

Letters

Heading into the future, dropping back into the past

To the editor:
Nothing aggravates me more than seeing our younger generation utilizing their fingers while looking down at their cell phones texting messages to their friends. Quite literally, they spend hours sending messages utilizing a language onto itself. They no longer use English, in fact if this keeps perpetuating itself, the King's English will enter into the realm of dead languages such as Latin and hieroglyphics.

Today, English teachers are driven to tears for want of their students being able to express clear thoughts and sentence structure in their essays and compositions. This gravitation by our younger generation to the use of high tech cell phones to communicate much like we did in the 1840s seems to be the price we pay for technological progress. Does this statement have you scratching your head? It shouldn't have anyone questioning that cell phones are retrograding us back to the 1840s.

It was in 1840 that Samuel Morse was granted U. S. Patent 1,647 for the invention of the telegraph. With the telegraph came a new way of communication utilizing the Morse Code. This way of communicating required extensive training to understand the code of the language. Essentially the

use of dots and dashes spoke English in a new and different way. In utilizing the telegraphic Morse Code system worldwide the establishment of a coherent language was established. In fact, this system could be used without wires as it was used in signal communication by ships at sea. It proved to be an invention that propagated progress.

Later in 1876, Alexander Graham Bell brought about voice communication to the world with U. S. Patent 174,465. What Mr. Bell did was to simplify communication using any language with the instant spoken word. This progressed slowly from local to worldwide communications, which later progressed into radio and TV communication networks. In essence, the world had instant access to anywhere that had such communication devices. Instant and reliable and simple contact with each other. By the end of the 20th century this is where we were. By this time the use of the internet and the application of computers have brought the use of technology to its pinnacle.

It was 19 years past the mid-20th century in 1969 that George Sweigert was issued U. S. Patent 3,449,750 for the cell phone. The progressive uses of this invention were many especially in remote areas and emer-

gency use. However with the progressive use of the phone from analog to digital and the use of the internet, things started to get out of hand quickly. In the 1990s, we started to see people talking on their cells while driving their cars. Little by little people became addicted to these devices. Accidents started happening, people were distracted using cells while driving. Also, we see people walking down the street

seemingly talking to themselves. But in reality, they are talking on their blue tooth. It makes one wonder how did we survive without cells. Some time during this cell boom, text messaging came into vogue. Wireless providers were ecstatic and promoted this new form of communication and found a way to make huge profits. Monthly cell bills brought shock and dismay to parents. However, this was just the beginning. Loss of

money was only one aspect of this new phenomenon. What has happened in the last decade is bringing us a generation that is regressing to the past.

Remember the Morse Code was a cryptic language needed to bring us communication at a distance. Text messaging also has its own language and requires finger dexterity to communicate at a much slower rate than talking.

So my question is this,

why are we going backwards? Texting represents a new Morse Code while the use of the spoken word on the telephone whether landline or cell represents the progression of 134 years and is a more effective and easier way of communication. Instead of going back to the future, we seem to be the future going back.

Richard C. Geschke
Albertson Way

PATHWAYS To Your Health

Community Education Programs
FEBRUARY 2010

FROM MEMORY TO MEMOIR: WRITING AND PRESERVING YOUR LIFE STORY

Turn memories and stories of the significant events in your life into a memoir for you, your children and grandchildren. Learn where to start, how to organize your memoir and how to keep going until you finish. Get tips on which pictures and documents to include and how to self-publish your story. Prior writing experience is not required. Instructor: Susan Omilian
Friday, February 5, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m., \$60 for eight weeks

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Your best defense against uncontrolled high blood pressure is to know your numbers. Conducted by Bristol Hospital Home Care registered nurses
Wednesday, February 10, 10 a.m. – Noon, Free

DIABETIC NEUROPATHY

Diabetic neuropathy is a peripheral nerve disorder caused by diabetes or poor blood sugar control. The most common types of diabetic neuropathy result in problems with sensation in the feet. The disorder can develop slowly after many years of diabetes or may occur early in the disease. This program will give an overview of the symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and prognosis of the disease. Presented by physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist Mark Watson, MD
Tuesday, February 16, Noon – 1 p.m.
Free (A light lunch will be served)

WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY...IS IT FOR YOU?

