

**From:** Comity

**Sent:** Saturday, April 10, 2010 9:16 PM

**To:** 'dszabo@newburyport.k12.ma.us'

**Subject:** Updated/ revised submission to NHS Favorite Poem Project (previously transmitted the morning of Friday, 4/9)

Please read bold text for quick review; Note → pointing to key info/input.

Some content may be taken/tailored from existing material; please be advised that Comity's side of the communications may be forwarded to other parties with a foreword.

→ For easier review, particularly given extensive footnotes/links (and "rich text" and extensive [con]text) --- eventually this communication will be archived online, linked from the Comity.org Correspondence webpage found at this [hyperlink](#) --- with the content of this correspondence destined for presentation as a webpage linked from the Comity.org Poetry in Motion webpage found at this [hyperlink](#).

NOTE: Resubmission, slightly modified from the 4/9 transmission: 1) reordering sections; 2) with modest refinement of wording/syntax; 3) expanding section 7a and 4) forwarded with this foreword.

\*\*\*\*\* BRIEF OUTLINE \*\*\*\*\*

1. Salutations.
2. Forwarded in a Motion of Comity, identifying the source, citing signature line, with explanation that this communication is submitted in advance of a key meeting on Friday, 4/9 --- with more context (and/or revised text) to be forwarded by the Saturday, 4/10 deadline for submissions.
3. → Prologue: Referencing prior exchange with Mrs. Szabo's creative writing students (specifically regarding the "Poems for Pettengill" work order form #3 at the [hyperlink](#) (as related to this favorite poem entry).
4. → Submitted poem/prose, not only a favorite amongst a number of lyrical pieces --- but of particular significance to begin the old-style Julian calendar year (March 25, 2010 - March 2011, termed "The Year of Boundless Ambitions")
  - a. (con)NOTATIONS and other footnotes:
    - i. Sometimes "bound" in posthumously published versions of Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" including the poet's essays
    - ii. Duly noting that the verse is often referred to as "Absolute Balance" (Comity considers it is "entitled" to be cited as "The (Goal and) Apex of All Education"
    - iii. Including annotated "context" about this essay as an excerpt of prose from Whitman's "Specimen Days"
    - iv. Caveat qualifying Whitman's modifying adjective "superior" by quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson
    - v. Explaining that the dynamics between Whitman, Emerson and Carlyle are an interesting study in "human nature" --- which will be expounded upon on (web)page
5. Footnote 3 of Comity's communication dated December 18, 2009 as referenced in Prologue (#3) correlating the "Poems for Pettengill" work order #3 with the 2010 Favorite Poem Project.
6. Perspectives and prospects: From Comity's perspective, the following essay serves as the perfect "proem" to "assay" our personal and common goals for the old-style Julian calendar civic year (March 25, 2010 - March 24, 2011, termed "The Year of Boundless Ambitions"). Of course, it was hoped to (ap)ply the students' complementary essay(s) [...] addressed to the prospective Superintendent (candidates then Superintendent-elect). Given Dr. Kerble may well share his favorite poem on the Firehouse stage on the afternoon of April 25, Comity will be delighted to share the "time and space" with the participating audience --- and be part of the process (and progress). With more opportunities in moons to come.

7. Tuition, intuition and acknowledgment plus (added) 7a) Annotations on other instances of “time and space”
8. Duly (and dually) noted: Mission (ap)plied with this submission.
9. Looking forward.

➔ #1) \*\*\*\*\* TIDINGS AND SALUTATIONS \*\*\*\*\*

Tidings forwarded with the rising tide (high tide 8:54AM) --- advanced to Mrs. Debbie Szabo as a submission to the NHS Favorite Poem Project --- for considered review by the creative writing students (of Poetry Soup and the Record Magazine).

**Please note ➔ highlighted text of this year’s entry below. More in context will be forwarded after the meeting mentioned below.**

➔ #2) \*\*\*\*\* FORWARDED IN A MOTION OF COMITY \*\*\*\*\*

The following is forwarded in a Motion of Comity by the Waterside movement’s “committee of correspondence” or Comity, so called (“on behalf of ye rest” ~ of all generations of the Waterside people, whether born here or drawn here, for a time, a Lifetime or a pastime).

Comity submits this entry on the morning of Friday, April 9, in advance of coming to a “meeting of the minds” with an interested party and partner --- who serves as a liaison between “the movement” and “the establishment.” More insight about this exchange, and how it relates to this submission (and mission) will be forwarded as a corollary.

