

Ocean Explorium Fundraiser at Texas Roadhouse

The Ocean Explorium will be the beneficiary of Fundraising Night at Texas Roadhouse on Tuesday, April 3, from 4 until 10 pm. Ten percent of participating food purchases, including take-out, will be donated to the Ocean Explorium.



Participating diners must present a special invitation flyer, which can be downloaded from the Ocean Explorium website (www.oceanexplorium.org) and displayed on a cell phone or other device. This flyer is also available at the Ocean Explorium Gift Shop.

Ocean Explorium staff and volunteers will be on hand, greeting diners and offering a variety of fun raffles. Among items to be raffled are a family membership to the Ocean Explorium, dinner for two at Texas Roadhouse, hand-made afghan, hand-crafted jewelry, gift baskets, and more. Raffle tickets cost \$1 each or \$5 for six.

Marlena Martins, Marketing Manager of the Texas Roadhouse in North Dartmouth, enjoys working with non-profit groups to boost their visibility and fundraising efforts. "Texas Roadhouse participated in the Ocean Explorium's annual Fish Bowl bowling tournament, and we are happy to welcome them here for Fundraising Night. Texas Roadhouse appeals to a broad range of the public, and we love to promote local organizations. The Ocean Explorium is a fantastic resource for families in the area and we look forward to introducing our patrons to them."

Abbey Spargo, education programs coordinator for the Ocean Explorium, considers the Fundraising Night at Texas Roadhouse a win-win. "This is a great opportunity to go out into the public and to introduce ourselves in a fun, family-friendly atmosphere. We hope to see lots of friends and family on Tuesday night, and to meet lots of new folks who will become friends of the Ocean Explorium."

The Ocean Explorium is located at 174 Union Street in downtown New Bedford and is handicap accessible via the rear entrance. Call 508.994.5400 for after-hours access.

For further information, contact Abbey Spargo at aspargo@oceanexplorium.org or 508.994.5400, or visit the Ocean Explorium website at www.oceanexplorium.org.

Update From Mayor on New Bedford Schools

Earlier this week I invited New Bedford School Superintendent Dr. Mary Lou Francis to begin a conversation about her role in the New Bedford Public School Department.



Dr. Francis has since expressed an interest in engaging in that conversation, and I am hopeful that a constructive dialogue will follow.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the Superintendent's personal commitment and work ethic. Dr. Francis assumed her current position under difficult circumstances, and, without question, has worked tirelessly. I believe she cares very deeply about our schools.

New Bedford schools are at a critical point in their history. Given the precariousness of the Department's position relative to state overseers, citizens of New Bedford should know that I will not proceed down any path which might jeopardize the ability of New Bedford to satisfy state deadlines and other requirements, and avoid a state takeover.

That is why I contacted state officials earlier today and asked them to extend all deadlines associated with the approval of the district turnaround plan to accommodate a continued dialogue with the Superintendent.

I am awaiting their official response, but am hopeful that the state will accommodate our need in this circumstance. Students, parents, teachers, and Dr. Francis herself, are owed a respectful and positive resolution in this matter.

Wicked Kickin' Savory Cheesecakes



by Matt
Ferreira

Cheesecake for dinner—A dream that Sean and Katie McKenna not only make a reality, they've made it a business. And like their products, this entrepreneurial husband and wife team started Wicked Kickin' Savory Cheesecakes from scratch.

The concept is easily explained. Imagine elements from some of your favorite dishes put together in an array of delicious combinations and arranged within a cheesecake. Though Sean and Katie are not the first to make cheesecake-ified entrees, they have certainly made the idea their own. "We loved the concept and did some research, finding out that most are herb and cheese recipes. We then started to experiment and play with different ingredient combinations," Sean says of his and his wife's entrepreneurial beginnings. "It was fun, often saying, 'You know what would be great in a cheesecake...'. Most of our cheesecakes are based on dishes we like to eat."

Another way Sean and Katie have made Wicked Kickin' Savory Cheesecakes an original is by injecting some local character into their product line. "All of our cheesecakes are named after either someone or something in MA or RI. We really love living in this area and wanted it to show in our recipes and names. Most of the names are also tied directly in some way to their ingredients. The Whitey Bulger is based on a white pizza, The Lansdowne is based on the sausage sandwiches sold outside Fenway Park, The North End is based on a local favorite antipasto."

