

## Barbara Anderson: Summertime and the livin' is only OK

**Barbara Anderson**

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"Resolve: To be true to your own particular summer and dredge its essence, never trying to turn copper into gold, silver into crystal."

Since I found this quote by someone named Barrett, I have treasured it as a resolution I could actually keep.

There was a time when summer meant swimming in cold mountain-spring water, or tennis and baseball at the park down the street, with very hot days passed playing board-game tournaments in my parents' cool basement.

Later, it meant volunteering to teach swimming at a Navy base pool, then actually getting paid for lifeguarding at Danvers' Sandy Beach in my short-lived "public employee period."

Later still, summer was spent working in an air-conditioned office during the week and catching up with chores on the weekend, with just an occasional travel vacation. Still, it was wonderful getting off the train at Wonderland at sunset and catching the ocean breeze when I reached Swampscott.

Now, in my golden years, with silver hair, I perform a kind of reverse Rumpelstiltskin magic by turning copper beaches and crystal mountain lakes into the cotton-blend webbing of my hammock. This is an essence to which I can be true for the rest of my life, as long as I have a good book and a thermos of iced light lemonade.

Of course, a political activist is never completely at rest. Even when it looks as if I am doing nothing, I am fighting the sales-tax/meals-tax increase by loafing instead of shopping, while eating at home. I resolved not to buy anything with a sales tax this month, and I've mostly kept that resolution except for cat food — Gilly doesn't care about politics — and the buffet at the Gourmet Garden where a friend and I celebrate our common birthday-and-a-half every August. I also admit to getting ice cream at Puleo's in Salem with Chip.

My anti-sales-tax diet was working pretty well, but now I have to get lunch from the buffet/pizza counter at Whole Foods in Vinnin Square to protest a national boycott against its CEO.

John Mackey recently wrote a column in the Wall Street Journal outlining a better health care reform plan than the single-payer one that is the eventual goal of President Obama and other liberals.

Mr. Mackey gives his own employees excellent insurance, but is opposed to single-payer government insurance. Good for him.

His enemies should know about a recent example of government health care — a VA center in Tennessee didn't sterilize equipment used for routine colonoscopies between patients, and thousands of veterans have

been exposed to HIV and hepatitis.

Speaking of HIV, The New York Times reports that public-health officials are considering promoting routine circumcision for all baby boys, and possibly adult heterosexual men, to reduce its spread. Note: The government that wants to run our health care system thinks that AIDS is caused by a lack of circumcision for straight men.

By the way, I learned during my annual physical this month that my Medicare Advantage Plan will pay for my examination, though traditional Medicare pays for just one physical when seniors sign up at age 65. My plan is the one that Obama recently attacked as wasteful, while failing to acknowledge that the Advantage plans, which are run by private insurance companies, are officially part of the Medicare system.

I'm told by a local billing office that an annual physical costs about \$500. Obama would make the patient pay for this preventive care, instead of allowing those "greedy" private insurance companies to pay.

Why do I keep hearing that those who oppose single-payer have no ideas of their own for health care reform? Alternative plans are everywhere. Along with what's available on the Internet, I have a paper stack of analyses that I've been reading in my hammock from the Heritage Foundation, the Heartland Institute and the Cato Institute, along with a series of columns by economist Thomas Sowell that you can find on his Web site along with his photo, which may reassure those who are afraid of being called racist if they don't support Obamacare.

I plan to write a column noting some of their suggestions for my own "Oh!BarbaraCare" proposal, after I have a chance to hear from local citizens at congressional candidate Bill Hudak's forum this Saturday (Aug. 29) at 1 p.m. at the Sheraton Ferncroft in Danvers.

I am on Congressman Tierney's e-mail list, so I did receive an invitation to participate in a phone forum on this issue. Though I doubt that many concerned constituents can adequately express their concerns in this format, I'll give it a try.

Even though on vacation, I was interviewed by Fox about the idiotic state law that doesn't let merchants pay the sales-tax hike for their customers to keep them from shopping in New Hampshire. I said that "consumers should just vote out the incumbents who voted for the increase."

At least I'm not quoted from Martha's Vineyard where one woman gushed, "I'm so honored to be walking on the same soil as Obama."

If I ever say that about any celebrity, especially a politician, you can skip the alleged Obamacare "death panel" and just give me that "God-take-me-now" pill with my iced lemonade.

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