An Insider Spills the Beans on a Criminal Organization

Part One: [Part Two will appear Feb. 8.—The Ed.]

We have a confession to make: we recently bought a book.

Now, purchasing a book is not an act that typically induces moral qualms. But this book is different. Its title is How to Rig an Election: Confessions of a Republican Operative. Its author, Allen Raymond, pleaded guilty here in New Hampshire to the felonious jamming of Democratic telephone lines on Election Day, 2002. He subsequently spent three months in a federal prison, and is now on probation. We paid $25.00 (to our friendly locally-owned bookstore,* of course) for his book. Unless the law bars him from profiting from his crime, Mr. Raymond will almost certainly receive some portion of that amount as a royalty.

So we have, in effect, rewarded him for disenfranchising New Hampshire voters—we have retroactively become his accomplice.

Confession is said to be good for the soul. Having confessed to this purchase, we do feel a little bit better—but we are not sure that's enough. We read the book, too—an experience that makes us wonder whether mere confession will be sufficient, or whether further penance may be required.

Co-Author? Or Partner in Crime?

Before we go any further let's take a (mercifully) brief look at Mr. Raymond's co-author, Ian Spiegelman.

Spiegelman is a former Page Six gossip columnist for Rupert Murdoch's New York Post. There may be lower rungs on journalism's moral ladder, but they can only be assumed to exist somewhere below the surface of a vile and opaque liquid. We're not going to go looking for it. We feel badly enough already.

Spiegelman was fired from Page Six in 2004 for failing to live up even to the Post's moral standards. It is a credit to Allen Raymond's intelligence, if nothing else, that he took Spiegelman on board as co-author—it creates a context that works to Raymond's advantage.

Who is Allen Raymond?

Raymond's confession begins with his assertion that he comes from "a rather illustrious old American family." His maternal great-grandfather founded the Underwood typewriter company. His great-grandmother is characterized by her correction of an electrician's error: "No, no," she told him with a laugh, he should have hung the new light over "the other Monet."

"The dominant concept, noblesse oblige, is one to whom much has been given, much is expected." Those who have sufficient means are expected to work towards the greater good of society as a whole. They may often be observed doing so in the society pages of newspapers.

An alternative view is that America is a melting pot in which those on the bottom get burned, while the scum rise to the top. This take is typically put forward while the scum rise to the top. As it happens, the author's paternal grandfather (and namesake) Allen Raymond was conveniently enroled in a position which would have allowed him to reinforce the noblesse oblige theory. He was a "legendary correspondent for the New York Times, New York Herald, and the International Herald Tribune." According to an old edition of Time magazine available online (Monday, Nov. 14, 1955), the elder Raymond once wrote a 70-page report for the American Civil Liberties Union on the "supression of government news by official agencies, usually hiding behind the subterfuge of classified information." So the theory of noblesse oblige could not have been utterly foreign during Raymond's youth.*

Despite growing up in an environment where dusty typewriters provided a steady backdrop, the young Allen Raymond, as he might have been related to Henry Jarvis Raymond, the founder of the New York Times, and gotten his job through the time-honored practice of nepotism. Born in 1920, H J Raymond died at the age of 49, after suffering a stroke while entertaining his mistresses. We have quoted Raymond the Younger, and his publicist at Simon & Schuster, on this topic, but as of press time we have had no reply.

One thing revealing about it. Not so wild. As a young PR flack fresh out of college, he says he was making $21,000 a year, spending $35,000, and letting his trust fund take care of the deficit.

"The Underwood fortune ensured that I'd never go hungry," Raymond writes. But his pride and his ambition goaded him to "leave [his] imprint somehow." By writing this book he seems to have succeeded—although not in a way anyone else would envy. What might be called his "research phase" for the book—a decade of the sleaziest sort of political one could ever imagine—appears to be, in retrospect, not something of which he is proud. And who wants to spend three months in a federal pen? The villain hostile to him for disenfranchising New Hampshire to the nether regions of the public relations industry—literally. He gathered toilet-flushing data which later garnered a considerable amount of free publicity during the Super Bowl for his client, Ty-D-Bol. Raymond says he was "fascinated" by the PR racket's ability to "massage people's perceptions so that they saw what you wanted them to see." But his ambition was unslaked.

"I was going nowhere," he writes. "I wanted to do something remarkable, to leave my imprint somewhere." He was ambitious, but other than wanting to achieve something grand, he appears not to have been what you'd call "inner-directed." He signed up at the Graduate School for Political Management (GSPM)**** because "it sounded cool...that's really all the thought I ended up giving the matter."

According to GSPM's website, Baruch College's then-fledgling Graduate School for Political Management (GSPM), since relocated to George Washington University.

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* RiverRun Bookstore (20 Congress St., Portsmouth, NH 03801) (603) 431-2100 where browsers are not just permitted, but indeed encouraged, to bring their dogs, children, and coffee. Open Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

** The ways of the world being what they are, we could not help but wonder whether Allen Raymond the Elder might have been related to Henry Jarvis Raymond, the founder of the New York Times, and gotten his job through the time-honored practice of nepotism. Born in 1920, HJ Raymond died at the age of 49, after suffering a stroke while entertaining his mistresses. We have quoted Raymond the Younger, and his publicist at Simon & Schuster, on this topic, but as of press time we have had no reply.

*** The Underwood fortune earned to page two
Fortnightly Rant

from one page

the New York Times has called it “The West Point of the Political Wars.” We looked in the website’s “Alumni” section, but found no mention of the school’s most infamous graduate.

“My whole reason for being at GSPM,” Raymond writes, “was to work my way into the presence of true political giants.” And it worked. Soon he was taking seminars with the likes of Roger Ailes, whom he describes as being “larger than life, and not just because he’s got a gut like the hood of a VW Bug.” Perhaps an appreciation of descriptions such as that is a sign of bad character. We couldn’t say. If so; guilty.

Raymond’s Confession is packed with such characterizations. Since he spent his career among Republicans—large-caliber Republicans—it is a huge helping of raw meat for anyone else with similar tastes. Frankly, we’ve been gorging on it. If it turns out to be so tainted that this metaphor transcends the page and has ill effects on this writer, so long. If not, a second helping from Mr. Raymond’s Dumpster of Delight next fortnight.

News Briefs

Preservation Then and Now
Exhibit Recalls the Birth of the Preservation Movement

PORTSMOUTH, N.H.—It was the original McMansion, a fitting residence for John Hancock, the man now most remembered for his extravagant signature on the Declaration of Independence. And in 1863, the magnificent stone structure was torn down to make way for townhouses.

“It has become a sort of battle cry for many subsequent preservation efforts—people always say, ‘Remember the Hancock House,’” said Historic New England Senior Curator Richard Nylander, one of the curators of a free exhibit opening Feb. 5 at the Portsmouth Athenaeum.

“The Preservation Movement Then and Now” tells the story of the battle fought for Boston’s Hancock house as well as the preservation of Portsmouth’s Rundlet-May House.

“We talk about how the movement changed from saving significant historic sites to broader issues such as land and shoreline preservation, not just saving a single building, but whole neighborhoods,” said Nylander, who joined Historic New England in 1967.

