

# OPINION

## EDITORIAL

### New grocery stores will be win for Lynn shoppers

Planned Ernie's, Market Basket means choices

With the closing late last year of longtime Lynn staples Johnny's Foodmaster and Ernie's Harvest Time, in November and December, respectively, food shoppers saw their choices diminish in the central part of the city.

While there are other thriving chain and discount grocers — Stop & Shop on Washington Street and Price Rite at 395 Lynnway — the loss of both Johnny's and Ernie's was a major loss to central Lynn families who shopped there for generations.

That's why the news last Friday that Ernie's Harvest Time will reopen in downtown Lynn, and on Tuesday that a deal has been finalized for a new Market Basket at the former General Electric Factory of the Future site, is such tremendous news for the city and its consumers.

With a population of 90,000 plus (and perhaps thousands more not counted in the 2012 federal Census), there's plenty of demand to keep all of the stores busy.

Ernie's had been a Lynn landmark for 64 years and its patrons lamented its closing last Dec. 29. Owner Ernie Fratangelo now plans to re-open at a location near City Hall by the end of summer.

"Ernie's is another good sign for the downtown," Lynn Economic Development and Industrial Corp. (EDIC) Director James Cowdell told The Item. "They are a welcome addition with a loyal customer base; plus, this is a heavily populated area."

Although the Foodmaster chain is permanently out of business, the addition of Market Basket in Lynn brings another Massachusetts' family chain supermarket to the city. And the sale and pending reuse of the long dormant Factory of the Future property is a big victory for the city, including Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy, the City Council and Cowdell's EDIC.

Lynn shoppers will come out the biggest winners though, with the return of healthy and well-established competition in the grocery and produce sector.



Closed last December, Ernie's Harvest Time plans to re-open in downtown Lynn by summer's end.



### Progress made in keeping Flax Pond clean

The Flax Pond Association was formed two years ago with the intention of trying to maintain the integrity of the area. Our first meeting was held with approximately 100 people in attendance.

After much discussion there were three major areas of concern to the attendees. Geese were number one, cleaning and maintaining areas adjacent to the pond was second, and restoring Flax Pond to a safe, clean, bacteria free pond to enable swimming and fishing was the third.

Since geese were the number one concern of residents who attended our meeting, we contacted Ward 1 Councilor Wayne Lozzi to see what could be done to control the population. He informed us that several years ago he was made aware that geese were becoming a major problem for many areas in and around Flax Pond and Magnolia Playground, which is used by citywide groups both for recreation and sports. These areas were being contaminated with the number of geese and their droppings. Homeowners bordering the pond were complaining about the amount of geese feces on their sidewalks and driveways where they walk and their children play. The problem is controlling the geese population in the most humane way possible.

Upon investigation, Councilor Lozzi discovered that unless some methods were taken at this time, the geese population would contin-

#### GUEST COMMENTARY KEVIN COLE

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ue to multiply at an alarming rate and make our parks and swimming areas unpleasant and unsanitary.

There are a certain number of geese, which will remain on the ponds and there are migratory geese that come and go. The problem is controlling and keeping those remaining geese at a reasonable number through a humane method.

Councilor Lozzi investigated all possible methods of geese control used in other cities and towns and also with environmental agencies. Adding the eggs is the most humane

method to control the geese population. Councilor Lozzi and volunteers obtained the required permits and started the process of adding seven years ago. This process is only successful if the community is involved in locating the nests.

This is not just a local concern in Lynn judging by a recent newspaper article in The Boston Globe expressing concern with the overpopulation of the Canadian geese on the little league field in Lynnfield.

I have lived in this area for my entire life. As a child, my summers were enjoyed at the playground with my three brothers and sister. We would spend the entire day with the playground instructor traveling from park to park for softball games and being able to play in our own park without worrying whether there would be too many geese on the field for us to play. We would return home and spend the rest of the day swimming in the pond with residents from the entire city.

This Association is making progress in keeping Flax Pond a clean, safe, and bacteria free pond for all families to enjoy now and for years to come.

**Kevin Cole** is president of Lynn's Flax Pond Association. He can be reached by email at [kpondview@comcast.net](mailto:kpondview@comcast.net).

### Regulatory bedlam? Yes, and it's growing

A guy's walking across a college campus, sees a young woman, grins, winks and, even though he doesn't know her, says he'd sure like to take someone so beautiful out on a date. She's offended.

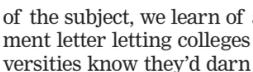
She accuses this fellow student of sexual harassment, and, because of new federal rules, she does not have to show that others might also find his remarks objectionable — as previously required. In proceedings that follow, his interrogators do not presume him innocent and can rule against him despite reasonable doubt. There's the possibility of a career wrecked by a moment's resented forwardness.

Sounds incredible, doesn't it? But much worse has happened and the door is being opened for more shocks. This is the new America, an America that is not quite a democracy anymore, but a country dictated to by tens of thousands of pages of bureaucratically promulgated regulations that cover everything from the amount of water allowed in a toilet to the kind of light bulb we dimwits may buy.

Maybe some think that every tea party needs a pooper, preferably from the Internal Revenue Service, and that red-tape specialists should run everyone's lives, because, after all, they're better than we are. The evidence tells us something else. It tells us the administrative state can be grotesquely unfair, unconstitutional, self-contradictory, unspeakably autocratically intrusive, stupid and morally repulsive.

And as if there wasn't enough already, more imperiousness recently came our way in the form of the Department of Education. In a Wall Street Journal analysis by a student

#### JAY AMBROSE



of the subject, we learn of a department letter letting colleges and universities know they'd darn well better know that speech can be a form of sexual harassment deserving swift action. That's not all. The letter also says that if supposed victims pronounce themselves offended, that's criterion enough to decide sexual harassment was committed.

Much of higher education may well lower itself to heed this interpretation of federal law, because, if it doesn't, financial aid and student loans could be lost. Especially when you add these new rules to prior rules, you have a problem. You've made speech less free and substituted yet more persecution for justice, which, every American should know, gets trumped elsewhere in our regulatory system. There are said to be so many federal regulations with criminal penalties that no one can be sure of the exact number.

If that's true, you might wonder how citizens can begin to know what those regulations say. The answer is that they don't and many stumble into guilty verdicts simply by going about their daily lives with no idea they were doing anything wrong.

Two years ago, The Wall Street Journal documented this travesty in an excellent series that pinpointed specific cases that were nothing short of unconscionable in a land that ordinarily evokes pride instead of shame.

President Barack Obama will fix our regulatory mess, won't he? He brags he will. He doesn't. In January 2011, he talked about addressing the incredible overlap in government programs, and well he should have. As The Washington Post's Ed O'Keefe reported in 2011, Obama's stimulus was hardly helped by the fact that funding for its crucial transportation projects depended on five agencies using 100 different distribution mechanisms.

Skip two years, and the White House is again pledging action in a situation the Government Accountability Office says is still a bad joke. Some old problems were addressed, but new ones developed. A report in The Fiscal Times notes that all this program duplication represents "about \$95 billion in potential cost savings" — \$10 billion more than the money saved by the sequester cuts.

For more bad news, note the Heritage Foundation's estimate that the increased economic cost of regulations in Obama's first term was likely more than seen in any other administration and its prediction that new regulations headed our way will badly burden an economy struggling to get going.

I find that probability offensive and suspect many others do, too.

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