

## The Tupper Lake Free Press

and Tupper Lake Herald

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## Letters to the editor

# Two legislative bills will hurt health care

To the editor:

Harmful legislation (A.285 and S.911-A) backed by New York's trial lawyers would change New York State's medical malpractice statute of limitations. While patients who are the victims of malpractice deserve justice and fair compensation, this proposed law does nothing to further those goals. In fact, it would have negative consequences for our entire healthcare system.

Adirondack Health, along with all of New York's world class doctors and hospitals, already spend billions annually on medical malpractice coverage—the highest in the nation. This legislation would increase these already enormous costs by hundreds of millions of dollars and further divert critical patient care resources.

New York's medical malpractice statute of

limitations is among the longest in the nation, with important exceptions for children and patients undergoing continued treatment.

Unlike New York State, many states with provisions similar to those in this bill also have reasonable caps on

the amount that can be recovered for pain and suffering, and some even cap total damages.

This proposed legislation is the wrong approach to fix New York's medical malpractice system.

We urge the New York State Legislature

to reject this piecemeal legislation, and consider a comprehensive approach to medical malpractice reform that strengthens New York's entire healthcare system.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Waguih Kirolos  
President  
Adirondack Health  
Medical Staff

## Community invited to tea and dessert event

To the editor,

Blessings to all the people in our community. Our hope is that your summer is going well. For one thing, life is far from being boring.

Our clergy group would like to invite you to a "Tea and Dessert" event at St. Thomas Episcopal Church on July 12 at 6 pm. The guest speaker for the evening will be Betty Maus of the Tupper Lake Food Pantry.

This will give people not only a chance to find out more about what the pantry does, but also how we may all be a part, and in what ways would be the most helpful. Many times we have services but people are not aware of how they work or who they serve. Service does not just happen. Many hands and minds make light a task.

This would also give us a chance to get to see our neighbors who go camping in the warm weather or go

south with the snowbirds in the winter. Sometimes we do not have a chance to see our friends at all. We hope you will take a few minutes to come, have a cup of tea and a piece of something sweet and ask questions and share in the information Betty has to explain.

Everyone is welcome and we hope you will join us.

Sincerely yours,  
Patty Francisco and  
the clergy council

## Magazine lists Adirondacks as one of eight top places to retire, Big Tupper gets plug

The July-August issue of Where to Retire magazine carried a feature story called Tempting Tourist Towns, which listed eight towns from the Adirondacks in northern New York to Las Vegas in southern Nevada that were perfect places to retire.

The piece of the article on the Adirondacks includes a full color photo of one of the snowy trails at Big Tupper Ski Center which describes it as "having an elevation of 2,000 feet with slopes suitable for all skill levels."

The following is the Author Candyce Stapen's description of the Adirondacks:

"Northern New York's 6 million-acre Adirondack Park draws nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts to its scenic mix of mountains, lake, rivers and valleys. The grouping of public and private lands, along with sizeable stretches of wilderness, nearly total the square mileage of Vermont and contains more than 100 towns and villages. Vacationers come to ski, snowboard, hike, kayak, boat, fish and bike- or to relax in a namesake Adirondack chair, designed in 1930 by a frequent tourist there.

The story lists Lake Placid as one of the region's gems.

The author listed the climate having a low of 8 degrees F. and a high of 29 in January and a high of 81 degrees F. in July and a low of 57. The cost of living was described as "above average" and the median sales price of homes in the region for January and February of this year was \$135,400- according to the Northern Adirondack Board of Realtors.

The other great tourist places to retire, according to the story, were the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Sarasota, Florida, Lafayette in southern Louisiana, Rapid City, South Dakota, Hot Springs, Arkansas, Park City, Utah and Las Vegas.

Incidentally, of all eight sections of the country, the Adirondacks boasted the second lowest median sales price for housing, behind Hot Springs at \$133,351. After the Adirondacks the next lowest place to buy a house was Lafayette at \$200,000 and Las Vegas, at \$205,000. The place with the highest median value for housing was Park City, Utah at \$1.3 million.

