



Town Times

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The national becomes very personal

Sue VanDerzee

From The Editor's Desk

While we pride ourselves on being a local newspaper, and indeed consider coverage of national news largely beyond our scope, every so often an issue reverberates at all levels. Now is one of those times. The economic crisis – whether it is as dreadful as some warn or a only bump in the road – is coming home to roost in many ways.

Candidates for state office are figuring out how to deal with Connecticut budget deficits caused largely by less income and sales taxes flowing in from residents whose stock portfolios are suddenly worth much less or whose salary growth has been nonexistent.

Town officials, in turn, think about which of the very few discretionary programs they can cut to allow them to heat town buildings and pay the educational bills.

In an effort to further understand residents' thinking, our poll question this week

concerned the bailout, which actually passed the House of Representatives last week after press time. Our question was: Do you think the House of Representatives should approve the bailout bill?

Out of 32 responses, 22 said "no" (69 percent) while 10 said "yes" (31 percent). The congresspeople representing us were similarly divided, with Rosa DeLauro voting "yes" and Joe Courtney voting "no."

One of the two residents who attached comments expressed a distrust of the Bush Administration to properly and fairly manage the money granted in the bailout while the other noted that the bailout made him "ashamed" of the political process in this country.

On a lighter note, our question about readers' favorite part of the 2008 Durham Fair generated no new responses (it's *so* last week!) so we will ask a new question on Friday.

Letters to the Editor

Spelling Bee

To the Editor,

If you need proof of the vibrancy of our two towns, just go to the Town Times calendar. Last week you could shop at a flea market, go to a model train show, enjoy a pig roast, listen to local authors at both the Durham and Levi Coe libraries and even enroll in a set-back tournament.

Next week another vibrant local event will be listed in the calendar. It's free; it's for all ages; it's an old fashioned way to have fun in a new fashioned format; it's a terrific break from political telephone calls and doomsday headlines; it features local personalities from both towns locked in combat in a fight to the finish.

It's the first annual spelling bee sponsored by the Coginchaug Valley Education Foundation at Coginchaug High School at 7 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 17.

There will be teams in costume, an MC, judges, a great raf-

fle of local delights, and to top it all, trophies for the winners of the spelling bees in our local schools as well as the evening's adult winners.

Some folks say that spelling is a dying skill because of spell check. The rest of the nation says that we can't spell since no New Englanders have won the National Spelling Bee since 1939. Come on out on Friday, Oct. 17, and watch us prove them wrong. Come on out to support your neighbors, friends and local businesses and try your skill at spelling the words too. Bee there or bee square.

Merrill Adams CVEF,
 Middlefield

One of the good guys

To the Editor:

It isn't always easy to identify the good guys in today's political climate. I have always thought that, when in doubt, I would pick the person that has demonstrated character

throughout his life.

I am a proud veteran, and I am a volunteer who helps other veterans in the VA hospital. It is sometimes sad to see these old souls who served our country, left unappreciated. Ray Kalinowski has not only served alongside these soldiers, he still cares about their well-being and is dedicated to seeing that they get the care and appreciation they deserve. The Connecticut Department of the American Legion named Ray Kalinowski "Legislator of the Year" for 2008, for advocating for the rights of veterans and for their families.

There is an old saying that sadly endures through the years, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." Ray never forgot them. He has worked relentlessly towards seeing that those who said "yes" when the country needed them, are not allowed to just 'fade away!'

Ray Kalinowski is perhaps one of the finest people I have ever met. Here is a patriot that deserves your vote. He's definitely one of the good guys!

William E. Currin, Middlefield

Why is he staying away?

Dear Editor:

Why has our current State Representative done next to nothing to get \$250,000 in state funds granted to the town of Middlefield by the State Legislature for improvements to the Mattabeseck Bridge?

