

Letters & Opinion

Thanks to Emergency Service Personnel

To the editor:

Just a note of gratitude to the emergency service personnel who responded to my accident on August 6th.

Although I do not remember much of your prompt and able response, clearly you helped me begin the process which is resulting in a gradual move forward toward recovery.

Thank you
John Dunn

“Hey Congress, where’s the transparency?”

To the editor:

It is simply impossible to read a 1,428 page bill in 16 hours. Yet this is exactly what happened with the “Cap and Trade” bill that was passed by the House of Representatives earlier this year. In order to exercise our constitutional right to voice concerns about legislation being considered in Washington, DC, we need to have access to the legislation that our elected officials will be voting on.

Who could possibly be against that? Apparently Paul Hodes and Carol Shea-Porter, that’s who! There is a resolution in the House, H. Res 554, which would mandate that all legislation be posted on the internet for 72 hours before Congress could vote on it. Unfortunately, it’s being held up in committee by the leadership of the House.

In order to move it to the House floor for an immediate vote, a majority of our elected representatives in the House need to sign what is called the Weldon discharge petition. It will require 218 signatures in order for this to pass. So far 182 members have signed this petition. Unfortunately, neither Paul Hodes nor Carol Shea-Porter has signed it.

I’ve already called Paul Hodes but can’t get an answer as to why he is against providing the citizen’s of New Hampshire the right to actually “read the bills” he is going to vote on.

If you think we should have the right to read the bills before Congress votes on them please call Paul Hodes and Carol Shea-Porter today and ask them to sign the Weldon discharge petition.

Sincerely,
Andrew Bridge
Amherst

Host Homes Offer Support to Parents and Kids

To the editor:

The Host Homes Program would like to get the word out to area parents and teens that we are here to support them. It isn’t always easy to be a parent or a kid. Parents are working longer hours, a dollar doesn’t seem to stretch as far as it used to, and kids are looking for things to do. While we can’t pretend to solve all your problems, Host Homes has many resources available to both teens and parents:

Youth Resource Poster – This is a one page hand out of the resources in this area available, whether it is where to get your GED, job assistance, extracurricular activity suggestions, STD counseling, how to get a mentor, affordable housing assistance and more.

Life Skills Classes – We have a class available to teach kids how to get an apartment, a job, a bank account, and more. Call us for the next start-up date.

Parent Support Group – Wouldn’t you like to be able to talk to other parents honestly about what you’re going through and to learn some new strategies to work with your teenager?

Drug and Alcohol Awareness Group – This new program is being offered to area families whose teens may be struggling with dependency issues. This is a time for parents and teens to come together to learn about the dangers of chemical dependency and its consequences.

Family Mediation – Mediation assists the family to communicate and work out struggles in a non-judgmental fashion.

Respite – Respite is a time for a teen to live with another family, up to 30 days, which will give you a cooling off period. In that time you begin mediation and counseling so you have new skills and strategies to help the family live together more smoothly.

Please call 672-1069 if you think we may be of help in your situation. Our services are always free.

Sincerely,
Mary Pat Jackson, Coordinator
Host Homes

Vigil Thank You

To the editor:

Since October 4, when Kimberly Cates was taken from us, and her daughter, Jaimie, was seriously wounded, the community of Mont Vernon has struggled to make sense of how such a horrible tragedy could happen.

The answer to that question may never come, but in the last two weeks, Mont Vernon has come together with strength and grace, proving to itself, and to others, that this small town is indeed a family.

We would like to extend our thanks to a few special members of our family who stepped forward and made the candlelight vigil held on behalf of the Cates family possible: Police Chief Kyle Aspinwall and his officers; Fire Chief Jay Wilson and his department; Mont Vernon Fire Department Auxiliary; Mont Vernon Board of Selectmen; Welfare Officer Richard Masters; Alene Candles of Milford; the Rev. Barbara McKusick Liscord; the Rev. Mike Sacco; the staff at the Mont Vernon Village School; and all the volunteers who on a moment’s notice brought refreshments and helped pull the event together.

