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- [Classifieds](#)
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Southbridge Evening News ▶

Towns must focus vision for future

Putnam official to speak in Southbridge
by Gus Steeves

write the author

December 06, 2009
NEWS STAFF WRITER

To Delpha Very, the town for which she works and Southbridge have a lot in common.

Not only do both communities share the same river, they're both old mill towns, both struggling to recover from being too closely identified with one industry, both have a controversial landfill and both possess the potential to be key regional hubs for agriculture and commerce.

"Both towns are passionate about being quintessential New England downtowns," Very observed, later adding, however, that the key to success is "to be unique."

For the last two years, she has been Economic Development Director in Putnam, Conn., and is bringing some of her experiences north of the border this Thursday. The Woodstock resident and former selectman will speak at 12 Crane St. at 7 p.m.

"This economy has hurt local shopkeepers, but helped in some respects because people are starting to look at the community aspect," she said. "... People don't walk much today, but they're driving to places for walkable communities."

Ironically, Southbridge already comes up as "very walkable" under the criteria used by www.walkscore.com, which looks at a community based on how close schools, parks, shops and other amenities are to whatever address you input. (In this case, the paper's office, 25 Elm St.) Putnam does, too; the two towns score 75 and 74 out of 100, respectively.

But Very observed that sometimes the reality is obscured by the perception. Putnam recently conducted a parking study and found almost all of the downtown core is within 350 feet of a municipal parking lot, but most people – even business owners – believed it was farther.

See Tuesday's Southbridge Evening News for complete coverage of community news.



The former Memorial Hall on Main Street might be the best representation of where Southbridge stands at present. It's a place with lots of history that's in the early stages of renovation, with a vision to become a "green" building and grant funding. It just needs community effort. File photo. *(click for larger version)*

Southbridge, MA



64°F
Cloudy

Feels Like: 64°F
Wind: NE 9 mph
Chance of Precip.: 10%
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Lottery Results

- ♦ Cash Winfall - Results for Monday, 4/26/10
9, 13, 24, 25, 26, 39.
- ♦ Mass Cash - Results for Tuesday, 4/27/10
15, 23, 27, 31, 33.
- ♦ Mega Millions - Results for Tuesday, 9/14/10
6, 14, 50, 55, 56, Mega Ball: 1.
- ♦ Megabucks - Results for Saturday, 4/24/10
10, 24, 31, 34, 35, 42.
- ♦ Numbers Game - Results for Tuesday, 4/27/10
4, 5, 2, 9.

National News

- ♦ **Police say Wash. acid attack self-inflicted (AP)**
AP - A woman who gained sympathy worldwide after she claimed a random assailant threw acid on her face came forward Thursday with a startling admission: She inflicted the attack on herself.
- ♦ **Guarded praise for chief's response to cop beating (AP)**
AP - The Dallas police chief won guarded praise Thursday for his handling of the release of dashboard

camera video that showed white officers hitting a black suspect, but some people disputed his claims that the beating was an isolated incident and not racially motivated.



◆After blast, states wait to act on aging gas lines (AP)

AP - Some of Pennsylvania's natural gas pipelines are 120 years old. Portions of lines also date to the 1800s in Massachusetts. And hundreds of miles in New York state are made of leak-prone cast iron.



◆Wis. prosecutor tried to keep 'sexting' case quiet (AP)

AP - If a Wisconsin prosecutor's constituents want him punished for sending sexually suggestive text messages to the victim in a domestic abuse case he was trying, they may have to wait until they can do it themselves — at the polls in two years.



National Sports

◆NFL draws line on tailgater's bowling ball shots (AP)

AP - No longer feeling welcome in the Buffalo Bills' main parking lot, a tailgating institution is on the move as the NFL draws a line between what's considered family friendly and R-rated entertainment...



◆Mayweather hit with more felony charges in Vegas (AP)

AP - Undefeated boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr. was hit Thursday with three more felony charges in a domestic violence case that already had him facing a theft charge.



◆Bush: Giving up Heisman not an admission of guilt (AP)

AP - Reggie Bush said Thursday that his decision to relinquish his Heisman Trophy is "not an admission of guilt," just the best way to end the controversy.



◆Westbrook brilliant in Cardinals win over Padres (Reuters)

Reuters - St. Louis pitcher Jake Westbrook pitched brilliantly through eight innings to lead the Cardinals to a 4-0 win over the San Diego Padres on Thursday.



National Politics

◆Int Min: France faces high terrorism threat (AP)

AP - Authorities have received an "array of clues" within the last few hours that show France is facing an elevated threat of terrorism, the interior Minister said Thursday.

◆Obama urges Conn. voters to go with Dem for Senate (AP)

AP - President Barack Obama warned Connecticut voters on Thursday against taking a chance on Republican candidate Linda McMahon, a former professional wrestling executive, as he waded into the state's hard-fought Senate race.



◆LIKE, IS SARAH PALIN TOTALLY CONCEITED? (Ann Coulter)

Ann Coulter - In the October issue of Vanity Fair now on newsstands, Michael Gross reverts to junior high school to issue gossip-girl digs at Sarah Palin. Next up in Vanity Fair: "Sarah Palin Super Stuck Up; Thinks She's All That."

◆ Tea Party Puts GOP on Road to Disaster (CQPolitics.com)
CQPolitics.com - With tea party-, Sarah Palin- and Jim DeMint-backed candidates winning Republican primaries all over the country, it's hard not to conclude that the GOP is committing suicide.

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