

# EDITORIAL & COMMENT

*The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken.*

Henry W. Longfellow

## New England Forest Products: Local, Sustainable Forestry

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Purveyors of lumber, hardwood flooring, stair parts, decking, bark mulch, cordwood, and more, New England Forest Products prides itself on selling the highest-quality wood products in the area at factory-direct prices, resulting in excellent value to the consumer. Buxton and his staff are also justifiably proud of the fact that there is no waste in his operation; everything that is brought in to be milled is used, including bark and sawdust.

"The lumber industry was a 'green' business before being 'green' was recognized as being important to our environment," Buxton says. "There is not one part of the tree that goes unused here. The sawdust is sold to wood pellet companies and made into wood pellets; the wood chips are sold to power plants; the bark becomes that beautiful, dark bark mulch used to announce the end of winter. What doesn't end up as lumber, pellets, or bark mulch is used for cordwood."

Over the summer, New England Forest Products diversified its operation and opened a retail space (known as The Company Store) to sell their lumber and other products directly to consumers. Since over 80 percent of the company's wood comes from forests that are managed for long-term health and growth, and are within 50 or 60 miles of the Greenfield mill, buyers can rest assured they're getting the best value for their money, and supporting local industry and

the environment.

"Buying direct from the mill avoids the entire distribution chain," Buxton says. "So consumers are getting the best price for products that have glaring quality differences from what's available at the big box stores."

Buxton's wife, Deb, and the other 11 employees at New England Forest Products are happy to help with any questions or concerns that customers may have. Most of the workers have been there for years, providing consumers with a wealth of expertise at their disposal every time they visit New England Forest Products.

Customers such as Al Struthers of Peterborough seem to have developed a passion for the products and services at New England Forest Products. Struthers says: "New England Forest Products offers top-quality, locally grown lumber... on several occasions the boards I've purchased were so beautiful that I didn't want to cut them!" Struthers goes on to say that "The employees are fantastic. They have an unparalleled knowledge of wood and have helped me pick the perfect boards time and time again. I can buy with confidence, knowing that every dollar I spend is going right back into the local economy."

For more details on the lumber and wood products that New England Forest Products offers, visit the retail store on Route 31 in Greenfield, call 603-547-3207, or visit the company online at [www.neforestproducts.com](http://www.neforestproducts.com).

## Hana's Handbag Boutique, No More Trips To The Mall

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more making a trip to the mall. You can shop locally and find quality goods at affordable prices.

Hana's Handbag Boutique is a new shop (located between Effendi's and Simply Scrubs) that has been enthusiastically welcomed to the area. "People are very excited to see a handbag store in the area, and have also commented on the reasonable prices," says Jessica Laurie, manager of the boutique, who is equally excited about how the shop has been received. "There isn't any place like this in the area. We provide consumers with reasonably priced, high-quality, designer and designer-inspired merchandise."

Laurie enjoys working alongside owner Faham Effendi to bring the people in the Monadnock Region a unique and unbeatable selection of handbags, scarves, perfume, and business and everyday accessories for men and women.

The first thing you'll notice when walking into Hana's Handbag Boutique is the overall clean, classy feel to the shop; and everything is merchandised for customer accessibility. You'll instantly see something you love, check the price, and find that you've truly gone to handbag heaven.

One of the brands carried at Hana's Handbag Boutique is Jafferjee's, a company that has transformed genuine leather products into an art form. From evening bags to travel bags, and styled to suit all ages, Jafferjee's products are the essence of quality, but at obtainable prices. This shop also carries stylish, non-leather bags in every shape and size imaginable.

Other popular bags at Hana's Handbag Boutique is the Khaadi bags from Pakistan. These are hand-spun and hand-woven out of raw materials such as cotton, silk, or wool, and then spun into threads on a spinning wheel. These attractive bags have beautifully embroidered motifs in a variety of colors – from earth tones to vibrant – and are embellished with sequins and beads. Also from Pakistan are some beautiful hand-stitched table runners with placemats.

A fashionable Pashmina scarf, wrap, or shawl is the perfect accent to any outfit. Hana's Handbag Boutique carries hand-stitched Pashmina and silk-blend scarves and water shawls (also known as summer or ring shawls). Pashmina – considered to be the best cashmere wool in the world – is the wool from the neck and underbelly of goats that thrive in the Himalayans. It is exceptionally soft and light, yet extremely warm.

