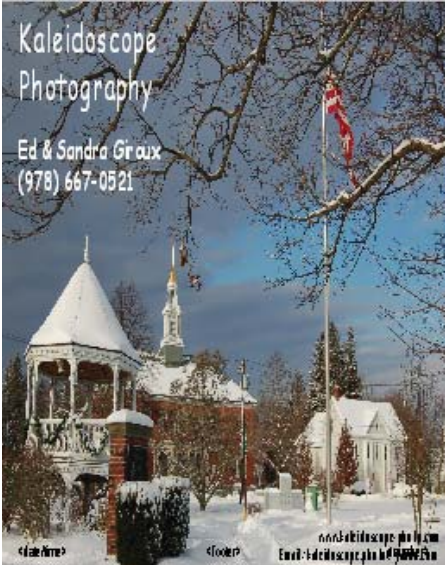
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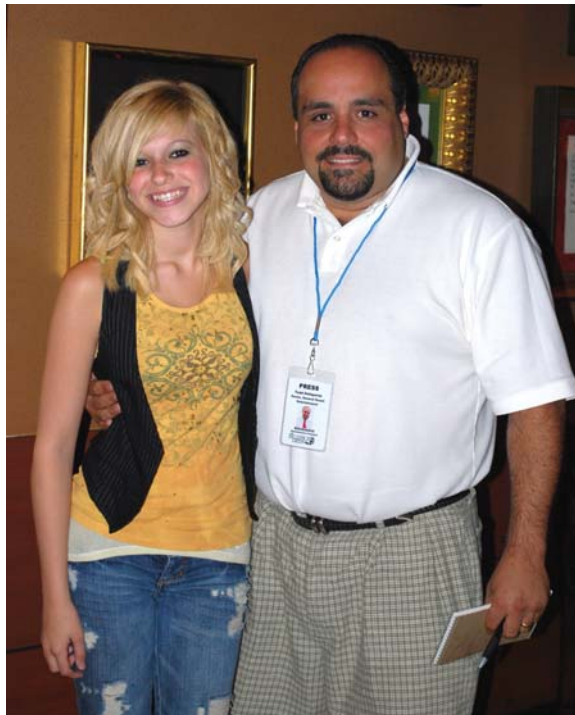


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RIA ROCKS THE HARD ROCK CAFE



DJ TODD CONGRATULATES RIA AFTER A CROWD PLEASING PERFORMANCE AT BOSTON'S HARD ROCK CAFE

Hi everyone! I hope you all enjoyed your summer. Now it's time to get back to school. I can almost hear all of you saying "BOO!" Well, look at the bright side. Hmmmm. I'm sure there must be a bright side.... Oh yeah, great elementary and middle school dances! I hope I see all of you 1st through 5th graders at the Boys and Girls club when the dances start up again.

They are well run, safe and youth-friendly and all of the money generated helps support the awesome programs the club offers. The dances run during the school year, typically on the second Friday of each month. Don't forget all students who attend the dance and remember to bring any school papers that received a grade of "100%" are entered into a drawing for a \$10.00 cash prize!

Hey, cool stuff! On Sunday, August 9th I was invited to the Hard Rock Café in downtown Boston where Billerica's own Victoria Eaton was opening for the local preteen sensations, Michael and Marisa. I've known "Ria" for years and she is one of my biggest fans, so it was really great to see her up there rocking out to a room full of guests. I had the chance to catch her before she graced the stage and here is what she had to say.

TD: "Excited?"

Ria: "Yeah. Really excited!"

TD: "Never sang here at the Hard Rock before?"

Ria: "No. I'm really looking forward to singing on that stage."

TD: "Yeah, it's a step up from just singing in Billerica."

Ria: "Yeah. I love singing at the Billerica Talent show and around town but this is like Hollywood."

TD: "How many songs will you be singing tonight?"

Ria: "Two. Desperado is my Dad's favorite and Deb Crosby (from Talent Quest TV Show) really likes "Hit me with your best Shot" so I'm doing those two."

TD: "Do you see a lot of familiar faces here to cheer you on?"