In 2005, the State Legislature passed Special Act 05-1, which earmarked \$250,000 in grant money for Middlefield to help with the cost of repairing the Mattabeseck Bridge. The \$250,000 grant represents approximately 10 percent of our annual non-education-related budget, from which improvements to structures like the Mattabeseck Bridge are paid.

On Feb. 7, 2007, nearly two years later, our State Representative wrote one letter — that's right, one letter — in an effort to obtain these funds. While we struggle with our property taxes, our State Rep. writes only one letter to obtain our grant money. What's most

distressing is that the letter may simply have been for show, and he may very well have no intention of trying to get us that grant money.

Grant money is controlled by the governor's office. Our current representative likes to remind us how connected he is with the governor, being that they are both members of the Republican Party. Yet, if he's so connected, why hasn't he worked harder to obtain these funds? The answer may be as simple as party politics. We know the governor does not want to release these funds. Perhaps our State Rep doesn't have what it takes to lobby his party boss for our benefit.

So, before you stay with Ray, ask why Ray stays away from helping provide property tax relief for us in Middlefield.

Mary E. Johnson, Middlefield

Dog park news

To the Editor

My name is Tyler Sibley and I have been working towards building a dog park in Middlefield as my Eagle Scout Leadership Project. I have been meeting with the town commissions for the last six months and now have a signed agreement between the Middlefield Dog Owner's Group and the Town of Middlefield. The dog park will be located on the 75-acre King Property on Besack Mountain. It will allow dogs to run free without their leashes,

See Dog Park, page 33

Letters policy

The Town Times intends to present a forum for the lively exchange of ideas and issues. To facilitate the publication of your contributions, several guidelines should be followed. Letters to the editor must be signed, with a phone number included. The writer will be called to confirm authorship. No anonymous letters will be printed. Contributions by any individual or group will not be published more frequently than once a month. Every effort will be made to print all letters received. However, the selection and date of publication will be at the discretion of the editor. Finally, the opinions expressed by our letter writers are not necessarily those of this newspaper. Deadline: Tuesday noon for Friday publication.

Special election letter rules

In order to allow the largest number of citizens to express their opinions on the upcoming elections, we set a few special election season letter rules. Number one, the deadline for election letters will be Monday at 5 p.m. Number two, election letters will be limited to 250 words. **Also, in order to allow as many people as possible to weigh in, we will not print letters that have already been printed in another publication.** For the last week before elections (deadline Oct. 27), only positive letters of support will be accepted. Of course, only signed letters with phone numbers, so we can verify authorship, will be accepted.

Dog Park (From page 8)

and owners to socialize with other dog owners. The park will be about one acre enclosed with a 5-foot chain link fence. There will be separate fenced areas for both large and small (or timid) dogs. We have just started fundraising, and already have \$2,000 and have 450 feet of fence donated by Home Depot. We had a booth at the Lake Besbeck flea market and raised \$662 at that one event. Our next two fundraisers are a golf tournament and a doggy costume contest. The golf tournament is on Sunday, Oct. 19, at the Hunter's Golf Course in Meriden. Contact George Jacobs at (203) 314-1882 for details and to sign up.

The doggy costume contest will be at Peckham Park on Sunday, Oct. 26 from 2 to 4 p.m. Stop by even if you do not want to dress up your dog. The dogs will get a chance to run free inside the fence, and play with other dogs. We need to raise a lot of money to build the park and also want to have more people sign up to be members of the Middlefield Dog Owner's Group (Mi-DOG, pronounced My-DOG). Thank you to the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Park and Rec. Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Home Depot of Wallingford, Xenelis Construction, Mr. Mickey Fowler, Mr. Mike Augeri all the people that send donations, and the 20 members of Mi-DOG that have

helped me so much. Mr. Chris Hurlburt has been nice enough to host our website as a link on the park & rec. website. Check it out <http://www.magicofchristopher.com/middlefield/or> e-mail me at MiDOG@comcast.net. Every little bit helps so if you see a Mi-DOG collection can or want to send a check made out to Middlefield Boy Scout Troop 33 to Tyler Sibley, P.O. Box 0454, Middlefield, CT 06455-0454, it will be greatly appreciated. Just write "Dog Park" on the memo line.

