

Black Bears, Graduations, State Titles, and Windmills

By Michael J. Atwood

Black bears on the loose in North Attleborough? Hey - I left Los Angeles to avoid such wildlife as skinny coyotes, hungry mountain lions, rock stars, and reality TV stars roaming the streets of my hometown looking for prey. But when I came home on Monday evening, I hit my answering machine only to hear a warning that indeed a black bear was roaming the area around Fales Road, Hoppin Hill Road, and Sheldonville Road, just two miles from my home. My wife heard the notification too and we looked at each other incredulously, concerned about our kids being out in the yard in fear of the beast. Then, after a few minutes, she handed me a plate of chicken and sent me out to go outside and grill.

Now, let's focus on the real news of this past week!

- 294 graduates of the Class of 2009 "walked" on Friday night. Unfortunately, the rain didn't hold off forcing the event inside the gymnasium.
 - Red Rocketeer Nick Wade won another All-State track title, his third in two years, with a 1:52.8 – 800 meter effort, once again breaking his own school record.
 - Valedictorian Jacquelyn Tupper and Salutatorian Kerry Fitzpatrick secured their final class ranks - #1 and #2. Jacquelyn will be going to Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Kerry will be attending the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
- "Top Ten" of the Class of 2009 (alphabetically listed), included: Kathryn Czepiel, Amy Goss, Caitlin Kenney, Alexandra Kostaras, Bradley Quade, Bethany Tupper, Carolyn Udall and Alexandra Van Buren.

- The N.A. girls' 4 x 100 relay also won an All-State track title at Fitchburg State College in a meet record time, their second relay title this year. The members included: junior Christy Deininger and seniors Julianne Cappadona, Lauren Goldberg, and Carolyn Udall (along with her top ten academic ranking and school record this season the 200 meters). Cappadona was also 3rd in the 100 meters and Deininger placed 5th in the 110 high hurdles.
- Nick Wade later anchored the 4 x 400 team to a 3rd place finish, running with juniors Matt Smith and Vladimir Francois and senior Ryan Doherty. Let's also not forget, junior Kevin Peter who placed 6th in the discus and will compete on Saturday at the New England meet in Burlington, Vermont. "It was a very rewarding day for the whole team as everyone turned in a personal best performance," said Coach Derek Herber. Not easily done in state competition.
- A 3-2 vote by the selectmen sent the N.A. Charter decision to the RTM. Will enough representatives show up to make this a fair vote and decide whether or not we should vote on changing our town's government? Hold on – did we even fill those 78 or so vacant RTM seats? That doesn't sound like democracy. John Rhyno says "Put it before the people." I say, "Don't we have better things to be worrying about this year?" Every move in town government should be to find more money for our budget deficit. And at that, how can operate with a city form of government when we're struggling as a town? I'm starting to feel that our best approach might be to cut costs is to chop town government.....in half.
Government is pretty expensive these days too.

- Word on the street is that pretty clear surveillance images have been found of the criminals who stole money from Julia's Garden wishing well up at WWI Park. *If you turn yourself in now, maybe we'll go easy on you. If you don't, we will find you and you'll wish you had.* Liam Neeson could intimidate these bozos with lines like these.
- Red crosswalks have been painted all around our town. I have to say, I able to see pedestrians much clearer then those old green ones. Plus, it shows town spirit.
- At the Red Sox-Rangers game Saturday night, my wife and I endured eight innings of four chuckleheads "dipping" then spitting tobacco into plastic cups as well as on the cement floor in front of them (or in back of us). On top of that, they were slowly getting drunk— or "totally wasted" as they phrased it. I'd witnessed the obnoxious behavior of two of these individuals before – twice during playoff games – when the dumped beer on two horrified women in front of them. When something splashed on my back and neck in the 8th inning, I'd enough and, like a man, I turned around, stared at the chew cup crew, took out my iPhone and said, "Okay, who wants to lose their season tickets?" Needless to say, the tough guy tobacco chewers were full of apologies. No one wants to lose their Sox seats and get tossed with a call to the Fenway security line. Classic line from one of the annoying dippahs.....: "Dude, relax; it's the Sox. It's Saturday night and we're up 8-0, dude"
- How would you feel if you saw a 240-foot windmill in WWI Memorial Park? Mike Bedard's idea of building one to produce power is a bit quixotic in my opinion. The park is a place of recreation and, although the wind turbine might

support our own energy supply and rec department, I get that sick feeling particularly for the neighbors, whenever I see one of those white mammoth rotors spinning around. I'd search for another location like in Cumberland...they have hills there too: how will Westwood Estates or The Cliffs respond to one of those clunkers spinning 24/7? Unless we're getting free electricity, I'm not interested; and the promise of a pool eleven years from installation is something we could fundraise another way. The wind turbine would also be hovering near the Julia's Garden and playground. Sorry, Mike : Thumbs down.

- And no more cell phone towers in N.A.! With the power lines and cell signals bouncing around the Landry Ave. sector, what does that mean for health of students at three schools located on that stretch and the surrounding neighborhoods? We don't know the long-term effects. I'd rather drop a call then hear about odd cases of cancer or other diseases due to exposure in the years to come.