

Letters to the Editor

LETTERS(from page 9)

separate survey at a later date for those not initially included. Full inclusion will allow us to move forward efficiently and expeditiously with the district plan for improvement; and we will be able to determine, sooner rather than later, the reasons why an increasing number of parents are choosing alternative forms of education; and/or why the school budget, bond, and teachers' contract were rejected by the voters in March.

If all parents of school-age children are surveyed, we will no longer need to assume what the reasons are behind those parental decisions to privately or home school their children. It may be that some parents choose alternative forms of education for reasons no public school can be expected to accommodate. But it might also be that the public school system is not meeting the needs of these students and that is why they are leaving. We won't know the reasons until we ask the questions of those parents whose children do not attend our public schools. Nor will we know if some of those parents whose children are currently enrolled are doing so because tuition costs, time, and transportation are issues which prevent them from seeking alternative forms of education for their children.

It is my hope that Dr. Bergeron and the Education Subcommittee will consider revising the current survey to include the entire ConVal community to ensure its success as a reliable and valid tool for assessing "customer satisfaction" of all parties invested in our public school system.

With full inclusion, this satisfaction survey will result in much more reliable and objective data and be better able to achieve its primary objective of identifying areas in need of improvement, as well as those areas of strength upon which we can build together as a community.

Without full inclusion from the outset, we will have lost yet another year prior to getting to the root causes of why the budget, bond, and teachers' contract didn't pass; and why too many of our district's children are not attending our district schools.

**Deb McGrath
Francestown**

Good kids suffer

To the editor:

I do believe they say "It was only a matter of time."

It is disheartening that a small group of rotten teenagers in New Ipswich ruined it for the community of kids that did everything right. The police have better things to do, and the people that gave their time, money and resources had to sit back and watch the park slowly get beaten down by a bunch of punks.

Rest assured, the bad seeds will always have a rock to crawl under and cause trouble. It is the good kids of New Ipswich that always wore a helmet, followed the rules, and certainly never brought a pack of butts to the park — they are the ones that suffer, not the trouble makers.

I hope their parents are embarrassed and mortified, although with kids like that, they learned it from somewhere. It is another example of not knowing where your kids are or what they are doing — except we all know what they are doing, destroying another safe avenue for the rest of our good kids!

**Karen Breault
New Ipswich**

Questionable practices

To the editor:

It was heartwarming to hear I was able to bring joy to several Jaffrey area residents in regard to my arrest in the April 30 Ledger-Transcript article headlined "Man charged with violation of electrician's rules." They appear in some cases to be opponents of my controversial methods to uphold citizen's rights.

I've been a handy man of many trades in this area for almost 30 years. When it comes to certain trades requiring licensing, there are exceptions written into New Hampshire contractor statutes. Occasionally on request, I may advise individuals or homeowners wishing to use these exceptions or their rights with their securing their own permits and inspections where required. The Department of Safety contractors board has many questionable practices to thwart these homeowners rights. It also appears to have earned me my photograph on their dart board up in Concord for assisting these homeowners with the DOS's constant accusations of these actions being illegal.

In the recent ice storm, there were thousands of people in need of assistance with their generators. Electricians were tied up, parts weren't available and thousands of people needed help. Unknown to many, when a state of emergency is declared, it provides in part temporary relief under federal law from many ordinances to homeowners. Hundreds hooked up their generators where it required shutting off the main breaker. The lineman were well aware of this and were checking lines for generator back feeding as with hundreds of reports of this to the state.

A Dublin homeowner, one of many whom I had advised, accidentally had the main breaker on. Thankfully, no harm done. When it came to the DOS inspector's attention that I was the one who had advised this homeowner, he proceeded to follow them around Dublin threatening them in zealous pursuit of my arrest. Rightly so, this homeowner had this investigator served for stalking. Out of compassion the Dublin homeowner didn't pursue charges, only wanting their involvement in this vendetta to cease.

Almost immediately after this court hearing in January, the DOS contractors board requested charges be brought forward on an old DOS case report investigated over a year ago in regard to electrical work on a hot dog stand in Jaffrey. Portable units, trailers, appliances don't require a licensed con-

tractor. However, where the state has so much riding on this, I expect my opponents will have more to be joyful about in the near future.

**Jean Coutu
Jaffrey**

Don't miss ConVal play

To the editor:

On May 1 my family and I had the great privilege and pleasure to watch "Once Upon a Mattress," the spring musical presented by ConVal Drama. Co-Directors Tim Clark and Liz Halper did a superb job of casting and directing the actors in this ensemble, who work together masterfully to create a hilarious and enjoyable story. Aside from the spot-on comic flourishes sprinkled throughout the show, a large part of the brilliance of this production comes from the music and singing, and for that Music Director Marybeth Hallinan deserves a huge amount of credit, along with all of the student musicians in her live orchestra, which includes drums, trumpet, bass, cello, violin, bass clarinet, clarinet, flute, xylophone and piano. The costumes are impeccable and colorful, and riotous when necessary, thanks to volunteers Kirsten Peterson and Leandra MacDonald. And the singing, acting and costumes are complemented by some great dancing as well, choreographed by ConVal graduate Sarah Brown. Truly, every contributor to this show deserves mention for giving 100 percent in creating a wonderful performing arts experience to share with our community.

