# Letters & Opinion

# Health Care - What's Missing

#### To the editor:

In all the emotion surrounding the multi-paged health care bills now under consideration, the false proposition is presented: "It's this or nothing." Nobody has read all of each bill. Nobody knows what interactions between and among the multitude of sections lurk within the pages. Unintended consequences are certain. An option that the American people would surely understand and support would be to take a rational approach to the problems within our health care system. That would require following the track of ALL problem solving, whether it's a medical problem, a car problem or a problem in any other field. The steps are: 1. Symptom – define the symptom of the problem in sufficient detail to isolate it. 2. Cause - for each symptom, isolate one or more cause(s). Keep asking "why?" until the root cause is reached. 3. Remedy – for each cause arrived at, above, formulate a remedy. 4. Model – Try each remedy on a small scale, if possible. 5. Control – for each remedy, install enough control so that the symptom it addresses never comes back. This process is not easy. It is hardly ever fun. It will not create heroes. Takes too long? Tackle the worst symptoms first. After all, has it not been said that we have been about this "problem solving" for more than a century now?

> Ken Jones Amherst

# Skate Over and Say "Thank You"

#### To the editor:

No doubt, many of you have seen the skating rink that has been set up this winter at the "Buck" Buchanan Field in the village. Hopefully, you've taken advantage of this fantastic resource and enjoyed an afternoon of skating with your family and friends. As a village resident, I drive by Buchanan Field at least twice a day and it is hard not to notice the level of use this little treasure is getting. You've probably seen this too - the hockey sticks, the figure skaters, little children pushing milk crates, dainty daredevils on double runners, and all manner and form of safety equipment. You know this as the traditional tableau of a New England village in wintertime.

What you probably don't know is that we all have basically one man to thank for this. I read an article last month that described the Buchanan Field rink as being "maintained by the town and overseen by the Conservation Commission". It is true that the fire department flooded the rink initially and has made a couple of follow-up resurfacing visits, and I'm sure that the Conservation Commission has maintained appropriate oversight of the rink's construction and use. Where the steel hits the ice, however, the development and maintenance of this rink has been all Ned Berming-

It was Ned who envisioned an improvement and expansion of the traditional "flooded field" rink at Buchanan Park. It was Ned who applied to the Bertha Rogers Trust for a grant to purchase the liner and batten boards. After receiving the grant, Ned got the project approved through the town and organized the installation of the new rink with volunteer labor. Ned maintains an informal maintenance schedule with a handful of volunteers in the village who often times come out to give him a hand - but when they don't - the maintenance crew consists of just Ned.

My family and I have enjoyed the Buchanan Field rink on several occasions this winter, but have done far less than our fair share of work to develop or maintain it. I'm guessing that if you've used the rink, you have racked up a similar debt. While we should all be grateful to the Bertha Rogers Trust, the town officials and the community volunteers who helped to create and maintain the rink, I think they would all agree that our thanks should be directed to one person. Do me, and yourself, a favor before spring melts the ice away: If you see Ned Bermingham, tell him thanks. He's not hard to find - he's usually over on Middle Street, scraping down the ice.

> Joe Taggart *Amherst*

## Vote for Kathy Brundage Library **Trustee**

### To the editor:

I am asking the voters of Amherst to support my re-election as Library Trustee. The Amherst Town Library is a vital center of information, education, and entertainment for our community, and demand for library services continues to increase. I have enjoyed partnering with our exceptional staff, Friends of the Library, and fellow board members in meeting the challenges of providing a library that is rated one of the top in our state.

It is a pleasure to serve on the board, and I will work to maintain a firstrate library for our town. Please join me at the polls on March 9. Thank you for your support.

> Sincerely, Kathy Brundage

# 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.

# **Vote Rubery for Selectman:** Commitment, Caring, and Concern

#### To the editor:

I would like to introduce myself I am John S. Rubery a candidate for the Board of Selectman for the town of Amherst. I have been a resident of Amherst for 3 years now and feel that this is a great place to live. I have been listening to all of the selectman meetings and see some things that I feel need to be looked at and considered based on where the economy and our residents are now. I feel the time is right for new views and thoughts on the board. I have all the time that would be needed for this position I am disabled and would be able to give my all to help Amherst continue to be the great town it is through my commitment, caring, and concern for Am-

I also want to make it clear that I will not, cannot accept any compensation for my position on the board should I be elected.