Kenneth C. Turino, exhibitions manager for Historic New England, said the exhibit’s subject is especially fitting for “the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive regional preservation organization in the country.”

“We offer a unique opportunity...
News Briefs

Some things can be preserved, some can’t. This centuries-old, double-trunked beech tree, next to the old library, was removed last weekend. One trunk was rotten almost all the way through.

William Sumner Appleton founded the organization in 1910 as the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

“He became very concerned that a lot of early buildings were being torn down because people weren’t taking care of them,” Nylander said. “He realized they were disappearing and thought there would be nothing left.”

Among the objects in the Athenaeum display are one of the roof balusters from the widow’s walk on the John Hancock mansion, Nylander said, and a “wonderful carved Corinthian capital from one of the interior rooms.”

“Many pieces of timber from the house were turned into parlour souvenirs,” he said. “One of the greatest will be in the exhibit, a massive chair made from the oak beams of the house. It was sold for an 1877 fundraiser to save Boston’s Old South Meeting House. Now the building is a National Historic Landmark.”

Those who are looking to preserve buildings now can also find insights.

“We’re creating a handout that will give people resources for preservation,” Nylander said. “We’re hoping people who want to preserve their own house will take away this pamphlet to find out the help that’s available.”

The exhibit, co-curated by Historic New England Curator of the Library and Archives Lorna Condon, will be open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m. through May 3 in the Athenaeum’s Randall Gallery, 6-8 Market Square.

There is also a series of free lectures related to the exhibit; reservations can be made by calling the Athenaeum at 603-431-2538.

On Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. (snow date Feb. 14), Nylander and Condon will speak on “The Battle to Save the John Hancock Mansion: Early Preservation in Boston.”

On Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. (snow date Feb. 28), Boston University Professor Emeritus Richard Candee will address “William Sumner Appleton and the Preservation of Jackson House.”

Joseph Cornish, senior stewardship manager for Historic New England, will speak March 6 at 7 p.m. on “Preserving Four Centuries of New England Homes: Historic New England and its Stewardship Program.” Also offered are special tours of local landmarks, including the Lady Pepperrell House in Kittery Point, Maine, on April 26 at 2 p.m. and the Jackson House in Portsmouth on May 10 at 10 a.m.

The Athenaeum is a nonprofit membership library and museum founded in 1817. For more information on the exhibit, go to www.portsmouthathenaeum.org or www.historicnewengland.org.
Lafayette Returns To Town In Triumph

Fifty years after the Revolution, a French nobleman embodied the soul of America

He was the American idol of 1824. Untold thousands stood in every kind of weather to catch a glimpse of General Lafayette of France as he visited all 24 American states in a grand 13-month tour. Everywhere Lafayette traveled—buildings, towns, streets and children were named in his honor. According to the Portsmouth Journal, Lafayette’s arrival in Portsmouth, New Hampshire on September 1, 1824 was an event too big for words. “There was a glow of un-effected delight on every countenance,” the newspaper reported. Only George Washington had the power to rouse such patriotic fervor from the citizens of this new nation, but Washington had been dead and buried for a quarter century.

The Marquis de Lafayette was just 19 years old when he came to the aid of Gen. George Washington’s rag-tag army in 1777. Spending his own inheritance to support American troops, he embodied the American Revolution. Lafayette was influential in convincing King Louis XVI to send French ships, men and supplies that helped turn the tide against the British at the Battle of Yorktown. Many historians believe that, without Lafayette, the American Revolution might never have succeeded.

That belief was certainly held by many Portsmouth citizens in 1824 as the last living major general of the American Revolution paraded into town. A thousand Portsmouth school children wearing Lafayette pins and hats made from flowers shouted their welcome against the blare of marching bands. B.P. Shillaber, a well-known Boston publisher and writer, recalled the moment to his dying day. As a boy of 10 Shillaber participated in the “rapturous welcome” and witnessed the exciting arrest of pickpockets who worked the joyous crowd. It was a fast-paced tour for stagecoach days, and since every town wanted to host Lafayette, the brief Portsmouth visit required a good deal of political finagling. The accommodating General left Boston on August 31, breakfasted in Marblehead at 8 a.m., dined in Salem at 2 p.m., slept in Newburyport and arrived the next day in New Hampshire.

The 66-year old veteran made his way from Hampton Falls and Greenland, up what is now Lafayette Road. The procession moved from Wibird Hill, site of today’s Lafayette School, to the “compact” part of town through an arch of evergreens decorating with signs noting each of the General’s famous battles. As in city after city, admirers mobbed Lafayette, including 30 local veterans of the Revolution, some of them sobbing with emotion. The general stopped to rest at the home of the late New Hampshire Governor John Langdon, just up the street from the William Pitt Tavern where he had reportedly lodged four decades earlier at the close of the war in 1784. There were the usual formal speeches at Portsmouth’s Jefferson Hall, followed by a grand ball at Franklin Hall attended by 300 ladies.

Lafayette stayed a full hour talking with guests after the event, then returned to the Langdon mansion at 10 p.m. along streets that were highly illuminated so the lingering throngs of admirers could catch a final glimpse. After another hour of socializing, a night coach whisked the French hero back to Boston.

We can follow Lafayette’s entire Farewell Tour through the journal of Auguste Levasseur, the general’s secretary. Levasseur was hired to document the trip and send back upbeat dispatches to France proving that the 50-year old American “experiment” in democracy was thriving. A fresh new translation of Levasseur’s journal by Alan R. Hoffman features a poignant meeting in the streets of Portsmouth. Lafayette was always a strong advocate of Indian rights and the abolition of slavery. His secretary was astonished to see a group of destitute Native Americans, down from Canada, selling trinkets to the crowds. He wrote: “Their clothes had no other character than those of a pauper; crowns and rosary beads had replaced their fur skins and their weapons; no longer did their intoxicated faces bear that expression of noble pride which, they say, so particularly distinguished the savage man.”

Hoffman, a Boston attorney living in Southern New Hampshire, admits he became obsessed with Lafayette after learning about his 1824-25 tour. Unable to find a complete English version of Levasseur’s journal, Hoffman bought an antique 1829 copy in French and translated it himself. His two-year labor-of-love is now a 600-page indepen-
One of my goals,” Hoffman told the New Hampshire Gazette, “was to just play a part in restoring Lafayette’s reputation. No one knows who he is today.”

That is true, Hoffman says, even of people currently living in roughly 60 cities across the country named Lafayette, Fayette, Fayetteville and Fayetteville. All were dedicated to our esteemed “National Guest,” as Gen. Lafayette was known during his American tour. Indeed, Lafayette became so emotionally connected to the United States that he took dirt from the excavation of the Bunker Hill Monument in Massachusetts and shipped it to France so he could be buried in American soil. America, in response, became emotionally connected to him.

Lafayette’s highly documented “Farewell Tour” still has much to teach us about America’s evolving self-image half a century after the Revolution. Lafayette also helps us understand our confusing national relationship with France, inherited from British history. Portsmouth citizens were instrumental in defeating the French in Nova Scotia in 1745, battled them in the French and Indian Wars, were allied to them in the Revolution, and again fought them in the Quasi-War with France. This historic love-hate relationship continues to the present day, although reduced to a battle of words.