Ria: "Oh my gosh, Yes. Many Ria fans from Facebook and my friends. My Aunt Val is here, and I haven't seen her for six years. My whole family is basically here. Jaime Dodd is here plus my brother Tyler and sister Becca and her friend."

TD: "You nervous?"

Ria: "Not at all."

Notes from General Sound

•By Todd Dellaporta



TD: "C'Mon!"

Ria: "Nope, Sorry. I don't get nervous."

TD: "Well, anything else to say?"

Ria: "Hmmm. (Thinking) Yeah, if you need a DJ call Todd at General Sound."

TD: "Ha ha. You are too nice. I didn't ask you to say that right?"

Ria: "Nope."

TD: "OK, Ria. Have fun and give it 100 percent."

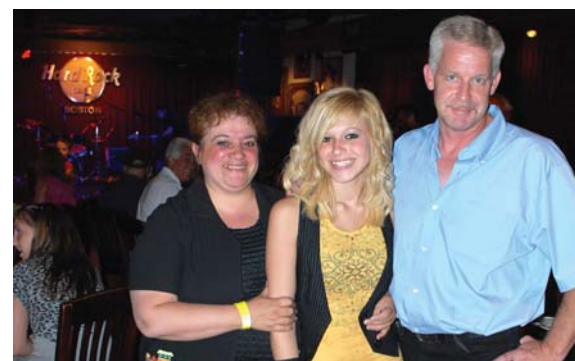
Ria: "How about if I give 115 percent?"

TD: "Super!"

As the house lights dimmed and the show started, I realized she wasn't kidding. 115 percent is the only way she knows. She started as promised with the Eagles hit "Desperado". Standing there in jeans, a peach sequined tee shirt and a smart black vest, Victoria displayed a vocal style and smooth controlled vibrato that I quickly realized is her own.

This talented young lady has the unique ability to briefly leave the traditional melody just enough to make the performance her own. Then she would return to the classic sound of the song like a seasoned professional. This is a very rare talent and is difficult for most young singers to learn. Victoria has mastered it. The song sounded great and would make Glenn Frey and Don Henley proud.

When "Hit me with your best Shot" began, Ria's cool smile and confident swagger let the room know that she was in her element. Subtle gestures like a few well-placed winks and shrugs were used with professional restraint and her entire demeanor during the long and often very awkward guitar solo didn't faze her in the least. At that point it was her microphone, her stage. She was in complete control. Wait! Someone check her birth certificate. Is she really only 14?



RIA, FLANKED BY HER BIGGEST FANS, MOM AND DAD

So, what's my final opinion? Ria is a wonderful young lady who has a nice personality, great pipes and most likely, one heck of a future in music! Special thanks to Deb Scaduto and Debra Crosby from "Talent Quest TV Show". (www.talentquesttvshow.com)

I guess that's all for this month. Please don't forget to drop me a line at info@generalsound.com to submit a question or comment. You could see your own words right here in the next issue! Also, be sure to let me know about any plays, musicals and or concerts happening in Billerica.

Todd DellaPorta, is the owner of General Sound Entertainment, and has been providing clean, upbeat entertainment for the people of Billerica for almost two decades. To inquire about quality entertainment, Videography or Photography for your next event call 508-572-6880, visit www.generalsound.com, or email at info@generalsound.com.

The General Sound Top 20:

Available online at

www.thebillericagreen.com/sound.html

The Sunny Side of the Street

•By Dave Gagliardi



THE GREAT BAT INCIDENT OF 2009

In order for you to appreciate this story, you need a little historical background about what happened in 1989 when our kids were about five and seven years old.

We had returned home from Ossipee Lake. My wife, Jo, and our kids entered the house while I unloaded the car. As Jo approached the slider, she discovered a bat on the floor. Not one to overreact, Jo screamed, "IT'S A BAAAAAAT!!!!", ran from the room, and knocked over our son and our daughter as she exited. So much for a mother's instinct to protect her children. She almost knocked ME down too as she ran from the house.

I stopped her long enough to ask what was wrong and, as she tried to regain control, she told me that there was a BIG bat in the living room. I went into the house and found the bat was actually dead. It looked as if it had been for some time. I proceeded to get rid of what was left of the bat, gather up what was left of the kids and life went on.