*Tyler Sibley, president
Middlefield Dog Owners
Group (Mi DOG)*

Vote for Ray

To the Editor: Town Times

I take great pride in having Ray Kalinowski as our 100th District Representative to the General Assembly, which encompasses Middlefield, Rockfall, Durham and Middletown.

Ray serves on the legislature's Veterans' Affairs Committee, Environment Committee and Public Safety Committee, of which he is the ranking member.

As an independent voter I always vote for the candidate who I think will best represent the citizens of our District and I can't think of anyone more qualified to do this than our present State Representative Raymond Kalinowski, who is running for his fourth term in this office.

Ray is very receptive to any questions or issues that any cit-

izen may have. He will take the time to look into it and see if it is the best for everyone prior to taking any action. Ray has always represented every citizen in the 100th Assembly District and not just a chosen few.

Ray is a man of great stature, integrity and creditability and I'm very proud to say that he is my State Representative, as well as a good friend.

He has one of the best track records in the legislature as well as his past employment history with the U.S. Air force, U.S. Secret Service, federal government and the town of Durham. He has initiated and backed many legislature bills that have come up for emergency responders, veterans, senior citizens and many volunteer organizations, just to mention a few.

We are so fortunate to have Ray represent our District and he is a great asset to the State of CT as well. This is why I ask you to consider Ray Kalinowski on Tuesday Nov. 4, when you cast your vote for our State Representative.

*Ken Kindschi, Former (Ret.)
EM/H.S Director, Middlefield*

Consider Suerth

To the Editor:

The economy is certainly the number one thing on everyone's mind right now, and truth be told, it scares me that we have Ed Meyer representing us in the state senate right now. He voted to increase our taxes

when there was a budget surplus, what do you think he will do now that there is a deficit. Not to mention, he has one of the worst records in the state senate for business in Connecticut. We need Ryan Suerth. I ask you to consider Ryan when you cast your ballot on Nov. 4.

William LaFlamme, Middlefield

Middlefield needs tax leadership

To the Editor

Recently I received yet another tax bill from the town of Middlefield, and this time my anger had reached its limits. The new Sewer Usage bill was now \$265, up from \$190. Yet the actual service provided has not changed one iota. This is the same for every tax bill town residents receive. Services are in no way commensurate with the taxes. In truth, there are very few actual services.

So where does the source of the ever rising tax bills lay? It is clear; it lies with the 80 percent that is funneled over blindly to the Board of Education. I say blindly because despite the protestations of our Superintendent and the members of the Board (of Education), it is indeed blindly sent over. The budgets submitted are often deceptive and rarely detailed and clear; and if anything is clear it is that our school system is top-heavy with administrators. Our Superintendent makes about double what the Mayor of Wallingford makes and there

are a number the British would call redundant positions that reach the \$100,000 a year level. Ours is a system of barely 2,000 students total. Yet the budget is over \$30 million. I have taught for nearly 30 years and I do understand very well where money helps education and when it really has no effect.

What I see in District 13 is a padding and inability to distinguish between wants and needs. Every time a budget is criticized, the cry of "our children's education is at risk" is heard. Yet where does our Superintendent first cut? Students; never administration. Teaching overseas one easily sees the inefficiency of the American education system and the wasting of monies that goes with an unchecked Board of Education.

As far as the board goes, it has long been a mystery to me why they do not present themselves to a general election. The usual reply is that they wish to keep politics out of the process. But tax money is politics, and there is no reason why board members cannot run for positions after clearly stating their views and positions and let the general vote determine who is on the board, rather than a room of people that cannot hold all town voters. The method of selecting board members is outdated and part of the problem of high taxes. A movement to change how members are elected to the BOE is long overdue

See **Tax**, next page

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