Perhaps more than any figure besides Washington, Lafayette made an impact on local lore everywhere he went. Scores of towns have their Lafayette legends. According to one Portsmouth story, Lafayette instigated a drag race through town during his first trip in 1784, pitting his customized carriage against a state-of-the-art Concord coach. Stewards of the Warner House point to a stained carpet where the general spilled his wine. A decorative tablecloth with 15 stars was reportedly used during a reception at the Langdon Mansion. According to Alan Hoffman, former New Hampshire governor Benjamin Pierce missed his own son’s graduation at Bowdoin College in order to greet Lafayette on his arrival at Portsmouth in 1824. Pierce’s jilted son Franklin later became president of the United States.

Young Lucy Elizabeth Penhallow set her version of the Portsmouth visit to paper in a letter to her aunt on September 2, 1824 “while the impression is still fresh in my memory.” Lucy was among the women who met “the great, the noble, the virtuous Lafayette” at the evening gala. She offered him “some leaves of geranium” and stood by his side for fully half an hour. Lucy was also able to interview the General’s well-versed son George Washington Lafayette, whom she liked, but found pale and fatigued by the proceedings, unlike his energetic and personable father.

Lucy Penhallow, in her excitement, comes closest to defining why Lafayette’s visit meant so much to so many. In 1824 Ports-mouth was at the beginning of a new economic decline. The formerly great seaport had lost its maritime trade and young people of long-importance families were leaving the city in droves to make their fortunes elsewhere. Portsmouth residents who stayed behind developed a powerful nostalgia for the city’s glorious past, and the more they looked back, the more glorious the past became. Lafayette represented the best of men in the best of times, and to see him in the flesh filled people of the era with an unsurpassable sense of gratitude—and of hope for a nation barely half a century old.

Meeting Lafayette, was for Lucy “one of the happiest moments in my life.” The chance to finally express her deep gratitude personally to the hero of the Revolution, Lucy wrote, “made one feel ten times more of an American than I did before.” Lafayette’s steps were of course followed by 24 not-very-united states, defining a central national character. Americans now saw themselves, despite all differences, as a thankful and patriotic people in love with liberty.

SOURCES: (1) Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825, translated by Alan R. Hoffman (2007); (2) Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds by Stanley J. Lacroix, Anna C. Loveland & Marc. H. Miller (1989); (3) Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds by Olivier Bernier 1983; and (4) Portsmouth Athenaeum Vertical File including newspaper clippings, letters and writings by Ray Brighten. Copyright (c) by J. Dennis Robinson. All rights reserved. Robinson is the owner and editor of the popular web site SeacoastNH.com and author of Strawberry Banke: A Seaport Museum 400 Years in the Making.

By the time this Currier & Ives lithograph was produced in the mid-19th century, Lafayette was forever enthrone in America’s pantheon, along with Washington and the other heroes of the Revolution. Not bad, considering he was born a French nobleman.

This far-less respectful French engraving, made during his lifetime, depicts Lafayette as an absurd scurvy French revolutionaries executed or jailed most of his family.
The Cross Of Gold*

by William Marvel

In one of her more recent attempts at sincerity Hillary Clinton remarked that she found her voice by listening to the people of New Hampshire. When I analyzed that for logical intent, all I could come up with is that she determined what the people of New Hampshire wanted to hear, and that’s what she told them.

The most troubling part of Hillary’s narrow victory here in New Hampshire was the disproportionate number of women who voted for her largely, or solely, because she is a woman. Women admitted as much on the editorial page, and they implied as much through their lopsided support for her at the polls (and in the polls). In other words, after decades of justifiable complaint about gender discrimination, many women appear to have decided to exercise it themselves. Those who can reject a female candidate for her unattractive political tendencies, without ever considering her gender, would seem more egalitarian than those who simply want to see a woman in the White House.

The most distressing result of the New Hampshire primary, overall, was the unusually high proportion of votes cast for the three candidates selected by corporate media to be the “front runners.” The pitiful showing by several competent, qualified, and deserving candidates on the Democratic side reflected nothing less than a decision by tens of thousands of voters to betray themselves and cast their ballots for one of Corporate America’s anointed three. I cannot count the number of people who admitted to me that they preferred Bill Richardson, Dennis Kucinich, or Mike Gravel, but added that they were going to vote for someone “big,” rather than “throwing away” their votes on someone who had little chance of winning.

Sorry to tell you, suckers, but you ended up throwing your votes away anyway. You had a chance to indicate what you really want in a president, and you squandered it. You let the Democratic Party and network television decide where your support would go. In one televised primary debate, party organizers arranged the participants so the party trinity enjoyed center stage while the presumed runners-up had to sit up on the wings. In an ill-gussessed effort to create the subliminal image of fringe candidacies, they positioned Mike Gravel and Dennis Kucinich at the extreme left and right, almost falling off the stage.

ABC decided that Kucinich could not participate at all in a debate at St. Anselm’s College. He was, the network concluded, not a “viable” candidate. Chris Dodd and Joe Biden got in, apparently meeting ABC’s idea of viability, but three days later New Hampshire voters gave Kucinich more than ten times as many votes as either of those two. Kucinich is a very bright and articulate fellow: his margin would have been larger still had ABC not been allowed to use corporate censorship to muzzle his corporate-unfriendly message—and if voters were not so prone to subordinating their own judgment to that of the media. Later, MSNBC squelched Kucinich in Nevada, too, although a judge there ruled the action an arbitrary and illegal manipulation.

As usual, the primaries have culled the real mavericks from the pack, thereby convincing the American people that they really didn’t want substantive change after all. Now the race boils down to the three whom the rich and powerful wanted to see grappling for the prize in the first place: Hillary Clinton, whom the corporate mandarins have whipped into submission before; Barack Obama, the sheep in wolf’s clothing; and John Edwards, who can be easily disposed of as the champion of an obsolete populist tradition. Big Money crushed the Populists in the 1890s, and could easily do it again.

Perhaps Big Money is right. Maybe populism is passé, relying as it does on confidence in the common people. They haven’t exactly demonstrated much wisdom with the democratic franchise, and most of their bad decisions cannot be attributed entirely to election fraud. The current crises of war, health care, and resource consumption all prove that what the United States needs now, more than anything, is a president and Congress willing and able to combat the insidious corporate hegemony that rules this country—and by extension, the world. Instead, it seems increasingly likely that next January a self-absorbed and lazy American people will, once again, get precisely the government they deserve.

—

* Cross of Gold: Look it up for yourself.

The Permanent War?

by Jim Hightower

Want the U.S. out of Iraq before year’s end? Or maybe next year? Or even four years from now?

If George W and his hucksters have their way, you can forget about any timetables for withdrawal. During the holiday hiatus at the end of last year, Bush quietly noted that he and the current leaders of the Iraqi government had agreed to what he called an “enduring” relationship that would keep American troops and our money in that country for a long, long time.

How long? Bush’s general, David Petraeus, who was sent to Iraq last year with a surge of more troops to produce quick results, has now said that a 50-year U.S. presence would be a “realistic assessment.” And, indeed, well before the surge, the Pentagon was building a dozen permanent American bases in Iraq.