That brings us to this year. We were spending a wonderful two weeks at Ossipee Lake with our children, John and Kate, now 28 and 26 years old respectively. Also with us was our son-in-law Derek, our granddaughter Melanie and our grand dog Harley. It was Melanie's first vacation with us. I don't know if she will want to go with us again after what happened next.

Everyone went to bed about 11pm but after 10 minutes or so, Derek woke Kate, telling her not to panic but there was a bat in the room. To prove the old saying "The fruit don't fall too far from the tree", Kate took the baby monitor and left. She didn't take the baby, who was in her crib five feet away, but the baby monitor. She apparently did this to have a bird's eye view if the bat landed on Melanie and sucked the life out of her through her nose.

She came into our room to inform us of the situation. I don't have to tell you how Jo reacted. I can just show you the hand print on my back from where she pushed me out of the room and slammed the door behind me.

I met Derek in the living room and he told me the bat was in the bedroom. I suggested we take the crib, with the sleeping Melanie still in it, and move it into the living room. This way we could close the slider and deal with the bat in the morning. We did this and, believe it or not, Melanie didn't wake up.

Somehow, as we moved her, the bat ended up in the living room also. Kate, who was in our bedroom with Jo, shouted to get "Mellie" and bring her to our bedroom. I scooped up Melanie and kicked at the door. Kate opened it just wide enough to slip a dollar bill through but not Melanie. I told her to open the door moreso and when she did, I placed Melanie on the bed. Kate then shoved the door closed, with me still in front of it, nearly crushing my head like a melon between the frame.

Now comes the funny part. Derek and I went on the hunt for the bat. I felt like Elmer Fudd chasing "that Wascally Wabbit. Ha-a-a-a-a-a." Derek turned on the ceiling light and the bat began to fly back and forth, finally landing near the top of the cathedral ceiling.

I tried to think of a way to knock the bat from its

perch when I remembered that I had brought tennis balls with me. I figured I could throw them at the bat in an attempt to stun it, then capture it. I know that bats have great sonar and swinging a broom at it would be useless. I began throwing balls at the bat.

Did you know that tennis balls, especially new ones, have tremendous bounce? I found out the hard way. As I threw them, they ricocheted off of the walls, lamps, pictures and fans, knocking some of them over. I felt like I was inside my own personal pinball machine. Not deterred by the destruction I was causing, I kept on throwing. Derek retrieved the balls for me as well as picked up the pieces of lamps and pictures.

The bat finally flew up to the loft area where John, my son, was sleeping. It was at this time, he decided to open his bedroom door to see what was going on. I told him that there was a bat flying around. Apparently still scarred from "The Great Bat Incident of 1989", he slammed his door so fast that it almost created a vacuum in the house.

The bat landed on the wall just next to the spare bedroom. It was now within my reach but the question was HOW was I going to catch it. I suddenly remembered seeing a fishing net in the utility room. I grabbed it and taped it to a mop handle. I started up the spiral staircase, leading to the loft. I crept up on the bat, hoping that he wouldn't notice me and placed the net squarely over him. He flew into the net just as I had wanted him to.

I hollered to Derek and started down the spiral stairs which are about two feet wide. They are difficult to negotiate when you AREN'T running down them, holding a crazed bat in a fishing net. On about the fifth step, I stumbled and almost pitched myself over the rail and onto the floor below, almost letting the bat escape.

I made it to the bottom, ran for the door, and tossed the fishing net, handle and bat outside. Crisis over. When I went inside and asked Jo if she was okay, she gave me a quizzical look that seemed to say, "What is with you people? Are you whacked or what? How am I supposed to get any sleep around here?"

Melanie, only six months old, I'm sure will not remember any of this but one day I will pull out this story and show her how she survived "The Great Bat Incident of 2009."

REALTY WORLD ADVANTAGE HAS VISION



LISA LUTHER, OWNER
AND HER AGENTS,
CAROLYNN GETZ,
MICHAEL BALBA, AND
CATHY LOMASNEY

When driving through Pinehurst in the evenings, look for the Realty Advantage windows. They may really 'enlighten' you.