The experiences that I have had in various organizations have taught me much about the way we need to look at things. Building a budget for a town is much the same as building a budget for an organization the numbers are larger and the impact of the changes effect many more. Every time we have a need to increase monies for one department or project. We need to explore many avenues for that funding before going to the citizens. The pockets of the citizens of Amherst have been affected by the current economic situation and are not as deep as they once were.

I have served in many positions throughout my career including Selectman, and as a member of the Budget Committee for the town of Greenville New Hampshire. I have held many offices in various organizations including The Veterans of Foreign Wars, The American Legion. I am a member of the Disabled American Veterans and have also been a member of the Lions Club. I serve on the board of directors for the Liberty House transitional home in Manchester NH, and have served on the Board of Governors for the Tilton Veterans Home. I am also a member of the Military and Veterans Health and Human Services sub-committee for Suicide Prevention. I have served on the Board of Directors of the Manchester Police Athletic League working with the youth and fund raising.

I know that we all agree how important it is to give our children a good education. The community has done a good job of providing our students with what they need. I do not believe that this year's budget with salary increases is the right thing for Amherst at this time. I do not feel that giving the school employees raises when the majority of our town employees are receiving none. The citizens, those employed, those that are retired, unemployed or disabled did not receive an increase. This is an additional burden that I feel the taxpayers cannot take on at this time. This should be considered for next years budget based on the state of the economy at that time.

I am asking for your vote on March 9th. I will be at the Amherst Citizens Association forum on March 3rd and also at the polls if you have anything that you want to personally ask me.

John S. Rubery

# **Support Brew for Selectman**

### To the editor:

I hope you will consider voting for Dwight Brew for Amherst Selectman. Dwight was on the town Ways and Means Committee for several years before his tenure on the Amherst School Board. As a result, he has a very detailed understanding of the town from a variety of perspectives

Dwight has the wonderful ability to see the big picture. He sets goals, creates a plan, and achieves results. But, Dwight doesn't do this alone – he is also a team player and has the ability to explain his ideas and gain buy-

Having worked with Dwight on the school board, I can personally attest to his ability to achieve results. Among the important reasons why I would like to see Dwight become a selectman are he's smart, he's willing to share information, and he listens!

Dwight will make an excellent selectman and I hope you will give him

Deborah Cort **Amherst** 

## 250th Hopes!

### To the editor:

I am writing today to ask residents of Amherst for their consideration of my request that the 250th Celebration Committee receive \$5,000 to help ensure that the 250th year will be both meaningful and memorable. We have received the support of both the Board of Selectmen and the Ways & Means Committee but, it is only through the help of our community that we can receive the funds that are needed.

On January 17th we enjoyed a very successful Commemorative Ceremony as well as a Tree Lighting event designed especially to involve the Town's children. Both of those events were carefully planned in honor of - January 18,1760 - which was the exact date of the Incorporation of the Town. As we planned for the day, we included as many Amherst residents as possible - some helping in organizational efforts - and others taking a more prominent role as Amherst musicians and historians. We were especially fortunate that a good deal of the support needed we were able to garner through the generosity of our community. However, as we move through the year and continue our hope of providing interesting and informative events - that are in keeping with the significance of this celebratory year - there will be many times that we will need to have the financial support I am asking for today.

I cannot end this letter without acknowledging that I realize our country is going through difficult days. However, Amherst's 250th year - a milestone of great significance in the life of a town - is where we are right now and, if it is at all possible for members of our community to help, we will be very grateful. Many thanks.

> Carolyn Quinn Co-chair, 250th Celebration Committee

# **Vote Caroline DeVore for Board of** Selectmen

#### To the editor:

Homework....for those of us with children, we know that homework is not their "favorite", but as parents, we know that learning to do your homework is a valuable skill that serves us into adulthood and into our chosen careers. I am running for a seat on the Board of Selectmen and I have been doing a bit of homework myself as a way to better understand all sides of the ongoing discussions around key programs, warrants and budget requests. I have read more than my fair share of meeting minutes and have researched the charter of every committee, board and town office. I have reached out to our current board members, to citizens and to advisory teams with questions to better understand key issues and to evaluate how I could help address these issues if I am elected to the Board of Selectmen.