Then comes Sen. John McCain, a big backer of Bush’s surge, declaring that he supports an ongoing occupation and permanent military bases there. He even has a fantasy that you and I would be happy with that, declaring: “I don’t think Americans are concerned if we’re there for 100 years or 1,000 years, or 10,000 years,” as long as we don’t have too many troop deaths.

Aside from Bush, Buckshot Cheney, and Halliburton executives, what “Americans” is McCain talking about? Even with deaths in Iraq down in the past few weeks, polls consistently show that the public overwhelmingly thinks this occupation is a horrible mistake, that Bush is doing a poor job, and that we need a short timetable for withdrawal. Also, does McCain really think Americans want endless trillions of our tax dollars thrown down the bottomless hole of that divided country? There are a few more important needs to spend money on in our country.

We the People must demand not only the quick withdrawal of all of our troops from the deadly sectarian violence of this civil war, but also the defunding of permanent American bases in Iraq.

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The Walker

by Rodman Philbrick

Stars: Woody Harrelson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Lauren Bacall, Lily Tomlin, Willem Dafoe, Ned Beatty; Written & Directed by: Paul Schrader

Given a choice of monster movies, which would you prefer? The Blair Witch Project goes to Manhattan with a camera as shaky as a subprime loan? Or an elegant, atmospheric tale about the real-life monsters of Washington, DC, with the lead reptile being played by eighty-four-year-old Lauren Bacall as a kind of Social Register python, squeezing the life out of her victims before she swallows them whole?

The public has clearly spoken. Cloverfield wins by a landslide, while Paul Schrader’s The Walker has been consigned to the art house circuit, where it will no doubt remain until made available on DVD to those few hearty souls who believe that Mr. Schrader is one of our best living screenwriters.

Early notices of Mr. Schrader’s latest effort have not been kind. The gentleman who wrote Taxi Driver, Raging Bull, and American Gigolo has been accused of pulling his punches, of being a milquetoast version of John Grisham as he quietly explores the effects of infidelity and murder on a clique of exceedingly well-connected Washingtonians.

True enough, Schrader has not made a thriller. There are no car chases, no sex scenes, and very little on-screen violence. It’s a movie of manners, about the elaborate artifice of power. Who’s up, who’s down, who’s in, who’s out. Jane Austin for metrosexuals, drenched in money and pow-

ing and tolerance of different be-

liefs and cultures. The orchestra

stands as a metaphor for what

could be achieved in the Midd-

le East. In the words of Barenboim:

“The impossible is much easier than the difficult...” (2004, 115 minutes).

Refreshments provided and discussion will follow the film. Free and open to the public. Sponsored by Seacoast Peace Response, Amenity International Seacoast Group $30, and Palestine Education Network. For more information, contact info@seacoastpeaceresponse.org or (603) 750-7506.

MLK Leadership Summit Friday - Sunday February 22 – 24, 2008

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dents. Sponsored by the UNH Office of Multicultural Student Affairs. For more information: jay.green@unh.edu or (603) 862-4528.

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Tuesday, March 4, 7 p.m. Concord High School Auditorium, 170 Warren St.

Concord, NH

Stephen Kinzer, author of the 2003 NYT Bestseller about Iran called “All the Shah’s Men,” will discuss the imperative for a sane, realistic policy on Iran. Kinzer is also the author of “Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq.” Copies of his books will be for sale. This event is free and open to the public, with donations gratefully accepted. Sponsored by New Hampshire Peace Action. For more information, call (603) 228-0559. This event is part of a national tour. For more information, visit www.follyofattackingiran.org.
Gaah! The Sky is Falling!

To the Editor:

Civil unions for gay people? Had the Old Man of the Moun-
tain not collapsed a few years ago, he surely would have had a midnight on January 1.

Has the once-conservative state in which I grew up some 50 years ago been invaded by liber-
als from Massachusetts, Vermont & Maine?

Tolerance is OK. Acceptance is not.

What's next? An apology for slavery?

Steve Moore
Cookeville, TN

Steve:

Did you know? The Old Man didn't fall, Kurt Rove had it dy-
namited? Just to go you YouTube and Google "Old Man of the Mountain" and "Vermin Supreme."

The Editor

Vision to Guide Policy

To the Editor:

This country has rarely had such an accomplished team of policy wonks running for presi-
dent as Bill and Hillary Clin-
ton. They understand policy and policy wonks running for presi-
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Don't read what you don't re-
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chance. Mike, few selected friends, I can help you with your quest for a

The Editor

Lady Democrats

To the Editor:

H. Clinton used tears, women's second-oldest trick in the book, to melt the cold hearts of New

Steve Moore
Cookeville, TN

steve:

 Didn't you know? The Old Man didn't fall, Kurt Rove had it dy-
namited? Just to go you YouTube and Google "Old Man of the Mountain" and "Vermin Supreme."

The Editor

Vision to Guide Policy

To the Editor:

This country has rarely had such an accomplished team of policy wonks running for presi-
dent as Bill and Hillary Clinton. They understand policy and power works our govern-
ment, but the Clintons are also lightning rods for enmity. We need a president who can inspire

a vision of our country working together—Democrats, Repub-
licans, Independents, and non-

believers—to solve the enormous problems Bush and Cheney have left us with. Barack Obama re-
minds us of the best that Amer-
ica can be. With the Clintons

working in his administration as
deficits, the cost of war, the

cost of the war on terror, and

the courageously he has showed.

The Editor

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LATE NIGHT MENU TUES-SAT
He's Disturbed

To the Editor:

It is very disturbing that Fox News uses its power to pick who the next President will be. I have heard nothing but negative comments from their news people about Ron Paul. Also the blockading of Ron Paul from the debate in New Hampshire is a travesty.

The election is just around the corner and we need to let FOX News know what we think.

Thank you and have a blessed day.

Bill Nicholas
Nashua, NH

The Economy's the Thing

To the Editor:

It finally hit home that the most consistent buyers in the U.S. economy are the middle class, a fact seemingly out of touch with the current administration, along with a host of Wall Street prognosticators whose livelihood depends on a robust Dow Jones, a measure of business GDP, devoid of individual growth and sustenance.

When asked in an early 2007 press conference what his opinions were of the economy, President Bush responded, "I don't know, you need to ask an economist." I'll assume there is an economist on staff, but Bush went on to say "I got a B in Econ 101, but I get As now in Tax Cuts," a befuddling statement since tax cutting is a portion of economic structure.

Like President Reagan, Bush has managed to take a surplus budget and balloon it into a $10 trillion dollar deficit through massive tax cuts, further irritating because it was done during wartime, which underscores that certain factions of society not only do not serve in the military, they also don't bear any financial sacrifice.

Quite the opposite! As with the Reagan years, a small fraction of the US economy, around 5%, are receiving 95% of the economic benefits. Our jobs are being outsourced to foreign countries as big business takes advantage of the $1 an hour labor, and U.S. wages have been suppressed through this as the middle class standard of living is further dumbed down, surviving via credit witnessed by our negative 5.8% savings rate.

Unlike the Reagan years, the middle class is getting no "trick down," the extortion theory of keeping the peasants calm. Yet like those years, which ended in the Black Monday of October 1987, the next administration will inherit a Rubik's cube scenario of fixing the economy and healing the deficit. It will be like placing a boxer in the ring with both arms in casts.