In August, Lisa Luther, Owner, and her team of World Realty Advantage agents introduced Windo Vision (TM) to Billerica. This interactive and illuminated display attracts foot traffic to the office windows to experience featured home listings through recorded messages and touch screen technology.

Want to take a visual and audio tour through a home? Enter the listing number and it will pop up on a screen for your review.

"This is a fantastic marketing piece for sellers," said Luther. This tool allows for showing a home over 24 hours. It will include a mortgage calculator and if an email address is provided, the information goes directly to an agent for quick and easy follow up.

"It's neat. People love it," said Luther. The Realty World Advantage office is located in the plaza at 880 Boston Road.



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Sing the song on page 16

Yankee Doodle

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Photos by Gail Lucozzi,
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Don't see it here? Go to
[www.thebillericagreen.com/
septextra.html](http://www.thebillericagreen.com/septextra.html)
for more fun stuff to see and do!

Tons of Photos
that just couldn't fit.
(We tried to squish them in.)

MR. THOMAS DITSON JR. BILLERICA'S AND AMERICA'S YANKEE DOODLE

By Dick Hawes & Bill Brimer



LEFT TO RIGHT: JOE HUMMEL, JOHN NEUHAUSER OF THE KING'S OWN, 4TH REG'T, FRANK MIRASOLO OF THE BILLERICA COLONIAL MINUTE MEN, AND MIKE REVERUZZI AND PATRICK GILGUN OF THE BRITISH MARINES, 2ND COMP BOSTON GARRISON.

In March of 1775, at the Billerica town meeting, a vote was passed to raise a company of 50 Minute Men. As a result, three companies of Billerica men marched out of town on April 19, 1775.

Animosity between the citizens of Massachusetts and the British forces occupying Boston had steadily escalated since the troops landed in 1768. The growing tension had manifested itself in several incidents both political and social, like the Boston Tea Party and the Boston Massacre. Still others are relatively unknown, like the Thomas Ditson incident.

A 33 year old farmer named Thomas Ditson Jr., was eager to become a minute man for the town of Billerica and decided to better arm himself. So on March 7th, he left his family to travel to Boston and find a firelock for sale.

Ditson was directed to a man who "appeared to be a soldier" and went with Sgt. John Clancy to the barracks for members of the 47th Regiment of Foot and bargained for a greatcoat. He paid a sum of 2 pistareen, small silver coins used in America at that time, and placed the coat in a bag before beginning the process of dickering for a firelock.

What happened next largely depends on whose side of the story you believe, Ditson's or Clancy's. Ditson said he offered four dollars for a, "very fine piece" and offered to pay one dollar and a half for an "old rusty piece". Clancy claims he and Ditson began drinking and Ditson offered to buy as many firelocks as the sergeant could gather. He went on to state Ditson also offered "any sum of money" if he would desert the army and come with him to the country. At any rate, Ditson was seized by a group of soldiers and carried off to the guard house on Foster's Wharf at approximately six o'clock that evening.

The next morning, a sergeant told Ditson to strip to his breeches. More men followed with a bucket of tar and a "pillow-bear of feathers." An officer standing ordered the men to tar and feather Ditson from head to toe, including the breeches. A paper was read to Ditson and then hung around his neck, which proclaimed; "American or Democracy exemplified in a villain who attempted to incite one of the soldiers of his Majesty's 47th Regiment to desert and take up arms with rebels against his King and country".

Ditson was then ordered to sit on a chair which had been fastened to a two wheeled donkey cart. About 40 to 50 regulars with muskets and fixed bayonets, led by Lt. Col. Nestbit, pushed Ditson through the streets of Boston, while jeering and singing to the tune of Yankee Doodle:

*Yankee Doodle came to town,
For to buy a firelock,
We will tar and feather him,
And so we will John Hancock.*

Wanting to avoid a massacre, an officer stopped the procession and told Ditson he was free to go.

Thomas Ditson survived the ordeal in good health and joined the minute company in Billerica. A little more than a month later on April 19th, Ditson and other men of the Billerica Minute Men Company answered the call and marched to Concord, opening fire on the regulars at Meriam's Corner. The current company, The Billerica Colonial Minute Men, with tongue firmly planted in cheek, refer to the Battle at Meriam's Corner as "Ditson's Revenge".



