

# The HAVERHILL GAZETTE

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FRESHMEN MAKING STRONG CONTRIBUTIONS

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WEEK OF FEBRUARY 13: RECYCLE BLUE

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*“Ninety percent of (investigations are) people wanting to know if they’re crazy. I can explain most of the stuff away, but some of it you can’t.”*

Ron Kolek, founder and lead investigator of the New England Ghost Project



BRUCE PRESTON/Courtesy photo

Ronald Kolek, founder of the New England Ghost Project, investigates a possible haunting using an infrared camera to seek evidence of spirits.

## Ghost Buster training Local college offers Ghost Hunting 101

By TIM MCCARTHY  
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If there’s something strange in your neighborhood, who you gonna call? Haverhill’s own version of Ghost Busters.

About a dozen people are being trained in paranormal research at Northern Essex Community College.

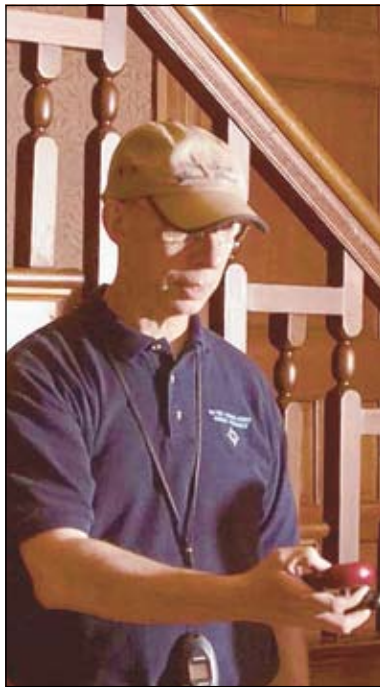
Available through a partnership with Veasey Memorial Park of Groveland and the New England Ghost Project, Paranormal CSI-Ghost Hunting 101 provides a unique, non-credit, opportunity to train for otherworld investigations and communication.

Taught by Ron Kolek, founder and lead investigator of the New England Ghost Project, the course instructs students on proper investigation techniques, use of equipment such as infrared cameras and audio recording, and proper analysis.

Kolek said most proper investigations merely confirm nothing more than bumps in the night, but a few offer a glimpse into the beyond.

“Ninety percent of (investigations are) people wanting to know if they’re crazy,” he said. “I can explain most of the stuff away, but some of it you can’t.”

The course, which meets for six lessons, will guide students



JEFFREY DACHOWSKI/Courtesy photo  
Ronald Kolek of the New England Ghost Project uses an electromagnetic frequency meter.

through the former summer cottage of Arthur Veasey, a Groveland mill owner who lived in the early 1900s. The town of Groveland converted the property into a historic site and park in 1996. As students apply their new paranormal skills,

their final assignment will be to write a paper on what they believe is, or isn’t, haunting the grounds.

“There is no right or wrong,” Kolek said. “They could be picking up different experiences.”

Kolek, an environmental scientist by trade, is also a graduate of Northern Essex. He’s written several books and hosted television shows and radio programs on the paranormal since founding the New England Ghost Project 15 years ago.

Despite the temptation, Kolek cautions thrill seekers against heading out to Veasey Park with no more than a strong will and a Ouija board. A person may believe they can take on the unknown, but traveling in a group and with a professional knowledge ensures safety.

“We have no clue what it’s like on the other side,” he said.

Northern Essex has used the Veasey grounds in the past for various non-credit courses, including pottery, bird-watching and even fishing.

Veasey Park is “known as Groveland’s best kept secret and don’t want to be a secret anymore,” said Mary Shattuck, program manager for NECC’s personal enrichment courses.

Shattuck said Kolek’s course was the first of its kind she can

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## Baddour: Drug test to qualify for welfare

Calls testing for legislators a ‘red herring’

By TIM MCCARTHY  
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State Sen. Steven Baddour wants to test welfare recipients for drug use but says he’s not interested in passing the cup to his fellow legislators.

The Methuen Democrat, whose district includes Haverhill, filed his drug testing proposal as amendment to his welfare reform bill, which was referred for committee review last month.

Similar proposals nationwide have drawn harsh criticism and even counter-proposals to require testing of legislators for illicit substances.

Despite the controversy, Baddour said he’ll remain resolute in his push for testing as part of welfare reform and called the suggestion that legislators be tested a “red herring.”



State Sen. Steven Baddour

“It’s about drug testing people who should be drug tested,” he said. “Those who are opposed to it always try to throw you a curve-ball to get you off track,” he said.

Baddour’s “Act relative to welfare reform,” filed on Jan. 21, would require all applicants for the EBT program to pay for and undergo a drug test. Those who pass would be repaid for the test. Those who fail wouldn’t be reimbursed and would be barred from benefits for a year, with harsher penalties for repeated failures.

A Republican-sponsored drug testing bill passed the

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## Adults needed to mentor students Effort helped 30 kids in 3 years

By TIM MCCARTHY  
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Three years later, the lives of more than 30 children have been changed for the better.

But for the good work to continue, more adults must step up to help young people.

The Haverhill Youth Mentoring Network continues into 2012 with a greater demand for mentors.

Nancy London, executive director of the program, said at least three children at Tilton Elementary School are on a waiting list for mentors.

“The teachers informed me they have many more kids they could be referring to the program,” she said. “The



Principal Mary Beth Maranto

Councilor John Michitson

demand is definitely there.”

An initiative combining the skills of Team Haverhill, Mass Mentoring, United Way and Haverhill public schools, the mentoring network asks adults to donate one hour a week to meet with child from Tilton enrolled in the

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## \$110,000 and counting: City mom praised for donations to cancer fight

By TIM MCCARTHY  
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Just a few weeks before her sixth-annual fund raiser, Tara Ryan Byrne said she cannot help but feel overwhelmed at the direction her life has taken.

After her cancer diagnosis in 2001, while she was five months pregnant with her

son Senan, Ryan Byrne never believed they would have survived, thrived and raised more than \$110,000 for The Jimmy Fund.

“I don’t even think I saw beyond my diagnosis at that stage,” she said. “It’s remarkable what a few people can do.”

Mother and son will host the 10 Free Kick Cancer

Celebration on Feb. 23, bringing another night of music, food, prizes and fun while raising money for The Jimmy Fund. The event is called “10 Free” because Ryan Byrne has been cancer free for 10 years.

“It’s amazing how generous the community is,” Ryan Byrne said. “When the

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### IF YOU GO

**What:** 10 Free Kick Cancer Celebration  
**Where:** Archie’s Little River Ale House, 27 Lafayette Square  
**When:** Feb. 23, 6 p.m. to midnight  
**Tickets:** \$20



Tara Ryan Byrne with her son, Senan



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