On that note, a quick rundown of the Wicked Kickin' menu:



- “The Neu Biege” – Linguica, crushed red pepper, onions, peppers, and a touch of cheddar.
- “The Cape Codder”- Chicken, raisins, spinach, red onions, walnuts, and goat cheese.
- “The Wicked Kickin’ Chicken”- Spicy chicken, red onion, blue cheese, and buffalo sauce.
- “The Whitey Bulger”- Tomato, fresh basil, garlic, mozzarella, and parmesan.
- “The Hub”- Pepperoni, mozzarella, ricotta cheese, marinara, fresh basil, and parmesan.
- “The Lansdowne”- Sausage, peppers, onions, and provolone cheese.
- “The Green Monstah”- Broccoli, spinach, garlic, red and green pepper, green onions, mozzarella, feta, mushrooms, and parmesan.
- “The Chatham”- Lobster, shallots, cayenne pepper, parsley, muenster and parmesan cheese.

Though Sean and Katie have had their fun creating personalities for their cheesecakes, they’ve also had their share of hard work making their venture a success. “The most difficult part is that Katie and I are responsible for every aspect of running the business... marketing, purchasing, baking,

cleaning, delivery, packaging, shipping, and on and on. But my wife and I work very well together. We each have our own strengths and weaknesses and each of our own set of skills compliments the other's well."

And it shows—In less than three years Wicked Kickin's popularity has spread from the local Dartmouth community throughout the Southcoast and beyond to the brink of national success. "The business has given us some amazing opportunities. We have been on The Phantom Gourmet and served our cheesecakes to 10,000 people on Lansdowne St. behind the Green Monster. We have participated in fundraisers run by both Matt Light and Vince Wilfork of the New England Patriots. We've been called by someone from The Rachael Ray Show, Food Network Magazine and the television show SharkTank, all because of our savory cheesecakes! We recently participated in a couple of great events like the Taste of Southcoast in New Bedford and The Lloyd Center Clambake at Demarest Lloyd State Beach."



Sean and Katie at the 2012 Child and Family Fashion Show.

In the beginning of December 2011, they opened the doors to the first Wicked Kickin' storefront on 319 Dartmouth Street, a

location that had been previously used by Homelyke Bakery. The calculated leap into retail, part of a well-thought out business plan, has proven to be a highly beneficial move for the growing business. "We've been doing a lot of walk in business at the location" says Sean. "We're not limited to just filling orders anymore". Here, customers can find a ready-to-buy selection of Wicked Kickin's best-sellers such as the "Wicked Kickin' Buffalo" cheesecake and "The Nue Biege" as well as the themed "cheesecake of the month" such as March's St. Patrick's Day "Corned beef Cheesecake".

As for the near future, this increasingly business savvy couple has no plans of halting the momentum they have built thus far. Wicked Kickin' is due to make its appearance at the upcoming Phantom Gourmet's Wine & Food Phest in Boston, which has become an annual event for the couple. They have also been invited to provide their savory cheesecakes for Matt Light's Celebrity Shootout charity event for the second year in a row, which is a first time a company has been asked to do food for the event twice.


With an impressive list of achievements under their belt and the drive to keep taking things to the next level, the future of Sean and Katie's Wicked Kickin' Savory Cheesecakes is considerably optimistic in the face of today's small business-swallowing economy. "We are always trying to grow and improve. As a small business it is important to have a vision of what you want to become and try to operate every day in a manner which will close the gap between where you are and where you want to be."

The Phantom Gourmet Wine and Food Phest is going to be held at the Boston Center for the Arts (Cyclorama) on Tremont Street in the South End on Saturday, March 31st from 1-4 pm and again from 5-8 pm. Tickets cost \$40 in advance, \$50 at the door.

The next Celebrity Shootout will be held in October.

You can check out Wicked Kickin' Savory Cheesecakes for yourself at www.wickedkickin.com.

Alex Sullivan Fifth Annual Fundraiser

The Alex Sullivan Scholarship Trust is holding its fifth  annual fundraiser on Saturday, April 28th, 2012 at Dublin's Sports Bar N Grille located at 1686 Acushnet Ave, New Bedford from 7:00 PM to 12:00 AM.

Alex Sullivan was a student athlete at New Bedford High School. He was one of the original members of the NBHS Wrestling Team that excelled on the wrestling mat. He graduated from New Bedford High School in 1999 and went on to graduate college at UMass Dartmouth.

Alex passed away on June 6, 2007 in a work-related trucking accident. This event is held annually to honor Alex and memorialize the man in the sport and school which he loved.