LEFT TO RIGHT: MATT LUTINSKI, JACK RICHMAN, FRANK MIRASOLO, BILL BRIMER, ERIC ANDERSON, RUSS WILLIS, RICHARD MACKAY

Captain Bill Brimer of the Billerica Colonial Minute Men (email billericaminuteman@go.com) is also the President & Executive Director of the Billerica Minuteman Statue Association. Capt. Brimer believes a statue is an honorable, historical, fitting and lasting tribute to the patriots who fought for our freedom and this statue should be installed on the common pointing down Concord Road, which was the line of March on April 19, 1775.

Donations may be mailed to:
The Billerica Minuteman Statue Association
Enterprise Bank
674 Boston Road, Billerica, MA 01821
Tel: 978-262-0123

GEAR UP FOR HALF HELMETS OR STETSONS AT SILVER CLOUD

As you step foot into Silver Cloud in Treble Cove Plaza at 199 Boston Road, get ready to be transported back to another time and place. Catering to the aficionado of western wear as well as the avid biker, Pei Ma, owner, can find clothing that fits you for a price that fits your wallet.

Silver Cloud was a chain of stores that have been around for eighteen years in other towns. A year ago, Ma bought out the previous owner. He has now opened up his newest shop here in Billerica.

To let everyone know about this new gem, Ma is hosting a Grand Re-opening Celebration on Saturday, September 19 from 12-4 pm. He will be raffling off Western and Harley boots, accessories, jeans and ever popular Silver Notes, his store gift certificates.

"The theme of our store is the rider of the past and the rider of today," said Ma. "It's a one stop shop for the rider of all time."

If you love the cowboy look, search no further. Ma has many quality Montecarlo Bullhide or Resistol cowboy hats as well as cowboy boots with varying degrees of detail. There are even little moccasins for kids. Rows of plaid shirts, denim jeans and rich leather jackets, tasseled or not, would make any cowboy proud.

Whether Harley chopper or a peppy Japanese model, you won't need to go elsewhere for all your biker gear. Heavier leather jackets ensure you will keep biking into cooler weather. Or if you prefer, his shirt style leathers make for a comfortable summer ride. Ma is knowledgeable in various types of helmets, taking the time to explain the differences between those he carries. Finish off your look with gloves, sunglasses, or belts and you are ready to ride. There is so much to see at Silver Cloud, whether for you or your loved one.

STEPS FOR PARENTS TO PROTECT THEIR FAMILY FROM THE FLU THIS SCHOOL YEAR

Billerica Public Schools, Health Services Office, August 2009

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 4 ways you and your family may keep from getting sick with the flu: (<http://flu.gov/plan/school/parentfactsheet2.html>)

1. Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand cleaners.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
3. Stay home if you or your child is sick for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
4. Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

To prepare for the flu during the 2009-2010 school year:

- Plan for child care at home if your child gets sick or their school is dismissed.
- Plan to monitor the health of the sick child and any other children in the household by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu. Identify a separate room in the house for the care of sick family members.
- Identify if you have children who are at higher risk of the flu by planning with your health care provider to protect them during this season. Children at high risk of the flu include: children under 5 years old and children with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Collect games, books, DVDs and other items to keep your family entertained if schools are dismissed or your sick child must stay home.

COMING TO YOUR MAILBOX IN THE OCTOBER EDITION:

Scouting in Billerica is Fun with a Purpose

Scouts don't just build campfires and make crafts anymore. These kids are having sleepovers on naval ship museums, organizing building projects in the center of town, and investing money in short term savings cd's.

Uncommonly Historical Tours

Did you know Billerica had about 100 historical sites you can easily visit? In the first of a series of features, we walk you through the town common – Billerica's Own Green – to sites within a one mile radius the whole family can explore.

To Bosnia and Back: A Veteran Remembers

One Billerica firefighter retells the story of his military tour as a real time M.A.S.H. communicator.

School Spotlight: Billerica Memorial High School

Students and alumni alike keep active with music and sports

Halloween and Autumn Happenings

We'll list them in our calendar section. Send us anymore you have coming up too.