## Editorials ...

# A couple of friends we missed...

We missed a couple of old friends in our tribute to those who have passed recently in our column last week.

One of the most jovial and good-spirited guys to bless this town in the past 80 years of so was native son Adelard "Del" Boyer, who died in early May.

Many younger people here knew Del as the pilot of his vintage ride he entered in most of the recent Woodsmen's Days parade. It's telltale horn was often directed as a big hello to friends he'd meet, as it rolled regularly through town.

Del sold life insurance for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company for many years and so he knew many people here. His enthusiastic personality made him a friend to many. People trusted Del.

He was Tupper Lake's first Housing and Urban Development Small Cities Residence Rehab coordinator, working with local homeowners and helping them to fix up their homes with grants won by the village in the 1980s. We had the pleasure of working with him as a member of the volunteer board that oversaw the program. Del was frank with folks but very fair- and he loved to laugh. He was a pleasure to work with and to be around.

When he left that post to take a job in security at Sunmount, we suspect he brought a lot of his comical ways and good-natured fun to his assignment there. He had many friends too in the Tupper Lake Fire Department, where he was a member for nearly 30 years.

Del was one of those guys who was fun to be around, and his robust personality made Tupper Lake a nicer place to live for it.

Tupper Lake also lost a great lady in recent weeks with the passing of Dorothy Dunn Parmelee, who reached the grand old century mark last November.

Dot was truly a woodswoman. In addition to golf and bowling, she was an avid angler, hunter and snowmobiler- as able and comfortable in the woods as anyone we know. She had her own hunting camp on the former Draper tract, we believe, a girls' camp of sorts.

Dot and her family were part of that migration that came from Vermont who came here with the Bobbin and Shuttle Company of Sutton, Vt. to work at the plant here. After the plant closed she worked at other bobbin operations here at the Oval Wood Dish and later at Draper.

It was at Draper Dot met our old friend Sam Parmelee, who ran the place. She later married Sam.

In their later years they traveled extensively. They always seemed to be having a lot of fun, wherever we ran into them.

What we remember best about Dot was her willingness to help others and her giving ways. She was a mainstay of the Tupper Lake Rescue Squad for nearly 20 years, and like her teammate Maurice Corrow, she was there almost every time a rig would roll.

A skilled clinician and teacher of emergency medicine, Dot was certified through advanced medical training to give IVs and do endotracheal intubations in the field and on the way to the hospital.

Because of her advanced training and vast medical knowledge we suspect a number of lives were saved here during her time on the rescue squad. Her many contributions to the squad over the years were her gifts to her adopted hometown.

Dot was a strong, independent woman with a lot of kindness to share with others. She will long be remembered fondly by many here.

-Dan McClelland

## Important lessons must come from prison escape

The nearly month-long search for escaped convicts Richard Matt and David Sweat concluded Sunday afternoon with the apprehension of David Sweat when two bullets fired by a state trooper, 21 year veteran Sgt. Jay Cook of Burke brought him down near Constable, after a short chase. Cook is a firearms instructor and a good shot.

Matt was killed by a border patrol agent Friday near the Duane town line, south of Malone. So desperate for a ride, Matt apparently took a shot at a passing recreational vehicle, and the driver called 911.

The capture of Sweat Sunday afternoon brings to a close one of the largest manhunts in the history of this state, involving the use of over 1,000 police officers, state troopers and agents of various law enforcement agencies, who combed the rugged woods of the northern Adirondacks through brush and bramble and swamps for over 20 days. For the searchers, who often were in close-fashion grid style formation often used in intensive searches for missing persons, it was grueling and dangerous work. The fleeing felons were apparently armed at times.

Many in the north country are thankful for the massive search effort and those who took part.

It rivals, we suspect, the massive manhunt for AWOL Air Force Major James Call, the many old timers here will remember. Call shot and killed one police officer and seriously injured two others in August, 1954. It was the start of a manhunt that ended two months later in the gambling town of Reno, Nevada.

It was reported about the modern day search that \$1 million a day in state and federal funds were spent in overtime and personal expenses of the law enforcement officers engaged in the search.