If it's fragrances you're looking for, Hana's Handbag Boutique has a full range of fragrances for both men and women. Dior, Gucci, Burberry Brit, Versace, Armani, and Ralph Lauren are just some of the many popular fragrances offered. They also carry gift sets.

Customers will also find a good selection of hair accessories, jewelry, Victorian vanity items (mirrors and such), wallets, laptop bags, briefcases, travel pouches, and even golf ball pouches. Hana's Handbag Boutique is open Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more details, call 603-358-1090 or e-mail: [hannahandbags@aol.com](mailto:hannahandbags@aol.com).

# TALES OF HOPE

## Helping Seniors Remain Independent Neighbors-In-Deed

For Neighbors-In-Deed volunteer Shivali Wallace, the benefits of visiting an elderly woman who lives by herself were many – not only for the woman she visited.

"The time with her was invaluable. It taught me never to underestimate the sincerity behind the phrase 'come back soon,'" said Wallace. "It taught me again how much joy and fulfillment there is in sharing a hug, a laugh, or just walking alongside someone during a stroll down their memory lane – no matter how many times before they may have done it. It reminded me not to take for granted the joy found in simple things like a drive in the countryside or how a boring lunch can become a picnic because it is shared with someone in a park."

Geraldine Liebert, director of Neighbors-In-Deed, said Wallace is not unique in that many of the approximately 100 volunteers in the program say they get as much from the relationships that develop as they give. Each year, the program holds two socials for volunteers and care recipients, and Liebert says the occasions are both heartbreaking and heartwarming. "The events shed light on the loneliness seniors feel as they age, yet also highlight the difference that the volunteers are truly making in the lives of the seniors."

Neighbors-In-Deed recruits, screens, trains, and mobilizes volunteers to assist seniors 65 and older who may be isolated, lonely, or have long-term healthcare needs or disabilities. Volunteers help with the many tasks of daily living, enabling them to remain in their own homes and maintain their dignity and quality of life. Services include friendly visits, assistance with grocery shopping and minor household chores, and repairs, in addition to respite for caregivers.

"In the early years, it was primarily visiting with seniors; but today we're seeing seniors with more critical needs who require more assistance around the home and transportation to doctor appointments," said Liebert. "Many of these care recipients live in rural areas in which services are limited or non-existent. They often don't meet income eligibility to receive services, yet don't have resources to pay for help."

There are many critical needs of the elderly that remain unmet. More volunteers are needed as well as dollars to support their efforts.

For more details or to volunteer, call 603-603-352-2088 or visit [www.monadnockvolunteercenter.org](http://www.monadnockvolunteercenter.org).

## The Most Influential City In The World

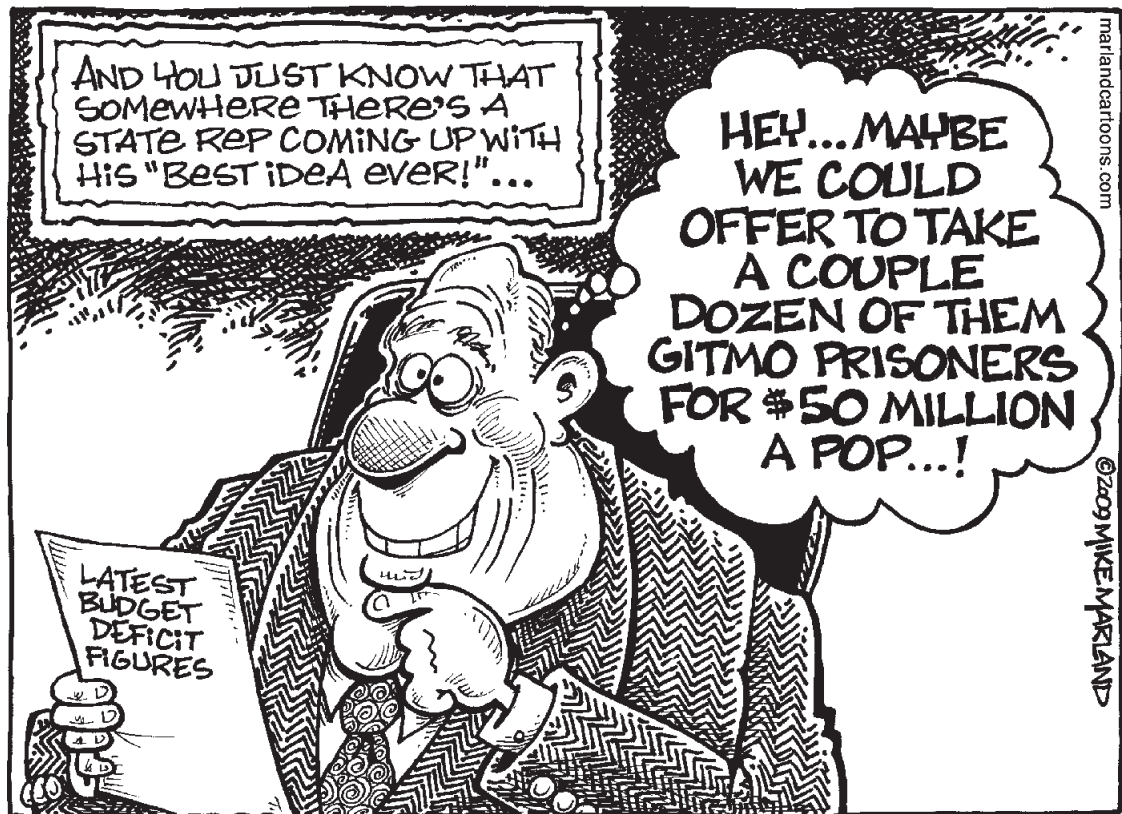
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the darkness of a dusty memory, an incident that no one can forget. Honking of horns and yelling of cab drivers. It's a terribly unforgiving place, a place where you *must* hold your own or fall through the cracks in the sidewalk.