The wealthy don't care about the national checking account's overdraft because they are removed from its effects, and the remedies. They have far up life's totem pole they no longer need government services other than to let the proletariat fight to protect their interests, and they have enough tax loopholes in place so they pay far less than they should, regardless of the propaganda of their "true contributions."

With such a negative appraisal of the economy that George Bush admittedly doesn't understand except for the tax cutting portion, how did we survive to date, and even prosper, if only for the business environment?

Since we no longer manufacture in this country, having shifted jobs to foreign lands, how about an $11 trillion real estate economy, something that increased not in raw production value, but in a false perception of home to afford new homes and existing inventories thanks to a no holds barred loan shark mentality of lending money. This strategy, which still hasn't seen the surface, will now lead to a prolonged recession until the next fraudulent economy is created to camouflage the effects of more tax cuts.

There is only one thing that the bourgeoisie did not count on when applying the "cut off your nose to spite your face" economic mentality. What if the middle class can no longer spend?

This is the result of the economic stimulus play, which is catching the conscience and attention of the President, and those who consistently declare the economy to be doing great, pointing to paintings of the sun while re-directing focus from workers inability to pay for increased health coverage, tuition costs and contributory pension plans, along with rising oil prices.

The global economy will now experience blowback, since all those laborers created by NAF- TA, all those jobs in third world countries, employ workers who could never afford American goods on their $1 an hour pay. In desiring a tax rebate (return of your tax dollars) for all those workers under $125,000 a year, President Bush has finally admitted he has to put money in the hands of the middle class, the people who spend money the fastest, and who in volume dictate the health of the economy.

These were the people ignored in the Bush tax cuts, and the stimulus package has now revealed the failings in the President's economic vision (the B student from Yale).

We now have to wait for the balance of the sub-primes to play out, their shock date, but the fear is we have no other economic "scheme," no junk bonds, no dot-coms, to assuage the Republicans next round of Ponzi scheme tax cut requests. The electorate's hope is that the next administration will not forgo the middle class again.

David DiBello
Lakewood, NJ

David: "The middle class get some "trick down" during the Reagan years? Haven't you seen the graphs? The cost bulk of the middle class hasn't had a rise since the 70's after taking inflation into account. The reason people have newer cars and nicer houses is that most households now have two or more wage-earners."

The Editor
Like many other citizens over the last months I have been in a bit of a dilemma about who to vote for. Actually, my problem has been a bit more difficult as I have been trying to decide whether to vote at all.

My belief that our system has been so badly corrupted that no vote really counts has affected me deeply. If my candidate won he would probably be ineffectual as President because of the power and resistance of the multi-national military/industrial complex. If that person were perceived as a real threat to the established system there is a good chance he would be assassinated somewhere along the way. Examples of that are the recent killing of Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, the 1973 slaying of democratically elected Chilean President Salvador Allende, presumably with American involvement, and closer to home, Martin Luther King, Jr, and Bobby Kennedy. But even before the final votes are tallied there is a good chance that the election will have a predetermined outcome. This is no idle fantasy. There has been plenty of ballot tampering in American elections including the last Presidential election where votes in Ohio and especially Florida were highly suspect.

Finally, what I could do could come to me in a dream last night. I decided that I would go to the polls, get a ballot, and destroy it. I would announce outside the polling place that I believe the polls, get a ballot, and destroy it. I would announce outside the polling place that I believe the system is a sham and rip my ballot up.

I told my wife, Linda, my intentions this morning and she did not agree with my assessment. We went through all of the arguments for and against such an action and even though we still disagreed on what I was going to do she agreed to support my decision and take pictures of the action.

I was a bit apprehensive as we approached the polls. Linda was a bit worried that I might be arrested. But I felt there was little chance of that as it was, in my mind, an act of free political speech. I had originally planned to burn my ballot but reconsidered and decided that tearing it up would be just as satisfactory and effective. I went into the polling place at Barrington Middle School, holding my destroyed presidential primary ballot.

As we walked down the stairs and headed to the parking lot a woman holding a sign said, “Gee, John Edwards sure could have used that vote.”

Linda replied, “For what?”

As we drove out of the parking lot I actually felt a great relief and satisfaction at what had happened. I had done my duty as a citizen and gone to the polls but I had not capitulated to a farce. Make no mistake, the show will go on but I will continue to follow my own dreams. Maybe I’ll have another one tonight.

(In the interests of full disclosure the writer of this article is also the subject.)

An unrepentant Paul Pat Morse, on the steps of the Barrington Middle School, holding his destroyed presidential primary ballot.

National

Witness for Torture: 400 March, 80 Arrested in Washington DC

www.witnesstorture.org

January 11, 2008 - Dozens of activists organized by Witness Against Torture delivered a message to the U.S. Supreme Court demanding the shut-down of the U.S. prison at Guantánamo and justice for those detained there. About 40 people were arrested inside the Court building and another 40 on the steps. All 80 have been released, but many were denied food and water for most of the 30-some hours they were detained. The arrests followed a solemn march from the National Mall of 400 persons that included a procession of activists dressed like the Guantánamo prisoners in orange jump suits and black hoods – part of an International Day of Action that was endorsed by over 100 groups that included 83 events around the world.

School of the Americas Vigil

January 12, 2008 - The stories of the School of the Americas, or School of the Assassins is a disturbing tale of such organized and planned terrorism, one would never believe it was real. Every year in Fort Benning, Georgia the people protest. This year we brought it to LA.

The brutality caused by the School of the Americas is very much real. It is so real that several speakers at the vigil were victims of torture at the hands of SOA graduates. We carried crosses bearing names of those who were lost in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Colombia, among others. Hector Aristizabal, a speaker at the vigil, held a cross bearing the name of his own brother who was brutally tortured and murdered in Colombia. It was so real, it was scary. And this story, though it did take place in Latin America, was completely caused by, funded by, and organized by the U.S. government. We funded these murders, rapes, tortures. We are terrorists.

The passionate efforts to close the School of the Americas (SOA) down included a year- long mass protest in November at its current location in Fort Benning, Georgia. (It was originally in Panama.) The school finally closed in 2001 but reopened one month later in the same location with the same staff teaching the same courses, but was renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Co-operation (WHISC).

The vigil was a replica of the Fort Benning protest and was held at Los Angeles State Historic Park. It featured speakers Father Roy Bourgeois, Martin Sheen, Cindy Sheehan, Blase Bonpane, Eisha Mason, Fernan-
Students are yearly. Act Now to Prepare Exploration Program” program. The day’s events were over. Then the celebration began and at the ashes of the brutalized. The uprising that must take place as an allegory for “return to life celebration” using huge paper ma- into flames. Then puppetistas of destruction” turning a village, and our crosses down and par- we held them up and sang “pre- while singers on the stage sang our crosses in a procession march into the classrooms, to go to the yearly teach about the SOA in termath of the SOA for wom- ers spoke of their experience as victims and survivors of murder. Family members. Lu- cia Muñoz spoke about the af- ternath of the SOA for wom- en, most notably the femicide in Guatemala. The speakers urged us to teach about the SOA in classrooms, to go to the yearly protest in Georgia and to call our representative. After the speeches and music we carried our crosses in a procession march while singers on the stage sang the names the crosses bore, and we held them up and sang “pre- sent.”