BABY BOOMERS LOOK TOWARDS RETIREMENT

Over the next two decades, the most chronicled generation in America will gradually enter retirement. At that point, each wave of baby boomers will quickly discover if their retirement plans, Social Security, and personal savings will be sufficient to maintain their existing lifestyles and needs.

Baby boomers—a name given to those born from 1946 to 1965—have been noted for their creation of the “computer age,” quest for physical fitness, and expectations for living long and full lives. Now, as the boomers pass into middle age, many are beginning to focus their attention on retirement.

Unlike the previous Great Depression-to-World War II generation, many baby boomers believe they cannot depend on receiving Social Security benefits during their retirement years. In fact, many economists question the future “security” of the Social Security trust funds.

To further compound concern, many employed boomers may not have employer-funded retirement plans. Since, in today’s work world, employees, rather than employers, generally assume full responsibility for funding their retirement plans, it is no surprise that uncertainty and worry occupy the minds of many of those without guaranteed pensions.



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BROADENING PERSPECTIVES

What can boomers do to determine if their savings and assets will sufficiently fund their retirement years? Definitive answers are often elusive. After all, life is often filled with many variables, and no one really knows for sure what the future holds. However, even with these constraints, boomers can gain much insight by estimating and analyzing the following:

- Potential income sources (e.g., income-producing real estate, inheritances, etc.)
- Projected balances of retirement and savings plans
- Costs of future health care needs
- Annualized rate of inflation over retirement years
- Amount of Social Security income to be received
- Percentage of present income required during retirement years
- Length of years retirement may last or life expectancy

SURVEY SAYS...

A 2008 survey conducted by the Employee Benefit Research Institute* found that only 18% of Americans are very confident they will have enough money to live comfortably in retirement. Results also revealed that only 47% of workers have tried to calculate how much money they will need for a comfortable retirement, and around half (49%) reported that the total amount of their savings (excluding the value of their home and any defined benefit plans) is less than \$50,000. In addition, 22% of workers and 28% of retirees said they have no savings of any kind.

As is true of every generation facing the retirement planning process, baby boomers should have a disciplined savings program in place. If you're a baby boomer, keep in mind that periodic or haphazard deposits may be counterproductive. With a commitment to success and a scheduled plan, you can work toward building the necessary retirement funds to secure your own financial future.

* Source: Retirement Confidence Survey, Employee Benefit Research Institute, 2008. Pursuant to IRS Circular 230, MetLife is providing you with the following notification: The information contained in this brochure is not intended to (and cannot) be used by anyone to avoid IRS penalties. You should seek advice based on your particular circumstances from an independent tax advisor. Copyright © 2009 Liberty Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved. L0409030154(exp0410)(All States)(DC) This article appears courtesy of Frank M. Hynes. Frank is a Registered Representative with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and MetLife Securities, Inc. He focuses on meeting the individual insurance and financial services needs of people in the Billerica area. You can reach Frank at his office at (978) 528-6046 fhynes@metlife.com

The Green Handyman

•By Jeffrey R. Parenti, P.E.



STOP GUTTER GLOP

Welcome to the Green Handyman. In this space I will be giving some practical advice on how to take care of your house and your land.

The family handyman is making a comeback in this recession. Previously, people were hiring professionals to do this sort of work for us. But as many of us are trying to stretch our dollars, we'll all be thinking about what we can do ourselves.

My dad's toolbox was open almost every weekend when I was a kid. I felt like he could fix anything he owned, including the car. All those years holding the flashlight taught me something – being able to take care of your house is a tremendously valuable skill.

So if you are looking for places to cut back in this economy, I can help you turn into your family handyman or handy lady. Don't forget about handy kids! Some will actually want to help.

comfortable. Make sure the feet of the ladder are planted firmly. You'll need to put scraps of wood under the feet on every surface except concrete or asphalt. If the ground is uneven, use the scraps to compensate and the rungs should be level. Wear your best sneakers since traction will help on the ladder.

To get the proper slope for the ladder, stand at the bottom and extend your arm in front of you. Your fingers should just touch the rung nearest eye level. Climb onto the first rung and bounce a little. The ladder should not move.