Each year, The Alex Sullivan Scholarship Trust provides scholarships for selected members of the New Bedford High School Wrestling Team who are pursuing higher education. Your support will help us accomplish this goal.

The event will feature a buffet style dinner prepared by Dublin's. There will be numerous raffle prizes including two sets of Red Sox Tickets, a pair of Custom Designed Reebok Sneakers, as well as gift certificates to local restaurants and shops. The entertainment is to be provided by DJ Garret Gomes. This is a cash bar event.

The Alex Sullivan Scholarship Trust is an independent organization that is committed to supporting our young adults in their journey of seeking higher education.

In order to give The Alex Sullivan Scholarship the full benefit of this event, your generosity is essential. Please join us for this great night.

We are still looking for raffle items. If you would like to make a donation or get tickets for this event, email alexsullivanscholarship@yahoo.com or call Brian @ (774) 644-0821.

New Bedford Art Museum Features City Gallery

Crews from the New Bedford Public Facilities Department have put the finishing touches on a newly renovated New Bedford Art Museum, a regional hub for arts and culture located in the heart of Downtown New Bedford.

Located at 608 Pleasant Street, the museum exhibits art and

objects from a variety of sources, including artist's collections, private collectors and cultural institutions. The renovations included replacing the museum's worn-out carpeting with new vinyl inlaid flooring—a more durable, easier to care for material that enhances the museum space. In addition, Art Museum employees and community volunteers helped repaint the entire interior of the Museum's ground-



level display space. New Bedford Floor Covering installed the flooring and donated the new carpeting at the Museum's entryway.

Among other new features, the newly renovated Museum includes "The City Gallery," a permanent display space for the New Bedford Free Public Library's art collection. This dedicated exhibit space will enable more of the Library's unique collection to be shared on a rotating basis with different audiences.

The first installation at the City Gallery is a sampler show. It contains highlights from the library collection, including oil paintings, watercolors and prints by artists like William Bradford, John James Audubon, Robert Swain Gifford, Charles Henry Gifford, Dodge Macknight and Dwight Tryon. Future exhibits will have specific focuses. For example, the next two shows will be dedicated to "preservation challenges" and women artists.

Much of the New Bedford Free Public Library collection is on exhibit at the Main Library and the current exhibit is entitled; "Liberty or Anarchy: New Bedford and the Civil War."

The Hunger Games Movie Review



By Shonna
McGrail

When a movie takes in \$155 million dollars in its opening

weekend, it's hard not to wonder what all the hype is about. "The Hunger Games" has set a record for most revenue for a non-franchise movie in an opening weekend, and third best debut of all times, only falling behind the "Harry Potter" finale and "The Dark Knight." If you weren't amongst the masses piling into the theatres this weekend, there's a good chance you're considering checking it out. Before you go, here is some food for thought.

It's hard to believe that you haven't seen the trailers at this point, but here's a little background on the film. The movie portrays a 16-year old girl named Katniss Everdeen who lives in a post-apocalyptic world where money and power are controlled by the Capitol. As a reminder to the rest of the districts of the Capitol's absolute power, they select a boy and a girl between the ages of 12 and 18 from each district and force them to compete in the Hunger Games; a fight to the death which is televised for all to watch. When Katniss' 12-year old sister's name is drawn, Katniss takes her position and thus must face the brutal challenge of staying alive.



I should start by saying that I recently became an avid fan of the book series. As someone who loves the science fiction genre, a friend suggested I check out the novels. After buying the first one on my Nook, I rapidly bought the second and third, sacrificing sleeping and eating in a compulsive race to reach the end. To say the books are a page turner is a great understatement. That being said, the books were still very fresh in my mind for the premiere of the film. If you are a fan of the book, you will see that many changes were made, some for the better, some for the worse (in my opinion). One thing to attempt to keep in mind though, is

that the book was written in first person. Trying to transfer such personal thoughts and emotions to the audience is a daunting task when you really consider it.

I did find myself a bit put off by the way the producers clearly tried to play up the love triangle aspect of the story. While there is a love triangle of sorts in the books, romance is not a prominent aspect of "The Hunger Games" the way it is in say... "Twilight." In the novels, it's clear that the strong willed and fiercely independent Katniss Everdeen does her best to avoid the trap of love, and romance is almost warped into a part of the power struggle. Nevertheless, can one expect anything less from Hollywood?