Once the march ended we placed our crosses down and par- ticipated in a “die-in” following a performance depicting “birds of destruction” turning a village into flames. Then puppetistas performed “return to life cele- bration” using huge paper ma- che faces and hands to awake our dead bodies up as an allegory for the uprising that must take place atop the ashes of the brutalized. Then the celebration began and the day’s events were over.

Stop Schools From Supplying Student’s Personal Information to the U.S. Military by Pat Elder
agentforchange@comcast.net
High School Deceptive “Ca- reer Exploration Program” pro- vides military recruiters with leads on 600,000 high school students yearly. Act Now to Pro- tect Privacy of High School Stu- dents in Your Community!

Join activists across the country by demanding that local school officials protect the privacy of high school students who take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, (ASVAB). Last year more than 600,000 school children took the ASVAB and all of the results, including personal information, were for- warded to military recruiters. The military refuses to publicly admit the ASVAB is a valuable recruit- ing tool. Instead, the ASVAB is marketed through schools as a “career exploration program” fre- quently without mentioning its affiliation with the military.

A little known option exists that allows school officials to preclude test data from wind- ing up in the hands of military recruiters. To access the template for you to use to create a letter to send to your local school officials, visit the following link:


INTERNATIONAL

Japanese Whalers Hold Sea Shepherd Activists Hostage

The Sea Shepherd ship, Yushin Maru No. 2, which is now nomi- nated to the Australian Cus- tomas vessel, that they were treated ing ship, that they were treated

The only injury was a bruised wrist suffered by Giles Lane. “Although we appreciate the concern that people have expressed for our welfare, it is im- portant to remember that this is not about us,” said Giles Lane. “It’s about stopping this cruel and illegal whale hunt. The treat- ment that we received was trav- ial in comparison to the suffering that the whales experience at the hands of the Japanese whal- ers. They may have been rough with us but at least we were not harpooned, electrocuted and mu- tillated. This is not about us, it’s about the whales.”

Since January 15th, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society’s ship Steve Irwin has been in full pursuit of five vessels of the Japa- nese whaling fleet, including the Japanese supply vessel Oriental Bluebird, and they say that they will continue to pursue illegal Japanese whaling activities for as long as possible.

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The Press Room

on of Beat Night with Larry Simon & Groove Bacteria
third Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m.
Annual Maine War Tax Resisters Workshop Saturday, January 26, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (SNOW DATE: Sunday, January 27, Same Time and Place) Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine, Bangor, ME
On the Agenda: "What, Whys, Hows of WTR: war tax resistance or interested in starting; Counseling/supporting current resisters; Planning for Tax Day for April 15 and before actions, promoting the national war tax boycott and Don’t Buy Bush’s War campaigns. Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine (170 Park St., up hill from Bangor City Hall, Library, and U-U Church), Potluck Lunch, Bring Food to Share. For more info: Larry Dansinger, Maine WTR Resource Center at (207) 525-7776; rosce@psouth.net <mailto:rosce@psouth.net>

MLK Spiritual Celebration: Soul and Spirit of Democracy Sunday, January 27, 4 p.m. St George’s Episcopal Church, Durham
An inter-faith celebration that affirms, supports and highlights the spiritual foundation that Martin Luther King, Jr. brought to his work and life. This gathering includes song, drumming, Chautuqua presentations, poetry, dance, a pledge for action and more. Part of the 2008 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration: Holler if You Hear Me: Race, Culture, and Democracy. For more information call (603) 862-3290 or see www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk_celebration.html.

Anticipating Climate Change Impacts in Southern New Hampshire January 28, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Memorial Union Building Theatre 1 UNH Campus, Durham
This seminar will provide an overview of the anticipated consequences of climate change in Southern New Hampshire and how these changes may affect local water and resource management. Dr. Cameron Wake will explain how global changes in atmospheric carbon dioxide translate to local changes in temperature and precipitation. He will also discuss several scenarios for carbon loading and the benefits of reducing carbon emissions. Dr. Larry Ward will describe how climate change affects sea level, including assessments of how coastlines and salt marshes are being altered by sea-level change. Mr. Michael Simpson will discuss the impact that projected changes in precipitation patterns and storm frequency may have on local land-use management decisions. His research investigates how well current water conveyance infrastructure will accommodate changing precipitation patterns. He will report out on current research in the Keene, NH watershed, with the findings having applicability to many communities across the northern New England Region. There will be time for questions with all three presenters. The evening promises to be an informative and thought-provoking discussion of a topic of great concern. Come early to sign in, review handouts, and meet others interested in this topic. The Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is sponsoring this seminar with logistical support from the University of New Hampshire. For more information, contact Steve@greatbay.org

Panel: The Rap on Democracy: Culture, Power, and Social Change Tuesday, January 29, 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. UNH Memorial Union Building (MUB) Strafford Room, Durham
Examining the radical implications of King’s legacy for American democracy today. Moderated by Reginald Wilburn, with panelists Michael Eric Dyson; Harvard Sitkoff, UNH Professor of History; Jackie Weatherspoon, NH Legislator; Cait Vaughan, UNH Senior, member of Women’s Union. Part of the 2008 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration: Holler if You Hear Me: Race, Culture, and Democracy. For more information call (603) 862-3290 or see www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk_celebration_ed-panel.html

Commemorative Address by Michael Eric Dyson
“Dr. King for the 21st Century” Tuesday, January 29, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Paul Creative Arts Center (PCAC) Johnson Theatre at UNH, Durham Michael Eric Dyson, social analyst, hip-hop intellectual, ordained minister, a two time NAACP Image Award winner, and Georgetown University professor. This event also features African drumming and dance; a spoken word presentation and a Step performance. Reception and book signing follows. Part of the 2008 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration: Holler if You Hear Me: Race, Culture, and Democracy. For more information call (603) 862-3290 or see www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk_celebration.html.

“Act Now” ~ A Campus Activism Fair Thursday, January 31, 12 – 3 p.m. UNH Memorial Union Building (MUB) Granite State Room, Durham
In support of local refugee and immigrant populations, building on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the fair seeks to raise awareness of the global plight of refugees and immigrant populations and provide student and community activists service opportunities to support these populations. Fair will feature personal stories from refugees, representatives from resettlement organizations. Part of the 2008 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration: Holler if You Hear Me: Race, Culture, and Democracy. For more information call (603) 862-3290 or see www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk_celebration.html.

Exhibit: A Walk in the Woods Friday, February 1 – 23, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Massabesic Audubon Center Auburn, NH Pastels and Paintings by Yvonne Wheeler, Manchester Art Association’s 2007-2008 Artist of the Year. Yvonne has expressed herself with oils, watercolor and sculpting her whole life. She was formerly an interior decorator and did paintings to suit a client's house. She also does commissioned portraits. The last 5 years she has seriously pursued pastels. This show is the culmination of her work in pastels to date. The Center is located at 26 Audubon Way, for more information, call (603) 622-1500, or visit http://www.massabesic.org.