If you didn't catch this show last weekend at ConVal High School's Lucy Hurlin Theater, go see it this coming weekend on Friday or Saturday night. Don't miss this extraordinary production!

**Martha Eichler
Peterborough**

The town is friendly

To the editor:

In 2005, my family and I moved to Peterborough after an attic fire in our house in Hillsborough. Sadly, during the early morning hours of April 29 this year, our residence on 20 Old Sharon Road in Peterborough suffered an electrical fire.

Everyone made it out safely, and our neighbors in the adjoining apartments did as well. The responders to the fire acted professionally and did a nice job extinguishing the fire and walking through with me the next steps.

Political Advertisement

Elect Carol Lenox Town Clerk

Carol streamlined internal office procedures for greater efficiency.

Turn to page 5 to see who is voting for Carol on Tuesday, May 12!

Paid for by Jim Grant, Chairman, Committee to Elect Carol Lenox for Peterborough Town Clerk

While losing a dwelling is not easy, especially for younger children — our children are 8 (Cheyenne) and 6 (Cole) — the community at a whole has made the situation bearable. From clothing to food, to support and community, this has shown what a "small" town can do for its residence and what the people of a community are willing to do.

Peterborough has a nice mix of traditional and contemporary features, from architecture and neighborhood layout, to infrastructure and development. A place we have — especially my wife (Angel or Angela) and my children — have come to call home.

For the moment, we are residing at the Jack Daniels Inn in town, so the kids can attend school, and have been looking for residence in Peterborough. After the outpouring of support we would be amiss to try and leave this town.

In the words of my daughter — "House spooky now, the town is friendly. I like it here." Although Cole cannot speak as well as others, he has vocalized in his own way: "I feel happy and my family is OK."

Thank you.

**Craig Heinselman
Peterborough**

We must choose education

To the editor:

"If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

These are the closing words in an interview with Arne Duncan, secretary of education, in an article by Walter Isaacson in Time, April 27, 2009, on "How to Raise the Standard in America's Schools."

Isaacson's cry for higher standards is not new. Institutionalization of low expectations in our education system began more than 50 years ago. During these decades we have been reminded annually of how poorly we compare with other nations in educating our students in mathematics and reading. In Isaacson's piece, we rank 25th in math, following the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Norway and Spain. Our education system is (unevenly) open to all. Anyone in it is free to excel and many do. God bless them! What is not good about our system is that our expectations are low and our perception of "adequacy" to compete globally is inadequate.

Many have criticized American businesses for outsourcing jobs. It is past time to recognize that many of those jobs are lost in our relatively high labor-cost economy because in our education system we fail to prepare our youth to compete for them.

Gene Wilhoit, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers is quoted in Isaacson's article as saying "I see standards as the essential foundation for all educational reforms."

Arne Duncan is presented as "The Apostle of Reform." He advocates more hours, days and weeks in class, more schooling options, recognizing the distinction between certification and qualification of teachers. He sees long-term opportunity ahead with better prospects for teachers in a declining economy (meaning fewer career job opportunities elsewhere).

Essential reform in our ConVal schools is going to be even more difficult to achieve because of our votes against the school bond, budget and contract this year. We can make improvements within present constraints, but, sadly, we have chosen only temporary savings in the near term and sacrificed opportunities to do a little more to slow the con-

tinuing decline in our education system relative to those of other developed countries. Of the two alternatives posited by Arne Duncan, we must choose education.

**John Vance
Peterborough**

A glorious event

To the editor:

Last weekend (May 3), the Monadnock Chorus celebrated in the Peterborough Town House 50 years of choral music. This was the last time for Dr. Carroll Lehman as musical director and conductor of the Monadnock Chorus after 20 years of service. He had chosen the beloved "Verdi Requiem" as his farewell performance.

And what a glorious, wonderful event it was! Chorus, soloists and orchestra achieved the highest level of excellence. We can be very proud to hear such challenging music in our little town of 6,000 people. We are indeed very fortunate to live in "Peterborough, a Good Town to Live In."

We thank Dr. Lehman for undertaking such a momentous task and wish him well for his further endeavors.

**Karin Van Strien
Peterborough**

MONADNOCK Ledger-Transcript ONLINE POLL

Are you in favor of the proposed 35 cents per pack cigarette tax hike?

Yes, it will raise much needed money37%

Yes, it could cut down on smoking .31%

No, it's not fair to smokers23%

No, it will hurt local businesses ...9%

Take part in this week's poll:

Do you think the media overreacted to the swine flu scare?

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