Moving on from this gripe, I should mention that this movie is not a chick flick. Despite having a strong female role, the themes of power and survival have been found as appealing to many generations and genders. Sources are reporting that only 61 percent of moviegoers were female this weekend. So if you're a guy worried that you'll be stuck for 2 hours and 22 minutes in a Twilight-esque gushing teen romance, fear not. There is plenty of action and adventure for all. Furthermore, the themes of "The Hunger Games" can really leave you thinking after you exit the theatre (if you predisposed to ponder such things).

The special effects in the movie were pretty cool, and while they toned down the gore factor a bit there is no escaping the essentially violent and harsh nature of the movie. This is one thing about a book being adapted into a movie that always excites me; while you know the movie will stray from the version you created in your own mind, it also allows you a chance to see it all come to life. The visual aspect of the



film really kept me on the edge of my seat, and despite knowing the outcome, I felt myself experiencing quite an adrenaline rush throughout much of the movie. One complaint to the filmmakers though; would a few more steady shots kill you? The camera is shaky throughout the film, perhaps to recreate that "realistic" feel when you read the book through Katniss' eyes, but it took me 10 nauseous minutes to really adjust to it.

Despite a few complaints I have about the reinterpretation of the plot and of the seasick filming technique, I have to admit I will probably try to see this movie again while it's in theatres. Partly it's because it was a great big screen experience, but partly because I really enjoyed the casting job. I found Jennifer Lawrence to be a great Katniss Everdeen. She maintained the persona of strong and quiet, but with an uncontrollable streak of rebellion. She got this down without overacting it, and the few moments of emotion she had felt raw and believable. In my opinion, Josh Hutcherson plays Peeta Mellark well. Peeta was never written to be a casanova, but rather more of a philosopher with careful logic and a calm demeanor, and that is how Hutcherson portrayed him. Liam Hemsworth is also cast in the movie as Gale Hawthorne, Katniss' opinionated best friend with his own fierce survival instinct. A solid support cast includes Woody Harrelson as her drunken mentor, Elizabeth Banks with some brief comic, and Donald Sutherland makes a rather chilling President Snow.

Reading the book is by no means needed to follow the movie plot, but it definitely gives you some critical insights that the movie didn't quite manage. Thus, I would suggest reading the book first if you have the time and interest because it is a great read. While I'm not going to go as far as to say the movie lives up to the outrageous hype, it is certainly entertaining. It's already got me hooked into seeing it again, something I rarely to never do. Need I say more?

City to Offer Tax Credit Assistance

Mayor Jon Mitchell and the Community Economic Development Center of Southeastern Massachusetts (CEDC) are encouraging residents of New Bedford to learn whether they qualify for valuable tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the MA Senior Circuit Breaker.



Interested residents must contact the CEDC to make an appointment to learn whether they qualify to claim these benefits on their tax returns. The CEDC will provide assistance to qualifying individuals at New Bedford City Hall on Thursday, April 5th from 11:00 a.m.–4:00p.m., residents interested in making an appointment to meet CEDC at City Hall should contact the organization at (508) 979-4684.

The Internal Revenue Service defines the Earned Income Tax Credit as, “a refundable federal income tax credit available to eligible families low-income working individuals and families.” And, while the EITC is the federal government’s largest program benefiting working families, it is largely underutilized.

“The ETIC is a proven means of providing tax relief that spurs economic activity and labor force participation while targeting those most in need. I encourage the people of New Bedford to learn whether they qualify for this benefit, and to use the tax preparation services offered by the Community

Economic Development Center,” said Mayor Mitchell.

Community Economic Development Center Director, Corinn Williams said each year, her organization staffs a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program site where residents who are unable to prepare their own taxes and cannot afford professional help are assisted. “There are still many working families and seniors in our community who may qualify to get money back, but are not aware they need to file to receive their refund. In addition, the recent announcement regarding the economic stimulus bill also requires that individuals to file their taxes to collect the rebate. Dollars reclaimed through the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Senior Circuit Breaker give a boost not only to these families but it helps our local economy as well,” said Ms. Williams.

The federal government states that the new maximum credit is \$5,751 for a family with two or more children; \$3,094 for a family with one child and \$464 if there are no children. The government also states that the new income limits are:

- \$40,964 (\$40,044 if married filing jointly) for families with two or more children
- \$36,052 (\$41,132 if married filing jointly) for families with one child
- \$13,660 (\$18,740 if married filing jointly) if there are no children

Investment income must be \$3,150 or less and children must meet certain age, relationship and residency requirements.