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The Good News: A Seacoast Citizens Calendar

THE GOOD NEWS CALENDAR SUBMISSIONS
Please submit your calendar item requests in the body of an e-mail (no attachments, please) in the following format:
Name of Event; Day, date, start time; Location; Description of event (brevity helped!); Contact person, phone number and e-mail (if available); Sponsor or organizer name (if applicable).
E-mail your submissions to: calendar@nhgazette.com.
Please note that our paper is small. All submissions will not necessarily appear in the paper. Editorial discretion applies absolutely.

Seacoast Peace Vigils

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Dover
Saturdays, 11 a.m. to Noon: Traffic island at the corner of Central Ave. & Washington Street. War Resister’s League of Southeastern NH. This vigil will take place as long as the U.S. continues to bomb or in any way attack another country. Doug Bogen, (603) 430-9565 dbogen@cleanwater.org or Macy Morse, (603) 433-4119 macy_morse@aol.com.

Portsmouth
Fridays, 5 - 6 p.m.: Market Square, Seacoast Peace Response. The vigil is a presence in opposition to U.S. bombing and warfare, and to any further expansion of military retaliation. Doug Bogen, (603) 430-9565 dbogen@cleanwater.org or Macy Morse, (603) 433-4119 macy_morse@aol.com.

Exeter
Thursdays, 5 - 6 p.m.: Town Hall on the corner of Water and Front Streets (near the Bandstand). Please bring your signs, candles and hopeful spirits. Peggi McCarthy aquahot@juno.com.

Rochester
Fridays, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.: Silent peace vigil in front of the Parson Main statue on Main Street. Sponsored by the Department of Peace group and the Farmington Progressive Group. Assemble in the municipal parking lot behind Slim’s Tex Mex restaurant. Pat Frisella frisella@worldpath.net.

MAINE
Kennebunk
Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 12 noon, at the Unitarian Church’s peace pole, Main St. (Route 1, at the intersection with Route 35), Kennebunk, ME. For more information contact Katherine Mendez at kathrinemendez@peoplepc.com or phone (207) 985-2099.

Sundays, Noon - 1 p.m., Bridges for Peace vigils are held at the same time on bridges throughout Maine, as well as several locations in Maryland. For the listing of locations see the Bridges for Peace website: www.peacebrides.org or call (207) 563-8902.

Wells
Sundays, Noon - 1:30 p.m.: Ocean View Cemetery on Rte. 1 across from the Junior High School. Betty Williams, (207) 646-5772. The vigil now includes men wearing black arm bands.

Exeter
Thursdays, 5 - 6 p.m.: Town Hall on the corner of Water and Front Streets (near the Bandstand). Please bring your signs, candles and hopeful spirits. Peggi McCarthy aquahot@juno.com.

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The Good News: A Seacoast Citizens Calendar


Book Discussion: Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace … One School At A Time by Greg Mortenson.

Monday February 11, 7 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. (or Tuesday, February 12, 1 – 2:24 p.m.) Portsmouth City Library, Portsmouth

On a 1993 expedition to climb K2 in honor of his sister Christa, who had died of epilepsy at 23, Mortenson stumbled upon a remote mountain village in Pakistan. Out of gratitude for the villagers’ assistance when he was lost and near death, he vowed to build a school for the children who were scratching lessons in the dirt. Raised by his missionary parents in Tanzania, Mortenson was used to dealing with exotic cultures and developing nations. Still, he faced daunting challenges of raising funds, death threats from enraged mullahs, separation from his family, and a kidnapping to eventually build 55 schools in Taliban territory. Award-winning journalist Relin recounts the slow and arduous task Mortenson set for himself, a one-man mission aimed particularly at bringing education to young girls in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Readers interested in a fresh perspective on the cultures and development efforts of Central Asia will love this incredible story of a humanitarian endeavor. Books are available at the library for members. For more information, contact Sherry Evans at (603) 427-1540.

Black History Month
Tuesday, February 12, 7 p.m. Franklin Pierce College, Pierce Hall, Rindge, NH

Joe Rogers joins us during Black History month to celebrate and commemorate the life and teaching of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. invoking Rev. King’s spirit through recitation and remembrance. He challenges us in our time and place to take hold of the Dream Rev. King lived and died for, assuring us that the Dream is Alive! Please invite your congregations and your friends! This event is one you do not want to miss and is brought to you by the Black Student Alliance, the Valakis Lecture Series and Student Activities/Interfaith Campus Ministries of Franklin Pierce University. You can learn more about the program at www.dreamalive.org/Contact Bill Beardslee. Assistant Director of Interfaith Campus Ministries and Club Support at (603) 899-4188 or by email: beardslee@fpc.edu.

“Whats, Why’s, How’s of War Tax Resisters” Wed., February 13, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Meg Perry Center (Peace Action/Foglight office) 644 Congress Street, Portland, ME Annual Southern Maine Workshop-Maine War Resisters (WTR) and WTR Supporters for those new to resist-

Calendar to page seven
Coming Soon: A Few Changes

We are pleased to announce that our next issue (Volume 252, No. 10) will arrive on schedule (Friday, February 8) at all the usual places. But, we would like to alert our readers that there will be a few changes. We are still working out some of the details, so we won't elaborate further on the specifics. Besides—surprises are exciting.

These changes will dramatically accelerate the paper's delivery to subscribers, improve the odds of its survival, and make it far more of a threat to the status quo.

Few things come without some price; in this case, it is a steep one: for the indefinite future, we're doing without the work of some excellent writers. If there were a way to make these coming changes, without paying this cost, we would take it. We cannot take this step without thanking them all most profusely.

Astute readers (all of our readers are astute, of course) will guess from the above paragraph that the paper will be smaller for a while. How much smaller, and for how long, remains to be seen. Given the present state of the economy, anyone making hard predictions runs the risk of making a fool of himself. What with today's gyrating market, the deranged economic theories that prevail, and the commercial media's stupefying credulity, we may be back to bartering pellets for firewood soon.

The fundamental reason for these changes is to allow this venerable institution to achieve a higher degree of organization. Those who best understand this paper's existing level of organization might say that that's setting the bar awfully low. We would be hard pressed to argue. All the more reason why we should take that aspect of the operation more seriously.

There can be no change without risk. The possibility exists that after making these changes, the paper will not—exist, that is. That is our worst-case scenario. But that has been the case since the paper first fell into this editor's hands almost nineteen years ago. Given the myriad uncertainties built into our lives by our all-knowing and ever-loving Intelligent Designer, this paper has always been in a race to achieve a higher level of organization. Before the next cheeseburger or slice of bacon smites him, and renders him even less serviceable than he is now. Given his notoriously poor organizational skills, the odds have never been good, nor have they been improving over time. Some kind of change is necessary if there is to be a long-term future for this paper—best to make it now, rather than be forced to improvise under less-controlled conditions.

Finally, one great advantage will come immediately from this change: we will qualify for first-class treatment from the U.S. Postal Service. See you in a fortnight.

Preserving The “Portsmouth Moment”

by J. Dennis Robinson

Historic events in Portsmouth are few and far between these days. So when the Port City makes international news, it is our civic duty to hype that event into the history books. I am speaking, of course, about “The Portsmouth Moment” in which presidential candidate Hillary Clinton expressed a moment of emotion at Café Espresso.

