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# Opinion

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## Mom's got what we need: Laughs

One of the funniest things about Norton's Andrea Henry is this: She's actually doing stand-up comedy.

Not all that many women are. Not that many ever have.

We salute her efforts to help us loosen up and to coax change in the status quo.

Henry's the young mother who's made it onto Nick At Nite's "America's Funniest Moms 3," which began airing last week.

"Most girls, when they're young, realize that they don't get attention for being funny," comedienne Joan Rivers, 73, was quoted last month in a Washington Post article on the odds stacked against female comics. "Girls want to be pretty or sexy. Funny isn't sexy. Comedy isn't sexy."

What it is, for sure, is hard work. And may get even trickier.

With changes assuredly brewing on what's politically correct for anyone delivering humor in the wake of shock jock Don Imus' awful slurs, challenges will intensify to walk a fine line.

Henry, meanwhile, has centered jokes around herself, making fun of her awkward teenage years, her family, being a worrisome mom. The kind of material that's familiar to so many of us.

The Norton woman, who decided to take to the stage after completing a class on

stand-up at the Boston Center for Adult Education, is bringing the world exactly what its inhabitants most seem to need: giggles, guffaws, the chance to poke fun at ourselves or at someone else, or at life's weirdnesses.

### EDITORIAL

Laughter can help with everything from escaping the clutches of trauma to salving grief to turning a bad day into a terrific day.



Numerous researchers postulate that laughter can help with everything from escaping the clutches of trauma to salving grief to turning a bad day into a terrific day. Which is why we tend to treasure the class clown or office cut-up. Still,

stand-up's been a tough road for women.

Patrick Spreng, author of "Everything Rosie: The Ultimate Guide for Rosie O'Donnell Fans," writes that in the early 80s, the now fiery talk show panelist and nemesis of billionaire Donald Trump, was one of six women doing stand-up.

"When I started, some women comics were jealous of other women comics," O'Donnell is quoted. "My philosophy always was, 'If she did, I can too.' All of us who are working are already in the all-you-can-eat buffet. If you get to the table and there's no shrimp, wait one minute and they'll come out with more."

But not that many more. There remains a relative scarcity of women in the field.

So we heartily congratulate Andrea Henry for not only delivering a baby recently, but plenty of belly laughs too.

## Dining out in dark, calorically

Do you order the risotto or the steak? It can be difficult to make smart choices when information about what you are eating is scarce. That creamy risotto might be worse for you than the marbled steak, and the salad your diet-conscious side wants might come with dressing that's almost as fattening. But you're not about to ask your waiter. The result for many diners is eating dishes with unknown quantities of calories and fats, which contributes to America's expanding waistline.

In supermarkets the federal government requires labels listing nutritional information on packaged foods. The benefits of this have been manifold. Consumers have been able to make more rational decisions about what they eat, and in some cases companies have responded to the incentive to make their goods better for those who eat them.

information on an increasingly large portion of the American diet. Many restaurants do not calculate nutritional data, and many of those with such calculations keep them in inconvenient locations or formats. That's why Phil Mendelson, a D.C. Council member, D-at large, is proposing to require chains of 10 or more restaurants to calculate the caloric, fat, carbohydrate and sodium content of their offerings and print them on menus or menu boards. The requirement would not apply to non-standard special dishes, so chains would not face an undue burden complying.

Consumers must make their own decisions about what to eat. Menus packed with nutritional information will not help those who recognize the risks of eating too much of the wrong

### IN THEIR OPINION



### VOICE OF THE PUBLIC

#### Help end slaughter of harp seal pups in Canada

To the editor:

Over 300,000 baby harp seal pups will be brutally killed on Canada's ice this year. The Canadian seal hunt, the largest commercial slaughter of marine mammals in the world, targets seals as young as 12 days of age. In 2006, over 98 percent of the seals killed were just two months of age or younger. Many had not yet eaten their first solid meal or taken their first swim. They had no escape from the hunters.

Each year, Canada allows hundreds of thousands of defenseless baby seals to be clubbed and shot to death for their fur. During the last three years, the government has allowed over one million seals to be slaughtered. The last time this many seals were killed — in the 1950s and 1960s — the harp seal population was reduced by as much as two-thirds. Video evidence shows sealers routinely dragging conscious pups across the ice with boat-hooks, shooting seals and leaving them to suffer in agony, and even skinning seals alive. The Canadian Department of Fisheries, which is charged with overseeing the hunt, does not punish hunters who kill the

seals inhumanely or who exceed the quota.

The Canadian Government has allowed this hunt to continue despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of Canadians, Americans, and Europeans oppose it.

The Humane Society of the United States has made tremendous strides in helping to ban the hunt. Major media channels all over the globe are covering the story. In the United States, Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., issued a resolution condemning the hunt. Several European nations are taking steps to ban the import of seal products.

Please voice your opposition to the hunt and stand up for these helpless mammals. Call or write to Canada's Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, and implore him to put a permanent end to the killing. Pressure the Canadian government and fishing industry to take action by refusing to buy Canadian seafood products. Tell the Canadian Tourism Commission that you won't be visiting Canada until the government bans the hunt.

Alexandra Welch-Zerba  
Attleboro

#### Health reform making great strides in Bay State

To the editor:

This week marks the one-year anniversary of health care reform in Massachusetts. Since last fall, Bristol Elder Services, Inc., along with community health centers and other agencies across the state, has been working to enroll people in Commonwealth Care, a new program that helps eligible Massachusetts residents get the comprehensive health coverage they need and helps them pay for it.

So far, nearly 63,000 people have enrolled in Commonwealth Care. This is a tremendous success. It means that tens of thousands of Massachusetts residents are receiving the kind of comprehensive, preventative health care they need and no longer have to rely on visits to the emergency room or wait in line to get prescriptions.

A 60-year-old woman with no primary care physician for years

mary care physician and is catching up on the preventative care she missed out on for years.

The success of Commonwealth Care shows that health care reform in Massachusetts is on track.

The goal of health care reform is to make quality, affordable health care available to every resident. To achieve this the state, employers, and the health care community are working together in an unprecedented effort to expand the choices available to uninsured individuals. As a result of this shared undertaking, everyone in Massachusetts can have the security they need and deserve.

Individuals who believe they are eligible may call Commonwealth Care's customer service representatives at 1-877-623-6765 or call Bristol Elder Services, Inc. at 508-675-2101.

Jody Sousa

#### Send us you

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#### Help someone lost friend and

To the editor:

Thanks to The Sun carrying the story, 2 efforts of White's Mi of Aaron and Ozark, knew Ozark fell in it Needless to say he v magnet. He was a g loved people as muc him. He had a playf one game he loved t walk through your h

Not only was he i panion, he was also Everyday we take fo sight we have, imagi going to Attleboro, c to Boston, then final way up Boylston Str Without Ozark, Aarc would have been eve consider you have n eyes but also your b

Those of us who I know the love you ge part of the family. A has lost his beloved dog, saddled with a of vet bills to pay on part-time teacher sa of all can not get the back until they pay t please help us help / you can. His heart is only time will heal t