6th Annual General Aviation Fun Day



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The 6th Annual General Aviation Fun Day at the New Bedford Regional Airport is scheduled for May 19th, 2012 from 10 am to 4 pm.

There will be performances by local dance studios, karate demonstrations, Mad Science of Southeastern Mass, formation flying, aircraft displays, skydivers, airplane rides, Buttonwood Park Zoo's Zoo Choo, and so much more!

Confirmed Participants for this year's event include:

- New Bedford Police Department K9 & Dive Team
- New Bedford Fire Department & Crash Truck
- Sherrif's Department Mobile Command Center
- Gonsalves Tae Kwon Do
- Dan D'Onfro World Class Kempo
- Buttonwood Park Zoo Choo Rides
- US Coast Guard Reserve and Coastie
- Antique Fire Truck Rides
- Community Nurse

- Chiropractic USA
- Away Cafe
- Ben & Jerry's
- Center Stage Dance Studio

Confirmed aircraft on display:

- Avenger
- Waco UPF 7
- T-6
- Stearman
- Citabria Explorer
- Russian Sukhoi
- RV-8
- SN-J
- Phenom Jet

For more information and up-to-date details check out the Fun Day website.

Website Launched to Help Home Buyers, Owners

The City of New Bedford Office of Housing and Community Development and the Fall River and New Bedford Housing Partnership, launched a new website designed to provide both prospective homebuyers and homeowners with a full range of information.



At www.frnrbhp.com, homebuyers can access information including upcoming homebuyer education classes, down payment assistance programs and mortgage programs. The information is provided to empower homebuyers to make the best decisions regarding purchasing a new home and to share tools that can help them to save money. Existing homeowners can find out information on low interest loans and grants to help make needed repairs to their homes. Visitors to the website may also access information about affordable properties for sale in New Bedford and Fall River through a lottery program.

The “News & Events” section of the site will be updated regularly with housing related events and classes in the New Bedford and Fall River area. The website contains links to all of the participating agencies including local lenders and social service agencies that can assist with credit counseling, tenant counseling, legal assistance and foreclosure prevention counseling.

The Fall River and New Bedford Housing Partnership participating agencies include: BankFive; BayCoast Bank, Bristol County Savings Bank; Bristol Elder Services; Catholic

Social Services; Fall River Community Development Agency; Fall River Municipal Credit Union; Fannie Mae; First Citizens' Federal Credit Union; MassHousing; Mechanics Cooperative Bank; Money Management International; Neighborhood Housing Services of the South Shore; City of New Bedford Office of Housing & Community Development; South Coastal Counties Legal Services; South Shore Housing; and St. Anne's Credit Union.

The Fall River and New Bedford Housing Partnership, founded in 2007, was formed to address the housing and foreclosure crisis. The Partnership provides assistance to individuals and families facing a risk of foreclosure by providing foreclosure prevention counseling, as well as educating consumers about financial literacy, credit worthiness and innovative loan products, including purchase and rehabilitation programs.

For additional information, please visit the new website at www.frnrbhp.com or contact the City of New Bedford Office of Housing and Community Development at 508-979-1500.

Whaling City Clippers, First Team Meeting for 2012 Season

The Whaling City Clippers today announced that the team will be holding its first team meeting of the 2012 season. Any and all current or prospective players are invited to attend. This will be the



first meeting to prepare for the 2012 Whaling City Clippers as they enter their second-consecutive year in the highly-competitive New England Football League's AAA Conference.

"We finished the 2011 season with our first playoff win in AAA and have added to a strong core of returning players who have dedicated themselves to improving upon last year's performance," said Mike Arguin, General Manager. "Interest in the team has never been higher. Last year we had nearly 100 players express an interest in playing for us and we expect to surpass that number this year. Only 50-60 players will have what it takes to make the final cut," continued Arguin. A number of players have already signed up through the team's website.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 5th at 7:30PM in the auditorium at Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, 1121 Ashley Boulevard in New Bedford, MA.

The goals of this first team meeting will be to begin the sign-up process and to communicate the goals of the team both on and off the field. Topics will include an introduction to the 2012 coaching staff, the outlook for the NEFL's AAA Conference, the team's player requirements and expectations, conditioning camp and practice schedule for 2012.

There is a non-refundable \$25 sign-up fee for players interested in signing-up with the team. Players may pre-register on the team website at: <http://whalingcityclippers.com/contact-us/player-inquiry/>.