➔ #3) \*\*\*\*\* PROLOGUE \*\*\*\*\*

➔ See submission highlighted below --- cited at the Comity.org website at the hyperlink <http://www.comity.org/PoetryInMotion.htm> --- and advanced/anticipated when previously submitting the “Poems for Pettengill” work order form last December archived at the hyperlink <http://www.comity.org/Poems for Pettengill Work Order3.pdf> --- which (on page 2 of that form) cites footnote 3 of a communication sent the Mrs. Szabo and her students on December 18, 2009.

➔ #4) \*\*\*\*\* (SUB)MISSION \*\*\*\*\*

**From *Leaves of Grass* (\*) ... The Essay, *Absolute Balance* [considered entitled “*The (Goal and) Apex of All Education*” (\*\*)]**

by Walt Whitman (1819- 1892)

**There is, apart from mere intellect, in the makeup of every superior (\*\*\*) human identity, (in its moral completeness, considered as ensemble, not for the moral alone, but for the whole being, including physique,) a wondrous something that realizes without argument, frequently without what is called education, (though I think it the goal and apex of all education deserving the name) --- an intuition of the absolute balance, in time and space, of the whole of this multifarious, mad chaos of fraud, frivolity, hoggishness --- this revel of fools, and incredible make-believe and general unsettledness, we call the world; a soul-sight of that divine clue and unseen thread which holds the whole congeries of things, all history and time, and all events, however trivial, however momentous, like a leashed dog in the hand of the hunter.**

➔ #4a) \*\*\*\*\* ANNOTATIONS AND (con)NOTATIONS \*\*\*\*\*

\* When self-published in 1855, the first edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* contained but 12 poems; when the last edition was completed, the tome included nearly 400 poems and prose. Preparing the final edition of *Leaves of Grass* as a culmination of his life work ~ Whitman penned to a friend: "L. of G. *at last complete* — after 33 y'rs of hackling at it, all times & moods of my life, fair weather & foul, all parts of the land, and peace & war, young & old."

That last version of *Leaves of Grass* ~ often referred to as the "deathbed edition" ~ was formally released in January 1892, two months before Whitman's death ~ with an announcement was published in the New York *Herald* citing:

*Walt Whitman wishes respectfully to notify the public that the book Leaves of Grass, which he has been working on at great intervals and partially issued for the past thirty-five or forty years, is now completed, so to call it, and he would like this new 1892 edition to absolutely supersede all previous ones. Faulty as it is, he decides it as by far his special and entire self-chosen poetic utterance.*

\*\* (Re)view the full collection of Whitman's works, published in its final form by David McKay in 1900, and subsequently published online at Bartley.com to mark its centennial anniversary: the complete final edition of *Leaves of Grass* ~ linked from McKay's [preface](#) ~ can found at this [link without](#) ~ which in turn links to the companion collection of Whitman's prose at this [link without](#). Some publications merged a selection of poetry, free verse and prose. The above essay, *Absolute Balance*, which Comity considered is entitled to be referenced as "The (Goal and) Apex of Education" is an excerpt from Whitman's pointed observations about Thomas Carlyle originally entitled "Carlyle from American Points of View" ~ which can be reviewed in its entirety at this [link without](#).

\*\*\* **Caveat: Ralph Waldo Emerson is quoted to have said, "Every man is (in some way) my superior, in that I may learn from him."** NOTE: Asking the kind reader to construe this includes both genders of humankind, for Emerson was to a large degree a feminist. FURTHER NOTE: On rare occasion, a variation of this quote is attributed to Thomas Carlyle -- - given the quote was found repeated in various iterations in correspondence between the two. However, purportedly, Emerson is the source of these sentiments.

➔ #5) \*\*\*\*\* AS REFERENCED ABOVE (RETRACING FOOTNOTES) \*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: Footnote 3 of a communication to Mrs. Szabo and her creative writing class, sent December 18, 2009 describes one of five Poems for Pettengill order forms to be submitted (the aforementioned form # 3 archived at <http://www.comity.org/Poems for Pettengill Work Order3.pdf>):

- 3) The students' perspective/proposal (in prose) for the future candidates (and particularly the successful nominee) for Newburyport Superintendent of Schools ---
  - a. Duly noting the timelines for the interviews and selection process will coincide with the Favorite Poem project ---
    - i. as frequently cited in the papers of record (see recent piece at [http://www.newburyportnews.com/archivesearch/local\\_story\\_342212313.html](http://www.newburyportnews.com/archivesearch/local_story_342212313.html)) ---
    - ii. and noted at the Newburyport Public School website at <http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/supt.html>
  - b. Comity has tentatively decided upon a "proem" to (cor)relate with lifelong learning:
    - i. Whitman's free verse, an abstract from his complete works, the essay "Specimen Days" often referenced as "Absolute Balance" (see [http://www.lordtimothydexter.com/Maxims\\_Minutiae\\_Miscellany.htm#similesouls](http://www.lordtimothydexter.com/Maxims_Minutiae_Miscellany.htm#similesouls)) ---
  - c. Further noting that the new superintendent will assume his/her role in ~~June~~ **July 1** ...