It was exhausting work for the searchers, and from the news reports this week, all are happy it's over.

Authorities are hoping David Sweat, who is being treated for two gun shots wounds to his torso at the Albany Medical Center this week, will survive for with him remains the secrets to this brazen and well executed escape.

Reports yesterday were that he was in stable condition and he has told investigators so far that they were planning to drive to Mexico with their accomplice, sewing instructor Joyce Mitchell, after killing her husband Lyle, who also worked at the prison. When Mitchell failed to show when they climbed out of that manhole in Dannemora, they switched to Plan B and tried to make their way to Canada.

The tight state of the art surveillance system at

the border would have stopped them cold, had they made it that far.

The escape was accomplished not by chipping themselves out through thick masonry walls of Clinton Correctional Facility and out through the service lines with only light instruments, as you see in the movies. Employed at times were heavy power tools, able to cut through inches-thick concrete or cast piping. The escape hatch cut in one of the pipes that was broadcast on television was cut through in such precise and straight fashion- it looked like the work of a seasoned craftsman, not a couple of cons making an escape. The work must have taken days, not hours.

How these murderers had access to major power tools is one big question in the case. It was reported that some came from locked contractors' boxes. One of them was picked. How they were used without someone hearing the loud noise power tools make is another.

Mrs. Mitchell and a veteran correctional officer at Dannemora have both been implicated in the escape. Were there more? Probably!

There must be a culture in the maximum security facility which apparently fostered the fraternization between the convicts and the two staff members, where favors were traded!

Convict Sweat's testimony will hopefully provide many answers to questions which still baffle investigators.

The escape of these two hardened criminals is a black eye for the Cuomo administration and for the brass of the state Department of Corrections who set incarceration policies.

The Dannemora prison- Clinton Correctional Facility- has long been considered one of the most secure facilities in this state, and perhaps this country.

For over a century generations of people of the tiny hamlet- including the late Senator Ron Stafford- have lived comfortably and at complete ease in the shadow of this giant fortress, knowing the place was impenetrable. There had not been an escape in over 100 years. Until now!

How it happened will be the subject of probe for months and years to come.

It's an incredible story that probably will be a major motion picture soon. We know of at least one author who is preparing to write a book about it.

The Dannemora prison has apparently seen major changes in recent decades- and none of them have been for the good of security, this incident proves.

Retired correctional officers here tell us that even as late as 25 years ago, inmates at Dannemora

were not allowed to talk when they were out of their cells, the regulations were so severe. Guards were feared by inmates!

Incarceration there was considered hard time!

Now even the worst of the worst- people like Matt and Sweat who killed brutally without remorse, are permitted to serve their time, lounging about in their street clothes in country-club fashion and cooking hamburgers to their own liking on hot plates in their cells. What is that all about?

Some of those changes may have come from the department of corrections but we suspect most of the easing has been a result of successful lawsuits filed by inmates or their advocates in state and federal courts.

People who live in the vast search area around Malone and Plattsburgh have had to endure three weeks of uncertainty and fear because these men were permitted to escape. Many here in Tupper Lake- 60 miles from the focus of the search- were troubled by the elopement. Many women we talked with, in particular, were deeply bothered by it- and we can understand why.

The system failed somehow. Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Department of Corrections leaders must be held to recent promises that major investigations will ensue. State lawmakers must ensure that is done thoroughly and completely!

As reforms are addressed, we'd like to see included the opinions and views of the run of the mill state correctional officers- the men and women who oversee the convicts daily in the trenches of our state penal system and who know better than anyone how these criminals think and how they are prone to act.

Discipline and regulation must be reintroduced to our state prison system in severe enough fashion to prevent future breaches. The maximum-security status of years ago must be returned to Clinton Correctional. The people of this state deserve nothing less!

-Dan McClelland

## Kind words appreciated

To the Editor:

Wonderful was your tribute to all those lovely people, Dan, in your column last time. Those folks now grace heaven's gate!

It is good to have someone in your position to share your words about the lives of some of those who have passed here.

Thank you, Dan!

Love and prayers,  
Patty Francisco