

Opinion

LETTERS

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their power dispatched (injected) into the grid, those above, do not (no sale). This scheme ensures the lowest cost wholesale power is available to the retail distributors, and hence to you.

Regardless of their offer all merchant plants that are dispatched are paid the clearing price. For example, if a plant offers its power at \$35 per megawatt-hour and the clearing price is \$65 per megawatt-hour, the plant will be paid \$65. ISO rules allow renewables such as wind and hydro to be bid into the bottom of the stack with zero fuel cost. Therefore the clearing price is lowered and the most expensive wholesale offers are bumped off the top of the bid stack ultimately saving you money. Of course the wind and hydro providers will be paid the clearing price for their power, whatever it may be. Also of note is the fact that negotiated PPAs are always dispatched as if bid at zero cost. The prices in these PPAs therefore do not increase the ISO NE clearing prices and in fact can lower it. All of this means to you, the end customer, that wind power will compete with conventional sources on a wholesale level and it will always lower the market cost of generated electricity. New England electric customers can expect an annual savings of \$25 million, according to the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board.

There are several ways for you to comment on the Cape Wind project before March 20 when the public comment period closes. You can mail or e-mail written comments to the Minerals Management Service. Further information is available at capewind.org or cleanpower-now.org. You can also attend a public hearing and read your comments into the record in person.

Sincerely yours,

— Carl Borchert

NEW PARENT/TEACHER GROUP FORMED

To the editor:

This is to inform you of an exciting new group being formed called the Parent/Teacher/Community Partnership or the PTCP. This is a proactive group which will be comprised of parents, teachers and community members who will seek to enhance the teaching and learning both in and out of the schools for all children. This group will seek to help the

schools address and fulfill the "island as a campus" portion of the Strategic Plan as set forth in 2004. We will additionally strive to increase parental involvement in the schools as over 30 years of research shows that getting parents and community involved is a very powerful mechanism to improve learning and development in a school.

Together we will plan and execute various projects both in and out of the schools which will promote educational experiences for students beyond the classroom in collaboration with the immediate community and beyond.

We are hoping that you will consider joining us in this important partnership.

Our first project is underway: Splash Nantucket! This initiative is to orchestrate a student development day which will be modeled after the Splash program held each fall at MIT. In the Nantucket version, we will invite teachers, fellow students and various community members who wish to instruct a class, workshop, craft or skill for a block or several blocks of time during a designated school day. Students in grades 9-12 will be required to sign up in advance for the courses which interest them and rather than attend classes on the set day, they will participate in their various workshops and activities. This is an event which will enhance the lives of students, faculty and community educators alike but will require much forethought and planning. We ask therefore that anyone interested in helping with Splash Nantucket reply to let us know you would like to become involved. Please reply also if you would like to be a member at large of the PTCP, Parent/Teacher/Community Partnership, to assist with a future event and receive updated emails regarding this newly formed group.

This group is open to any community member, parent or teacher who wishes to participate in current or future projects of the PTCP.

Although this first project focuses on involvement with high school students it is our goal to expand to accommodate community partnership projects in the middle and elementary schools in the future.

We hope you will join us.

— Nini Lafarge and Holly McGowan (parents)

— Page Martineau (teacher)

— Joan Ottinger

LESSONS FOR LIFE

This is the third column in a series of six. Much of the information in this series is from the nonprofit research organization HeartMath® (www.heartmath.com). Research on trauma and the heart is the basis of stress reduction techniques taught in Dr. Robert Macy's trauma response certification course in psychological first aid (a course recognized by the International Red Cross).

Anyone who has had an injury or surgery has been asked what her pain level is on a scale of one-to-10, with 10 being the "greatest pain ever." This measurement applies to emotional pain, too, and sometimes emotional suffering reaches the top of the scale.

The more often we experience overwhelming events that push us to the top of that scale, the more difficult it becomes to cope effectively with the day-to-day challenges of life. The self-calming and stress-reduction techniques described in the first columns in this series, "ease," the "power of neutral," and "heart appreciation," all using "heart-breathing," are useful in managing the anxiety that emerges after overwhelming events.

But there's something basic, and incredibly helpful,

that isn't a "technique" and can't be learned from a book (or newspaper article). Yet it's necessary — essential — if we are to have meaningful, fulfilling lives and recover from events that have shaken us to the core.

Playfulness.

Yes, playfulness is vital.

There are lots of things people can choose that make their lives meaningful. "Playfulness" rarely makes the list. Yet the times we spend sharing pleasure and laughter with the people we care about are the moments that we remember, that we appreciate, when we look back.

So, on a scale of one-to-10, think about a single day's playful and pleasurable moments. How do they rate? Seek out above-average "pleasure and playfulness" every day, even if only for a few moments.

Another way to think about it — and maybe the most reliable yardstick — is to find a way to laugh every day. Nose-to-the-grindstone, dinner-on-the-table: Okay, fine. But we all deserve a few minutes of laughter with the human beings who are closest to us. Seek opportunities for laughter (a "ten" if possible).

Have you had your daily dose of laughter today?

— Rev Jennifer Brooks

Unitarian Universalist Church, Nantucket

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