Anytime you are up on the ladder, never, ever lean your upper body too far to the left or right. If your center of gravity shifts outside the leg of the ladder, it will tip over. Your best rule of thumb is to always keep your shirt buttons in between the legs of the ladder. Resist the urge to stretch for anything out of reach! Climb down and move the ladder over.

If your gutters overflow, water can wind up in places you don't want, such as the house's interior and your basement.

Are you excited about your first home repair? Great! Then let's begin with one of the least pleasant household tasks: cleaning the gutters.

With autumn upon us, thousands of leaves will fall, and many will end up in your gutters. You won't know how many got in there without taking a look.

Why is it important? Leaves can partially or completely block water's path to the downspout, which takes it away from the house. If your gutters overflow, water can wind up in places you don't want, such as the house's interior and your basement. Also, a gutter full of water is very heavy and can tear the gutter right off. It can also damage gutters if standing water is left to freeze and expand.

Can I do it? That depends on how high your gutters are and your tolerance for heights and being on a ladder. If you have never been on a ladder before, it's more intimidating than it looks once you climb up there. But if your house is one or one-and-a-half stories (ranch, raised ranch, cape, split) and you have a good ladder, try it.

How do I stay safe? Unfortunately, it's easy to fall off a ladder. Over 200,000 people are injured each year in ladder accidents. First, make sure you have a good ladder. Invest a little extra in your ladder – you will be much more

What do I need? Just a pair of rubber gloves. Regular yard work gloves will be soaked after one scoop.

How do I do it? Start where the downspout meets the gutter. Just grab a handful of gutter glop and toss it over.

How often should I do it? It all depends on how many leaf-dropping trees are aiming for your gutters. Take a look at least once a year in the late fall. You may need to do it more often if you see one of the following: A slow trickle (or none at all) is coming out of the downspout during a good rainstorm; water is spilling out the side of the gutter; or you see a little plant growing out of your gutter.

What about special gutters that never clog? If you've ever been to a home show, you've seen several companies exhibiting gadget gutters that let in water but not leaves. (This is testament to how many people hate cleaning them out.) They are expensive and not 100% effective. (Few things are, as all veteran handymen know!) “Never-clog” gutters will reduce the amount of time you'll spend cleaning them out, but they will need to be maintained sooner or later.

Just like everything else around the house, Good luck.

Jeffrey R. Parenti, P.E. is a registered professional civil engineer living in Billerica.

DON'T YOU JUST HATE IT WHEN...?

It's amazing where life will lead you and the fates have lead me to Liana. I never would have thought I would be writing a column at this point in my life but hey, who am I to fight destiny?

My job is to write about Pet Peeves and not just mine but yours too. I asked a lot of people what theirs were. I got answers ranging from cell phone use to rudeness. Some people think they're one in the same. I don't but then that's just one person's opinion.

Wikipedia defines a pet peeve (or pet hate), not to be confused with hating you pet, as a minor annoyance that an individual identifies as particularly annoying to them and to a greater degree than others may find it. Examples may be poor table manners, sloppy kitchen hygiene, smoking, grammatical errors in written passages or inconsiderate driving. I'm going to zone in on one that makes me nuts. Rudeness.

So, what defines rudeness? I reverted back to Wikipedia and they said rudeness is the disrespect and failure to behave within the context of a society or a group of people's social laws or etiquette. What does that mean?

I was brought up that it means saying "please" and "thank you". Being polite and holding doors for people. Elbows off the table. It seems today society is a bit lacking in all of these areas, and even in my own home. It drives me nuts, and I'm not alone. In 2006,

a 20/20 poll reported that 84 percent of us are bothered by rudeness and disrespect. It was second on the nation's list. A phone survey taken by the Telephone Doctor Customer Service Training headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri puts lack of good manners and bad attitude as first, with 87 percent complaining of this very problem.

One of the thing that bothers me most is when I stop to let someone cross the street and they either linger and take their time as if I have no place to go or they don't even acknowledge that someone helped them in a small way. All it takes is a "thank you" or a wave. I'd even appreciate a nod. Just some thing to let me know "Hey! I see you. Thanks for helping me."