FURTHER NOTE: For projections about shared "time and space" in the old-style Julian calendar year (March 25, 2010 – March 24, 2011) --- please review the Comity.org Compass and Calendar chronicled at this [hyperlink](#)

➔ #6) \*\*\*\*\* PERSPECTIVES, AND PROSPECTS \*\*\*\*\*

**From Comity's perspective, the following essay serves as the perfect "proem" to "assay" our personal and common goals for the old-style Julian calendar civic year (March 25, 2010 – March 24, 2011, termed "The Year of Boundless Ambitions"). Of course, had Mrs. Szabo's creative writing students the opportunity to complete the free form prose "ordered" with the aforementioned work order form # 3 --- it was hoped to (ap)ply their complementary essay(s) to articulate what they (and all life-long learners and educators) consider should be the "goal and apex of all education" --- addressed to the prospective Superintendant (candidates then Superintendent-elect).**

The **successful candidate now known to be Dr. Marc Kerble**, we the undersigned join the Waterside people ("in toto") to express the enthusiasm, hope and "esperance" that precedes his taking the helm of Newburyport's school district --- and encourage that the Clipper city explore "new waters" --- and seek that high "watermark" for innovation --- beyond the high marks of MCAS scores. In this case, to make a case for inspiring a "different school of thought" --- one with "boundless ambitions."

**Given a "premonition" that Dr. Kerble may well share his favorite poem on the Firehouse stage on the afternoon of April 25, Comity will be delighted to share the "time and space" with the participating audience --- and be part of the process (and progress). With more opportunities in moons to come.**

➔ #7) \*\*\*\*\* TUITION, INTUITION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT \*\*\*\*\*

➔ **Thank you in advance for reviewing and discussing Comity's submission to yet another "NHS Annual Favorite Poem Project."** As some may recall, last year Comity was asked to read Whitman's "one thought at the fore" --- conveying a "foreword" of "forward thinking" about the "goals" and "time and space" (that) "all peoples of the globe together sail [...] bound to the same destination."

*One thought ever at the fore ---  
That in the Divine Ship, The World, breasting Time and Space,  
All Peoples of the globe together sail,  
Sail the same voyage, are bound to the same destination.*

And if memory serves, when describing why the above "(fore)thought" was of importance for the "The Year of Charting New Courses" (March 25, 2009 – March 24, 2010) Comity alluded to the "unseen thread" that when drawn upon will gather us closer together as a community ...

With a keen intuition that the students' selection of favorite poems for recitation is expressly "inclusive" --- thus the process inherently promotes that new entrants (and diverse entries) will take precedence --- Comity still takes pure delight in the knowledge that each and every entry is weighed, examined and assessed by students during the process of this priceless "tuition" (under Mrs. Szabo's thought-provoking tutelage).

➔ **Although Comity does not fully anticipate that this submission will be presented "on stage" (time: April 25, 2010; space: Firehouse Center for the Arts) during the Eighth NHS Favorite Poem Project event --- Comity.org will present this content "on page." This to fulfill the hopes that this "proem" indeed promotes (and propels) a long-overdue "adventure in word and deed" for NHS students and lifelong learners alike --- a mission for this submission noted below.**

➔ #7a) \*\*\*\*\* ANNOTATIONS ON OTHER INSTANCES OF "TIME AND SPACE" \*\*\*\*\*

\* As mentioned in prior exchange with Mrs. Szabo, last fall Comity had occasion remark about the remarkable "NHS Annual Favorite Poem Project" during an extemporaneous exchange with two consultants (John Connolly and Albert Argenziano) who were waiting to be interviewed by the School Committee at City Hall last fall.

[NOTE: This, during the selection of consultant firms to guide Newburyport through the superintendent search process -- - duly noting Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates (HYA) was ultimately selected.]

Standing on the top steps of City Hall, the two posed questions about what which strengths were deemed essential in prospective candidate(s) for superintendent --- and of course in the successful candidate --- being particularly intrigued with the conversation about engaging the community (in that two of the Comity below represent the demographic without children in the Newburyport public school system, although still engaged and passionate about public education ).

Had extolled the virtues and creativity of many teachers within the system, mentioning that it was teachers who pulled the "school without walls" together which used City Hall as one location when the high school renovation was delayed in the fall of 2002 --- one mentioned the need for whoever takes the helm to be creative and enthusiastic about education, and inspire and support innovation. At that point mentioning the special projects that Mrs. Szabo's creative writing students did throughout the year, both extracurricular and within the curriculum itself. And while realizing by its description "creative writing" is "creative" how needful it was to translate this to other disciplines.

