



QUESTION OF THE WEEK

If you could be anyone or anything for Halloween, what would you be?

By David Hart



Cole Vincent Bailey, of Phillips: "A froggy."



Aiyana Savage, of Kingfield: "Ariel of Little Mermaid."



Jan Fisher, of New Portland: "A gypsy."



Gaylord Ingham, of Phillips: "Injun Joe."



Pete LaPlante, of Stratton: "Single."

COMMENTARY

Letters on page 4

School Con vs. Tax Con

By Professor John Frary

Do you feel under-taxed, and do you feel that a centralized bureaucracy in Augusta would help to increase school efficiency?

Consider these questions. Have you any memory of any candidate for office ever saying that Mainers are under-taxed and should pay more? Any memory of a candidate promising to go to Augusta and raise taxes? I'm guessing you have not. Yet taxes continue to go up, running ahead of inflation and population growth in almost every year.

This is not to say that our legislators hate taxpayers and want to hurt them. At least I hope not. Except maybe a few. You will understand this phenomenon better if you get yourself a copy of "The Peoples Guide to the Legislature (any year). There you will find statements by every representative and senator in Augusta about what they hope to achieve in office.

And everything, almost without exception, will cost money. This is true of the current membership, even though it was already evident before the recession that Maine is fiscally overstretched with a huge burden of unfunded mandates. And while

we are on the subject, check to see how many of these legislators have anything to say about how we are to fund those mandates.

When these statements speak of improving government they almost invariably propose ways to spend more money. It seems as if nearly all of our legislators imagine Maine's government has attained a superhuman level of flawless efficiency. There are no programs which should be terminated as ineffective. No inefficiencies which they can detect and propose to correct.

When they do propose to "save" money, the results are disastrous. Think of jail consolidation, or the even more disastrous school consolidation. Baldacci's administrators claimed in June of 2007 that school consolidation would save \$221 million over three years. This year they claimed it would save \$1.6 million—but now they have abandoned even that pitiful number, because in reality it will cost more than it will save.

So why aren't some people concerned with overspending voting YES on 3 to throw out the bogus Consolidation law? The money savings isn't there.

— Please see **Con** on page 11

Please vote 'YES' on Question 5!

By Nancy E Teel

My mom died in July of 1999 from Pancreatic Cancer; a mere five months after diagnosis, typical for this type of cancer; it shows up with little warning and moves very quickly. My siblings and I banded together and took turns being with her for days at a time.

I think the thing that was most difficult for me was the extreme discomfort and pain she experienced from the constant throwing up and nausea. We all learned early on to carry a plastic bucket and roll of paper towels when we left the house for doctors' visits or to simply go for rides. She would sit in the passenger seat with the pail between her legs. Sometimes we would pull over to the side of the road so she could have a change of scenery while hanging out the door. I'm describing an attractive woman, who had always prided herself on looking like a million bucks, no matter how much money she didn't have!

Rubbing her back as she hugged the toilet bowl, I grew frustrated and angry that the pill prescribed to alleviate this discomfort always ended up get-

ting flushed. This pill was called Marinol, cost about \$12 a pop, and wasn't covered by insurance. Ironically, this alternative to the real thing, marijuana, is prescribed as treatment for nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy, when conventional medications for these symptoms fail. For my mom, and many other critically ill people, this isn't the case. Her cancer was in her digestive system, which couldn't process anything anyway. It seems to me common sense that she wouldn't be able to keep the pills down long enough for it to be effective.

Of course I knew there was a better way but mom was radically resistant to the idea of smoking pot. All the years she feared her "perfect" children were using drugs was hard to shake off. As I headed home to try to catch up with my own life, I was determined to score a few joints for her. Much to my surprise, younger friends of my mom's beat me to the punch.

With much trepidation, she tried a few "puffs." I

— Please see **Question 5** on page 11

Legislative Report: The ballot questions

By Rep. Tom Saviello
District 90

In the last few weeks many of you have asked me questions about the many ballot question that will be in front of you Nov. 3.

There are four kinds of ballot issues. They are the People's Veto, Citizen's Initiative, Bonds and Constitutional Amendments.

The People's Veto is a process where citizens can propose the veto of a new law. Signatures totaling 10 percent (55,087) of the votes cast for Governor in 2006 are required. Once validated and timelines are met, the people of the state vote to decide the outcome of the new law.

The Citizen Initiative is a process where a citizen or group of citizens can propose a new or change an existing law. Signatures totaling 10 percent (55,087) of the votes cast for Governor in 2006 are required. Once validated and timelines are met the legislature votes to accept or reject the new law or changed law. If rejected the people of the state vote to decide the outcome.

Bond approval is a process where citizens approve or reject the legislature's vote to borrow money for capital improvements such as roads and new schools.

Lastly, Constitutional Amendment is a process where citizens approve or reject the legislatures

vote to amend the Maine Constitution.

Below I have identified the type of question you will be voting on and a summary on each ballot question provided by the Secretary of State. For more information you can go to <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming.html>

**Question 1: A People's Veto
Question 1: An Act To End Discrimination in Civil Marriage and Affirm Religious Freedom**

Marriage is the legally recognized union of two people. Gender-specific terms relating to the marital relationship or familial relationships, including, but not limited to, "spouse," "family," "marriage," "immediate family," "dependent," "next of kin," "bride," "groom," "husband," "wife," "widow" and "widower," must be construed to be gender-neutral for all purposes throughout the law, whether in the context of statute, administrative or court rule, policy, common law or any other source of civil law.

A yes vote repeals the law. A no vote keeps the law in place.

**Question 2: A Citizen Initiative
Question 2: An Act to Decrease the Automobile**

— Please see **Ballot** on page 20