We are awed and inspired by the people of Mont Vernon. Please continue to keep Jaimie and David in your thoughts.

Sincerely,
Pody Hansbrough
Vigil Organizer
Mont Vernon

Open Letter to the Community

Dear Parents and Community Members,

We want to thank all the parents and community members who joined us at the Crisis Information Session last Monday evening. We appreciated the thoughtful questions and support we all felt for helping our students through the recent weeks.

Members of the community asked good questions about what we have in place, or plan to put in place as a result of this tragedy. What we hope happens as a result of our coming together is the developing of new ways to meet the complex needs of an adolescent population and their families and more participation for programs already established. It is important for all stakeholders to work together to raise our students.

Programs and structures we are planning to offer in the near future:

- **Parent/Administrators Coffees** will be hosted on Nov 3rd from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and Nov 10th from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the high school.
- **Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys** by Michael Thompson. On Wednesday, December 16th at 3:30 in the Souhegan theatre, the PTSA will host a conversation with this New York Times best selling author. Thompson is a psychologist, school consultant, and author of eight books. We will also sponsor a book club reading/discussion during the weeks preceding this event.
- **The Dark Side of Social Networking.** On Thursday, February 11th at 7:00 in the theatre, the PTSA has asked Amherst Police Officers John Smith and Michael Knox, to discuss online social networking sites. They will discuss current trends, issues students are facing when utilizing the sites, and prevention and monitoring suggestions.
- **Do you know what’s in your medicine cabinet?** On Wednesday, March 31st at 4:30, the PTSA has invited Scott Graham, clinical supervisor and consultant for many mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, to discuss the signs, symptoms, and harmful effects of prescription drug abuse among our teens. Child care is available at no cost for each of our presentations. Please contact Dean of Students Bob Thompson, 673-9940 x310.
- **We are planning additional advisors’ training** to develop lessons and protocols dealing with bullying and harassment, drug abuse, and mental health issues.
- **We are working with our PTSA on additional programming** to support our parent community.

Below are a few of the supportive structures that are already in place for our students.

- **Advisory continues to serve as a cornerstone to helping our students navigate through academic/social/behavioral aspects of high school.** Students meet in small groups of 10-12 with a faculty member. Our advisory coordinator provides tools for identifying students’ needs, as well as providing protocols for discussing progress reports and students’ academic strengths and concerns. As you can imagine, Advisory was a significant piece in helping our students through the events of the past few weeks.
- **CORE Team, our student assistance program, meets regularly to identify, discuss, and follow up on interventions for students identified by peers, staff, or parents, as exhibiting behavior which raises questions about substance use/abuse.**
- **Our RtI (Response to Intervention) team is actively working to identify and intervene with social/behavioral and academic supports for students brought forward by staff.**
- **Our Self in Society course provides academic, health, behavioral, social support and goal setting to students in need of more individualized attention.**
- **Our Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor (LADC) offers services to all students as needed. Support for students in recognizing negative habits, as well as recovery and placement/referral services are provided.**
- **Comprehensive counseling options include the opportunity to work with our school counselors, social worker, drug and alcohol counselor, and school psychologist.**

Please know that we are working hard to take care of our students and to be attentive to the needs expressed by our adult community. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Jim Bosman, Bob Thompson,
Colleen Meaney, Karen Chiniinis,
Peggy Silva

Trustees Announce Fundraising for New Library Carpeting

To the editor:

With children all around her on the Library’s worn and stained carpeting, Jackie Biger, our wonderful children’s librarian has made it work. Despite the shabby condition of the children’s room floor, the kids love the library and what she has to offer.

Programming is exciting and enrollment in reading programs and activities is way up. Now Miss Jackie is leaving us to start a new life with her husband in France, and we’d like to kick off a fund raising appeal that will replace the carpeting on the lower level.

This carpeting has been in place 25 years, a lot longer than we’d leave carpeting in our homes. It is not just unsightly. It is unsanitary and embarrassing in a library that has recently been named one of the top five in our state. It’s time for the carpet to go and a great way to say a goodbye to Jackie, too, for she wants new carpeting for the children more than anyone.

