

*To make democracy work, we must be a nation of participants, not simply observers.  
One who does not vote has no right to complain."*

Louis L'Amour

# Grey Matters

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Happy day after Halloween. I hope everyone had a fun and safe Halloween. On Friday the building was full of ghosts and goblins, medical staff and sports stars, cartoon characters and walking silverware. From my vantage point as Mr. Sponge Robert Squarepants (Sponge Bob to my friends), everyone had a great time.

I wrote this paragraph in last week's *Grey Matters*, but it is important enough that it warrants repeating:

For those of you who may not already be aware, RJG is a local election site.

Given the anticipated high voter turn out, parking and traffic around the building is going to be extremely problematic. Acton Police officers will be on hand to direct traffic and will block off the side entrance to our school, which is located next to the field off Route 111. Cars will only have access to the campus from the Charter Road entrance by the tennis courts, and there will be no visitor parking available for the day. This change will likely result in a traffic delay on Route 111 and difficulty entering the campus. Please plan your morning and drive to school accordingly.

As always, your patience and cooperation will make this very important day as relaxed as possible.

As late as the early 90's, very few people, other than doctors and lawyers, walked around with pagers attached to their belts or in their purses. Then, over time, the convenience of being easily accessible caught on and soon "*everyone*" had one. This handy form of communication eventually spilled over into schools. While not inherently "evil," they often became a disruption.

Schools often banned them for student use during the school day, and I recall confiscating many beepers after they went off during classes. Today, we have the cell phone. Again, modern technology has provided us with a wonderful way to contact each other, and we have a new form of classroom disruption. The cell phone, however, adds a new wrinkle. In addition to being able to talk to each other, cell phones allow us to send messages in writing. These "text messages," clearly a useful tool, can inadvertently put students in awkward situations. For example, they may appear to be passing messages, not about where to meet after school, but instead asking the answer to question number seven on the math test.

Parents and guardians, the easiest way to avoid these classroom disruptions, and the potential appearance of impropriety, is for students to not bring cell phones to school. With that said, I recognize that there may be situations where a student needs to be able to reach a parent or be reached by a parent after school. If this is the case, please remind your child that students are not allowed to carry cell phones during the school day. If they need to bring one to school, they are required to leave it locked in their locker during the school day. Please have a conversation with your child and remind them of the appropriate use of cell phones.