But the people were astonishing. Faces of every nationality, every walk of life, and these are just the ones passing by on the street! Imagine who might be inside those apartment buildings, or riding in that taxi that just passed. People are in abundance here, no doubt, but so are people who tell stories in their faces. An old man, wrinkled and worn, moves slowly but determinedly; a businesswoman with dark sunglasses and red lipstick wipes the sweat from her upper lip; a large, jolly man laughs loudly at whoever is on the other end of his cell phone; a police officer, solemn as stone, yells for the timid bohemian and her man to get off of the wall. If one could manage to stand in one place for long enough, 1000 stories could be written of these magnificent people. But if you stand still long enough to even think, you will be swept away in a wave of humanity, and so you walk on.

It was these things, these simple ideas of people and place, want and necessity, which influenced me the most. This place handles those things like nowhere else. The city is a living, breathing creature in its own right, and people are the blood in its veins. They weave in and out of buildings and down alleyways, across bridges and into subways. Their faces speak a thousand tongues, as do their voices. In their eyes, you see the true beauty of this city, its light and its darkness, its joy and pain. New York City reflects in the eyes of its citizens, and in these reflections, you can see what draws me to it, what made me think of it when asked to write about something influential. This is everyone's city, the city for all, the city where everyone comes together. The last true "melting pot" in these United States lies in New York. And it is my dream to find my own place in that conglomeration, the most influential city in the world.

*Alyssa Kervin lives in Jaffrey and attends Conant High School. In her free time she likes to surf the web, play guitar and write fiction. She doesn't know just yet what she wants to do after high school, but she's pretty certain it will have something to do with writing.*



**The Monadnock SHOPPER NEWS** Vol. 52, No. 16, Feb 4 - Feb. 10, 2009  
 Founded in 1959 by Gabriel and Barbara Shakour [www.shoppernews.com](http://www.shoppernews.com)

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CIRCULATION & READERSHIP AUDITED BY THE

**Circulation  
Verification  
Council**

Postage paid at Keene, NH 03431. Outside the regular circulation area THE MONADNOCK SHOPPER NEWS is available at a rate of \$30 per year for a mailed subscription payable in advance. The Shopper will be responsible for errors in advertisements only to the extent of correcting the same in the next issue in space equal to the items involved. "The publisher reserves the right to accept or refuse advertising news, editorials or feature material on any basis."

A weekly free newspaper published every Wednesday by Shakour Publishers, Inc., 445 West St., Keene, NH 03431  
 CALL: 603-352-5296 FAX: 603-357-9351 E-MAIL: [shopper@shoppernews.com](mailto:shopper@shoppernews.com)  
 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE MONADNOCK SHOPPER NEWS, P.O. BOX 487, Keene, NH 03431-0487