So, newspapers around the world covered the story and pundits debated ad nauseam whether the incident was responsible for Clinton’s win in the New Hampshire Primary the next day. If Clinton wins the Democratic nomination, presidential candidate, Portsmouth will be ensnared as the place it all began. If she loses, people will say Hillary never should have cried in Portsmouth. Either way, we win.

So without further ado, I hereby suggest that all patriotic Americans ship in to buy a brass plaque to be mounted outside the now-historic Café Espresso. The minute I finish this column, I will send restaurant owner Dave Hadwen a check for $10 to start the ball rolling. Steven Fowlé, editor and publisher of the New Hampshire Gazette, has agreed to send $20. I called David to ask if he liked the idea. He loved it. A serious all-weather plaque with raised letters can cost $1,000, so we need your dough. I suggest something like this:

Café Espresso Site of the Historic “PORTSMOUTH MOMENT”

On this spot on January 7, 2008, Senator Hillary Clinton almost cried while running for president of the United States. Clinton “teared up” with emotion in response to a question by Marianne Pernold-Young, then won the New Hampshire Primary the next day. The event was blown out of proportion by the press, but then so was Plymouth Rock. The more you repeat the story, the more real it seems. Think about that. The next time you're reading the somber inscription on some ancient greenish monument. Creating a plaque ensures that historians, like me, will chew over the event for centuries to come.

Only 15 women and two men were invited to the breakfast chat early on the morning of January 7. But there were 40 or 50 reporters and camera people there to document it. The local Portsmouth daily, unfortunately, left Café Espresso early for another assignment and missed the crucial moment. But it didn’t last long.

“She was Hillary Clinton the woman for six or seven seconds,” Marianne told me on the phone recently, “then she caught herself and went back to being Hillary the politician.”

Marianne found herself inundated by press from CNN to BBC to media in her home country of Austria. Returning home after the rally at Café Espresso, she found three television reporters with satellite feed truck piled on her front lawn. The press especially enjoyed her candid revelation that “the woman who made Hillary cry” actually voted for Barack Obama in the primary. She didn’t really make Hillary cry, but history likes to round off the hard edges of the truth.

“A lot of the media think I’m a plant,” she says wryly. “I’m not a plant! But if I were—would I tell anybody?”

Marianne was once a beltway insider herself. She was a White House photographer during the Jimmy Carter Administration. These days she is a fine art photographer. I have many of her photos on my web site and one on my office wall. In fact, I first learned about “The Portsmouth Moment” when a reporter from the London Guardian contacted me to help her find Marianne. But Marianne was so swamped by requests for e-mail interviews, that she turned off the “Contact” button on her own web site.

“It was wild and it was fun,” Marianne says, as the press inquiries continue to pour in weeks after the event. But the really interesting part of the story is how one silly little question and one tiny little response could set off such a cascade of reactions. If nothing else, “The Portsmouth Moment” is an historic example of how silly we all are.

And so that we do not forget, send your non deductible contribution to The Portsmouth Moment Plaque, c/o Café Espresso, 738 Islington St, Portsmouth, NH 03801. Let’s make fun of history, before it makes fun of us.

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Better old news, than new lies.

More Morphine in Maine

It is stated by the Brunswick (Me.) Telegraph, that the use of opium has enormously increased in Maine since the enforcement of laws restricting the sale of liquors. A manufacturing chemist, whose business is said to be among the largest of its kind in the country, is reported as having stated that more morphine is sold in Maine, in proportion to population, than in any other state in the Union.

That may be true; but before pinning one’s faith to it very firmly it would be well to have some further evidence on the subject.

Sailors’ Lively Sendoff

The U.S.S. Kearny paid off her crew and went out of commission on Tuesday. A number of the men, whose time had not expired, were taken to Boston by rail to be put on the receiving ship there; and they made things lively about the depot while waiting for the train, the presence of the police being required to prevent disturbance.

Forty Would Have Sufficed

A case of extremely severe corporal punishment for a sailor, at the large naval station at Boston, has agitated the people of North Middletown, Mass., where a boy seven years old was recently ferruled more than seventy blows for scratching a match in school.

A Parsimonious Rejoinder

A spendthrift, who wasted nearly all his patrimony, seeing an acquaintance in a coat not of the finest cut, told him he thought it had been his great-grandfather’s coat. “So it was,” said the gentleman; “and I have also my great-grandfather’s land, which is more than you can say.”

A Hazard of the Profession

A long report of a trial in San Francisco contains this parenthetical statement: “At this point in the proceedings it was noticed that one of the jurors was asleep, but no one took the trouble to awaken him.”

Let Sleeping Jurors Lie

A young man named James Rose was shot in the street in New York, and a notorious rough and Tammany politician named Martin Geogheghan was found close by with a smoking pistol in his hand. A coroner’s jury has just brought in a verdict that Rose was shot “by some person unknown,” and the assassin has been discharged.

New York Justice

Geogheghan “swings too many votes” for the democracy to be punished for such a tripe as cold-blooded murder in New York.

Life in Lead City

Lead City, three miles from Deadwood, was taken possession of on Wednesday by a mob of 150 roughs, who called a town meeting of their own, upset all the existing laws and made a set to suit themselves, “jumped” all the streets, yelled and fired pistols, and in other ways made themselves objectionable. The citizens in the evening commenced to arm and organize for protection.

A 19th Century Sredienski

Warm as the weather is and has been for the season, the present seems hardly the time of year for going in swimming, but Horace Jenkins of Kittery, a youth of about seventeen years, tried it on Tuesday and seemed rather to like it. He was digging clams on Pumpkin Island, early in the forenoon, and was so intent on his work that he failed to notice that the rising tide had floated his boat off, until she was some two hundred yards away, and rapidly going further. Without any time he stripped himself, swam to the boat and climbed back to the island, dressed himself, and carried off his mess of clams in triumph.

Number of American Troops Lost in Iraq:

3,931 as of Wednesday, January 23, 2008
Portsmouth is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River. Depending on which boat captain you believe, it's the sec- ond, the third, or the fourth farthest- ingast navigable river in the country. The Piscataqua's remarkable cur- vature is caused by the tide which turns the river. The other major player is a water- way valley, about ten miles square. Twice a day, the moon draws rough- ly seventeen thousand gallons of salt water from the ocean, up the river, into Great Bay. (If the moon ever over- looks this shift, the river will be filled to a depth of 2,120,000 ten-ton truckers.) The mesquite provides a creosote bush habitat, low- ing salinity and outgoing rock cleaf. The skunkhaven moves from the mouth of the river, past New Cas- tur, around the head by the old North Castor dock, and Yankton Bridge, past the tugboat, and on towards Great Bay. This spectacular can't be seen when the chum- ber closes down the tide gap. A good place to watch in the tide gap near the mouth of the tidal chum, off Ceres Street. Twice a day, the moon affects the tidal gap. All the sand dunes, where the tidal chum upsteam goes back to rejoin the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua cures in false 100° to 120° cur- rent. A good place to observe this is in an open boat, chum. Which the river also has moved to change the water to a second, and loth the sand dunes. Often when the river runs, the crabs develop a new nest, or the ocean. Ships com- in heavy laden with coal, when they are close to the dock, and go to low tide, for maximum clearance under Memorial Bridge. 12:11 12:13

February 1, 2005

Friday, February 1


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