We will be putting in carpet tiles, which are not only sensible in a public building, but easy for fund raising. Each tile costs \$25 to purchase and install, and there will be a list of donors visible in the downstairs area where a child can see that a parent or grandparent or friend has donated a carpet tile for Miss Jackie in his or her name. We’ll also give Miss Jackie a list of those who helped out with the project. We have a matching grant from the Bean Foundation, so we need to raise just \$6,000 from other sources to put down new carpeting on the lower level.

There is a sample tile on display so you can see what the carpet will be like. You can make checks payable to the Amherst Town Library with “carpet tile” on the memo line or visit the Library website www.amherst.lib.nh.us and click on Friends PayPal account where you will be able to use your credit card.

Please consider buying one or more carpet tiles for the project. This is simple, direct, and much needed fundraising, and something that your children can understand and get excited about. We all know that when something as important as the local library needs help, people do what they can, such as buying a carpet tile to remember someone who made a difference in our lives.

The Amherst Town Library Trustees

Light Up for Halloween

To the editor:

Every year, as the Amherst Tree Lighting Festival approaches, I am asked if village homes HAVE to have white candle lights in their windows; folks wonder if it is a law! No, it is not a law, but it is a tradition which many enjoy.

However, this coming Halloween is the perfect time to put orange lights in the village windows! The village is aglow on Oct. 31 from 6-8 pm. Houses are decorated, ghosts are flying and Jack o’ Lanterns are jumping...the perfect time for colored window lights!

See you there!
Ann and Peter Bergin

Physician Assisted Suicide is a Dangerous Step Toward Euthanasia

To the editor:

Physician prescribed suicide is on the New Hampshire House legislative agenda. The bill, HB 304, is passing through the House Judiciary Committee and will be forwarded to the full House for action. It is a bill that some see as the first step towards an euthanasia policy.

There is no question that if a person is terminally ill, life is drawing to an end, and the person is in severe pain that he or she can commit suicide. It is a personal decision. But when government legalizes suicide, government is validating and promoting the act. This bill will authorize doctors to prescribe suicide pills for patients that have been diagnosed with an illness that might cause them to die within 6 months. This lawful authority is not limited to patents in pain, but includes those depressed, even if that depression comes and goes over time. Further the bill authorizes the doctor to prescribe the pill but does not require the doctor to be present and administer the pills. What happens if the patient obtains the pills and decides not to use them? Do the pills go into the medicine cabinet where they can be removed by others?

The American Medical Association, American College of Physicians and many church bodies oppose this bill. It is one thing for a physician to be authorized by the patient through the authority of a living will not to perform heroic measures to prolong life, but it crosses the line from the healing arts to the killing arts to tell physicians they should be active participants in causing death. Currently it is a class B felony in New Hampshire if a person aids or solicits another to commit suicide. That protection should remain in place.

And what have the sponsors, Rep Weed, Democrat from Keene, Rep. Watrous, Democrat from Concord, Rep. Mitchell Democrat from Jaffrey, titled the bill: *Death with Dignity*. There is no dignity in doctors becoming the instrument of death.

The debate on this bill continues in the NH Legislature. There is time for you to express your views. Write, call and e-mail your representatives and senator.

Representative Robert H. Rowe
Milford and Amherst

Letters to The Editor:

The Amherst Citizen is eager to serve as a community forum. We welcome your letters, opinions, and commentaries and make every effort to run them in their entirety. We do reserve the right to edit. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the position of the staff of The Amherst Citizen.

Please direct your letters, views and commentary to the Editor, The Amherst Citizen, P.O. Box 291, Amherst, NH 03031-0291, or e-mail your submission to: news@amherstcitizen.com. We will attempt to run your letter as submitted (space permitting) providing it is signed and phone number is included.

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- ❑ Harvest Market, Hollis
- ❑ Harvest Market, Bedford
- ❑ Hannaford SuperMarket, Bedford

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