Most folks I have talked with about the race have asked two things: (1) What does a Selectman actually do, and (2) Why do you want to be a Se-

First, Selectmen act as the executive branch of the town, like the Mayor of a city or the CEO of a company. With the assistance and input from multiple town committees and the Town Administrator, they prepare and present the annual budget, make appointments to various boards and offices, sign warrants to pay town bills, grant licenses and permits and also act as the Board of Health and Board of Assessors.

Beyond those "basics", I believe the Board should embody the essence of the town. They are not just the CEOs....but they should be the Chief Strategy, Communication, Marketing, Finance and even Technology Officers. Together with other town officials, the Selectmen should manage the growth of our town, the expansion of our tax base, the maintenance and safety of the town...all while insuring that our town's character is not lost. This should be our Board of Leaders. Based on my "homework", I believe we need to infuse this Board with leadership that moves beyond administration and even moves beyond years of service as a measure of effectiveness. We need Leadership that will redefine our Board and bring service back to the people of Amherst. Can you imagine a Board that really did their homework, reached out to the community, listened to positive and critical input, took issues on proactively and promoted creative solutions?

This leads me to the answer for the second question - Why would I want to join this Board? I want to be a member of this Board because I can bring leadership experience, new ideas and improved communication to the Board. I have 25 years of experience working with corporate boards as a contributor and a member, and I have been a VP of Marketing and Strategy for the last 15 years. I have worked in the public and private sector to negotiate contracts, define budgets, attract key talent to committees and yes, I believe I can hit the ground running in Amherst. I'd like to put my management experience, creativity and collaboration skills to work for you. Beyond the experience I can bring to this Board, I want to be your Selectman because I am deeply concerned about the current Board's inability to bring forward proposals that the town will rally behind. There are major programs in the Department of Public Works, the Open Space Land Purchasing program and the Recreational Land Use program that need leadership today. I feel that the Board has lost touch with the Town they serve.... with the Town they are chartered to lead.

On Tuesday, March 9th, you will see two types of candidates on the ballot for Selectman; board incumbents and newcomers to the board. I ask you take a hard look at your town's CEOs (current as past) and take advantage of this opportunity to infuse new ideas into your town's Board of Leaders. I will work for you and I will always do my homework on the key issues.

> Respectfully, Caroline DeVore Grohse-Holz **Amherst**

# Value Provided by the Library

### To the editor:

As voters consider the services provided by the Town and the level of taxes needed to support those services, the Trustees of the Amherst Town Library would like to offer some information about the value of those Library services provided to our residents. The total circulation of all classes of materials increased by 13% last year and since July we have seen a 20% increase. This is an amazing increase considering that historically the circulation increase is between 2 and 4 % a year. And we had nearly 200,000 patron visits last year, including 2300 people who attended our adult programs. Perhaps it is because of the current economic conditions that residents are taking advantage of the many opportunities to save money by using the Library. Instead of buying that latest bestselling book for \$25, borrow a copy from the Library. Do your children have a Nintendo DS or WII, then save some money by borrowing a game before buying one for \$50. Rather than spending \$10 to \$12 per person to visit the Currier Gallery or the Museum of Science or 7 other museums, reserve a museum pass. Going on a trip or just commuting, borrow an audio book and save \$30 or more. Looking for a new job or finding some ancestors, our Reference Librarians provide professional service to help you in your search. Use the Library's subscription to Ancestory.com and save the \$20 a month membership fee you would have otherwise had to pay for genealogy searches. Because Amherst is a member of the Greater Manchester Library Consortium and we share a common library system with 10 other libraries, you can use your Amherst Library card to borrow items from other Consortium member libraries such as Milford, Bedford and Manchester.

While we strive to provide the best services for our patrons (the Library was rated one of the five best small libraries in New Hampshire), we are conscious of the need to keep costs down for the taxpayers. Last year we were able to return to the town over \$30,000 in unused salary funds due to unpaid leave and retirements. We have nearly completed a private fund raising activity to pay for the re-carpeting of the downstairs of the Library where the Children's Room is located. This \$19,000 projected will be completed without expense to the taxpayers thanks to the support of the Bean Foundation, the Friends of the Library and other community groups, and over 100 individual contributors. Due to your support, Amherst will continue to have a Library that adds to the market value of your property.

> Don Holden, Chairman Amherst Town Library Board of Trustees

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