Come meet our bariatric team who will answer your questions about weight loss surgery and explain the steps involved in determining if you are eligible. We invite you to bring a guest or support person. Pre-registration is required. Please call 860-314-2798 to register or for more information.
Wednesday, February 17, 6 – 8 p.m., Free

TAI CHI FOR HEALTH

Tai Chi's gentle movements help to increase flexibility, muscle strength and heart/lung activity.
Monday, February 22, 9 – 10 a.m.
Plymouth Town Hall Community Room
80 Main Street, Terryville
or
Monday, February 22, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Bristol Hospital Wellness Center
\$60 for six weeks

MANAGING WEIGHT THROUGH EXERCISE

In a private and non-threatening environment, this medically supervised program will put your muscles in motion and get your heart pumping. The program, which is held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for six weeks, is open to all ages and fitness levels.
Begins February 22, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., \$75 for six weeks

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUPS

Our free support groups are open to adults with diabetes, their families and friends. "Vitamin D and Bone Health" is this month's topic.
Tuesday, February 23, 11 a.m. – Noon, or 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Bristol Hospital Center for Diabetes
102 North Street, Bristol (call 860-940-6300 to register)

WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY SUPPORT GROUP

Bristol Hospital offers a free monthly support group meeting for people who have had any type of weight loss surgery. The group is also open to family members, people who are preparing for bariatric surgery and for those who are exploring their options for the procedure. This month's topic is "How to Get in Tip Top Shape."
Tuesday, February 23, 6 – 7 p.m., Free
Please call 860-314-2798 to register

SKIN CANCER SCREENING

Skin cancer knows no season! It doesn't matter what time of year it is, all unprotected sun exposure is potentially dangerous. Join us for a free skin cancer screening conducted by Olakunle Oluwole, MD.
Wednesday, February 24, 1 – 5 p.m.

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL, HDL AND TRIGLYCERIDE SCREENING

Fasting for eight hours is required for this finger stick screen that takes approximately five minutes. Conducted by Bristol Hospital cardiac/pulmonary registered nurses
Thursday, February 25, 8 – 10 a.m., \$20

LUNG FUNCTION SCREENING

This simple test consists of blowing into a special tube that measures the health of your lungs. Conducted by Bristol Hospital cardiac/pulmonary registered nurses
Thursday, February 25, 10 – 11 a.m., Free

DOES WINTER MAKE YOU FEEL SAD?

Seasonal affective disorder is a type of depression that occurs at the same time every year, usually in the winter. It can cause anxiety, an increase in appetite and a lack of energy. Our program will give an overview of the condition, the causes, symptoms, treatments available and when you should seek medical care. Presented by psychiatrist Jeffrey Shelton, MD
Thursday, February 25, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., Free

ZUMBA

The beat of the music, the steps, the moves, the feel of this cardio-based workout are unlike anything you have ever experienced before! Thursday, February 25, 5:15 – 6 p.m., or Friday, February 26, 10 – 10:45 a.m.
\$45 for six weeks

Kids' Quest is a six-week fitness and nutrition program that is designed to help children between the ages of 10 and 14 build a foundation for a healthful lifestyle. In a fun and interactive group setting, children learn how to improve their food choices and how to increase their physical activity. Parental support is needed to help the children at home, and parents must attend three of the six classes. Call 860-314-2087 for the start date of the next program.



842 CLARK AVENUE • BRISTOL, CT

Unless otherwise indicated, preregistration is required for classes and screenings. payments must be received FIVE days before the start date.

Please call InfoLink at Bristol Hospital at 860-585-3661 to register.

Column: Elio Gugliotti

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hurdles to overcome. Still, I sat waiting to hear just how we, as a state, are going to overcome those hurdles. Everything was silent on the hurdling front. As I drove away from the meeting, it was what wasn't said that stuck with more

than anything else I heard that morning.

In the world of trouble, we find ourselves in, that silence is the most troubling thing of all.

Elio Gugliotti is a staff writer at the Bristol Observer. Any comments? Email egugliotti@BristolObserver.com

Email us your letters to the editor:

Have an opinion? Put it down in writing. Send it to The Bristol Observer. mchaiken@BristolObserver.com

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