This also applies when I let you pull out into traffic in front of me or I hold the door open for you. I do because it is polite and getting a smile back or a head nod makes me feel good. If I'm lucky enough to get a thank you, then I'm just over the moon.

A 15 year old close family friend who works at a supermarket told me one of his pet peeves. Last week he was collecting carriages and as he walked out of the door, there was a man standing under the sign that read "no smoking within 40 feet of this building". Yes, you guessed it. He was smoking. The only answer I could give him was it was rudeness on the smokers behalf.

Pet Peeves

•By Nora Fiore



Now I know lots of people think talking on your cell phone in public is rude. That doesn't bother me as long as it's not overly loud. This is probably because I use my cell phone in stores too. I try not to and I keep it short. Or at least until someone gives me the hairy eyeball. Then I hang up right away.

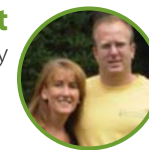
Which brings me to my next rude thing. Cashiers and baggers. The other day I had two baggers and my cashier leaning around me to see each other while they were talking. I'm sorry to interrupt your conversation by wanting to pay for my items but "Hello!" At least include me too. I mean, if I want to be ignored, I'll go home and hang out with my kids.

But alas, not all is lost. In the past few days I've encountered much more politeness than rudeness. I've had the door held for me. People have waved "thank you" when pulling out. The cashiers have been polite and attentive.

I hold out hope for us all. Just remember the golden rule: treat other the way you would want them to treat you. If you would like to be treated with kindness and respect, remember you get what you give. Thank you Liana for having faith in me, and I wish you great success with the new paper. Have a wonderful fall season everyone.

The Traveling Gourmet

•By John and Sherry Livsey



7 NANA JAPANESE STEAK HOUSE:

Perfect for an intimate dinner or a large group celebration.

If you are anything like me, you've had 7 Nana Japanese Steak House on your list of places to check out since it opened last year. Somehow it continues to get bumped down the list like some of the DVD's in my online rental queue.

My husband and I finally went a few weeks back to celebrate his birthday and it turned out to be better than we anticipated. As we entered this Japanese Steak House located at the Treble Cove Plaza in North Billerica, we were instantly delighted in the atmosphere they had created on the inside.

The friendly host immediately greeted us with our options of eating in the dining room or enjoying the show at the hibachi grill. We opted for a table in the dining room where we could have an uninterrupted conversation since it was a rare night of childless dining. We could still watch the chefs entertain guests with their skillful knife tossing and humorous food preparation exhibit from this location.

Our server was prompt and attentive. She took our drink order and quickly arrived with our Fog Cutter and Tokyo Lemonade. The drinks were refreshing and delicious on this hot summer night. We ordered a sample of sushi to start and our server was

helpful in our selection process as we had many questions about their extensive menu and specials. This is the place for sushi in Billerica, each piece was perfectly prepared and so fresh. Our server taught us to mix the wasabi with the soy sauce for the perfect amount of heat in each bite. Sushi is not new for us, however this was our first time trying this tip and it made the whole experience even more enjoyable than usual.

For dinner, the birthday boy chose the Yaki Udon noodles with beef, which was served with Miso soup. The noodles were the perfect consistency and the beef was so tender it could be cut with a fork. I opted for the Tempura special which included shrimp, chicken, and a variety of vegetables all fried in a light crispy batter. The mouthwatering tempura was a pleasant surprise; to have such lightly textured fried food was so enjoyable. The tempura was served with Miso soup and white rice. Our visit was a pleasant and romantic birthday celebration; however we continue to plan our next visit so that we can sample more of this intriguing Japanese fair.

We were surprised to hear that they do not use peanut products in their cooking as our oldest son has an allergy. Our children would enjoy sitting at the hibachi when we go back as a family. We are also interested in going with a group of friends to sit in one of

the private tatami rooms where we can enjoy a traditional Japanese dinner at a sunken table suitable for up to 6 people. For this option, we would need to make a reservation. With their three dining options and fantastic menu, this is a place that should be bumped to the top of your queue.

To view the menu, print coupons, or just to learn more, visit their web-site www.7nanasteakhouse.com.

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