Noting that Comity had shared a similar conversation on the subject of education at this very "space" (on the steps of City Hall) at a point in "time" during the month of June. Encountering Dr. Kevin Lyons before he left his post here in port afforded the opportunity to wish him well and thank him for helping position an exciting venture which would be launched come August --- weaving seamlessly into the Waterside's history and "history in the making" --- particularly since it would be coordinated with the Friendship's visit. One suggested he may come return to port for the event.

[NOTE: It would soon come to light that the visit to port by the Friendship would be scuttled due to rot behind the figurehead which sent the replica Tall Ship into dry dock for repairs. Then the third week in August, the pilot venture was summarily abandoned, ostensibly due to some confusion over the hardware platform.]

Fast forward to another "time and space: --- ("time") the evening of Thursday, March 11 --- ("space") outside of Room 118 at the Newburyport High School. There to attend the NHS Theatre production of "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" --- which happened to coincide with the night the School Committee chose to make its selection between the two candidates for superintendent --- one approached Mr. Connolly and Dr. Argenziano who asked if we were there for the School Committee meeting. With reintroductions, the two insisting that they recalled our prior exchange. Having explained that 10 health did not allow attendance in the recent candidate interviews, although we had followed the process closely, and 2) while understanding both candidates would serve well, we did have our fingers crossed for one in particular.

Explaining that while at the high school for the play --- having brought a family member --- and that we had strolled down to Room 119 with an equal measure of excitement and curiosity about the pending decision --- we revisited our prior conversation about not only the engagement of the community but engagement of the key constituency (students), seeking to sustain an excitement about learning in many disciplines throughout their young academic careers.

Reminding them of our prior conversation last fall, noted that it was nigh "time" for submission of "favorite poems" typically requested by Mrs. Szabo's creative writing students (those participating in Poetry Soup and the Record Club) in early March --- and that this "time" the Comity's submission would be entitled, "The (goal and) Apex of Education" --- with further engagement of another one of Mrs. Szabo's students' projects during the New Year. Which would hopefully bring good fortune to a mission long past due for a launch. And then thanked them for finding the perfect person to take the helm.

➔ #8) \*\*\*\*\* DULY (AND DUALY) NOTED: MISSION (AP)PLIED WITH THIS SUBMISSION \*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: Harkening back (the "space" at the Firehouse Center stage; the "time" during the spring of 2002 (a year before the first NHS Favorite Poem Project in 2003) when --- in anticipation of the reopening of the renovated high school in the fall of that year --- "dreams" were shared between presenting educators and the participating audience of constituents about what "peradventures" for experiential learning might be facilitated by having a new facility. (The premise and promise being that in due "time" the "space" of the new facility would help facilitate progressive programming.)

FURTHER NOTE: Foretold that on Sunday, April 25, 2010, the waxing Pink (or Sprouting Grass or Egg or Fish) Moon will rise at 4:40PM, with the changing tide (low tide) at 4:20PM. A perfect time to position "the Ship" for a launch. (A coincidence that "Comity" had advanced to Dr. Kerble when he mentioned this was the very situ he and his wife would often repose when visiting Newburyport.)

[FURTHER STILL: In that the moon recedes one and one-half inches per year --- thus is currently a full foot more distant than that presentation in the spring of 2002. (Duly and dually noting that this Sunday marks a 40-year milestone for the launch of Apollo 13, the "successful failure" --- we hope that this proposition is successfully positioned this day through Monday eventide. More anon re this progress and "forward movement.")

Let us “contend,” support and champion that within six months from that “time and space” --- by the Full Hunters Moon of October 22-23 --- this mission to reach the “Apex of Education” will be well underway. For while the moon will recede another  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch by next October --- we maintain it remains within reach.]

Before that “time and space” --- let us seek the “soul-sight of that divine clue and unseen thread” that (be)holds the event (on April 25) with “the whole congeries of things, trivial and momentous.” Please keep this in the mind’s eye as you review the submission. And together we pursue the mission.

All the while ...

➔ #9) \*\*\*\*\* LOOKING FORWARD \*\*\*\*\*

Looking forward to further exchange --- and to change (in word and deed, respectively and “correspondingly”).

Until then.

Selah.

Forwarded in a Motion of Comity ---

The Waterside movement’s “committee of correspondence”  
Comity, so called (“on behalf of ye rest” of all generations of the Waterside people, born here or drawn here to the Waterside, for a time a Lifetime or a pastime)

- The Dears, Ken and Dominique (of the Waterside community of Newburyport)
- Ann Naimie (of Cape Neddick, ME ~ “sometimes of Newburyport”)

[www.Comity.org](http://www.Comity.org)

[www.LordTimothyDexter.com](http://www.LordTimothyDexter.com)