

► Our Mission

The Suffolk News-Herald's mission is:

- To serve our community with integrity;
- To report the news that affects the people of our community fairly and accurately;
- To serve as a forum where public opinion is valued and shared;
- To distribute top-quality advertising for our business customers;
- To take an active role in helping Suffolk grow and prosper.

► Our Opinion

A boost up the career ladder

Every year, students from Suffolk Public Schools get a chance to head downtown for a conference where they can get a taste of the opportunities that could be available to them if they do well in school and then graduate and pursue the right kinds of post-secondary education.

The Career and Technical Education Professional Student Conference puts employers in front of a group of students who already have shown interest in their careers — even as early as middle school — by participating in the Career and Technical Education program of studies. Participants in that program, according to a student manual from the school system, maintain a B average while completing a sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization of their choosing.

The goal of the program is to graduate students who are qualified to go into the workforce at an advanced level, if they choose to do so. Completion of the program can qualify students for various industry certifications and licenses and can set them on the path to journeyman or apprenticeship status or on to associate's or bachelor's degrees in their chosen fields.

Two of the most important factors in helping students in the CTE program make what will turn out to be career-defining decisions are getting a clear picture of the career they're pursuing and getting encouragement and support from people who are already involved in their chosen fields. That's what made last week's CTE conference so important to the 150 or so students who attended. Both of those goals were served by the industry leaders who agreed to attend and work with the young students.

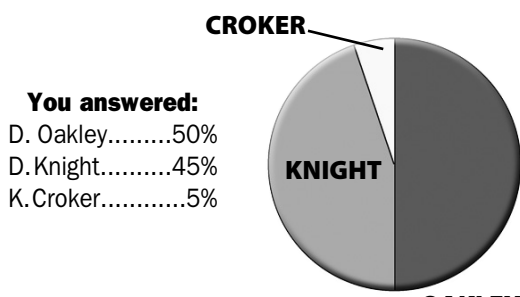
But this year, there was something entirely new on the agenda. Students attending the event had the opportunity to interact with eight different modeling and simulation consoles. Students interested in welding, for example, got to try their hand at a simulated welding exercise, and students interested in nursing got to work with a rescue dummy. It was about as close as a student could come to his or her chosen industry without serving an internship.

The leaders of Suffolk's Career and Technical Education program continue to work to give their student participants access to the best opportunities available. Those students are lucky to have such dedicated teachers and administrators on their side and to have access to generous industry leaders and state-of-the-art technology to help set them on the right career paths.

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► Online Poll

In our last edition we asked reader to voter for their choice for Player of the Week.



Vote today at: suffolknewsherald.com

► Editorial Board

Editorials appearing in "Our Opinion" section above represent the opinion of the newspaper's leadership. To discuss an editorial, contact R.E. Spears III at 757.934.9616.

'Twas the Night Before Fiscal Cliff

'Twas the night before Fiscal Cliff, and throughout the land, Democrats, Republicans were taking a stand. Their positions unwavering, intractably firm, With donkey-like stubbornness or entrenched pachyderm.

But the public were hopeful all snug in their beds, With visions of compromise alive in their heads. "Come on!" said the people in frustrated dismay. "Abandon this meaningless partisan fray."

When Obama and Boehner finally met, Their first thoughts were not of a country in debt. And Obama, the chief, said to Boehner "Oh crap! I'd rather depart for a nice winter's nap."

"I know," sighed Boehner "I've plenty to do, Was planning to take a vacation or two." "Never mind," said the Prez, "we'll just keep delaying, Who cares what the grumbling public are saying."

But out in the blogosphere there arose such a clatter,

The people revolted, resolving this matter: "There's only one way to deal with such fools Obama and Boehner must settle by duel."



Nick Thomas
Columnist

And caught the first plane heading out to Seattle.

"Come back," yelled the people, "we demand this by right, You've had chances to talk, now you settle this fight." But the pair, reunited, were far from impressed, As the thought of a duel made them rather depressed.

As he pondered alternative White House residents, Obama now saw why we have the vice presidents. Quick thinking, as always, to Biden he beckoned, "Get over here Joe, and I'll make you my second."

"Now Joe I expect you'll appear

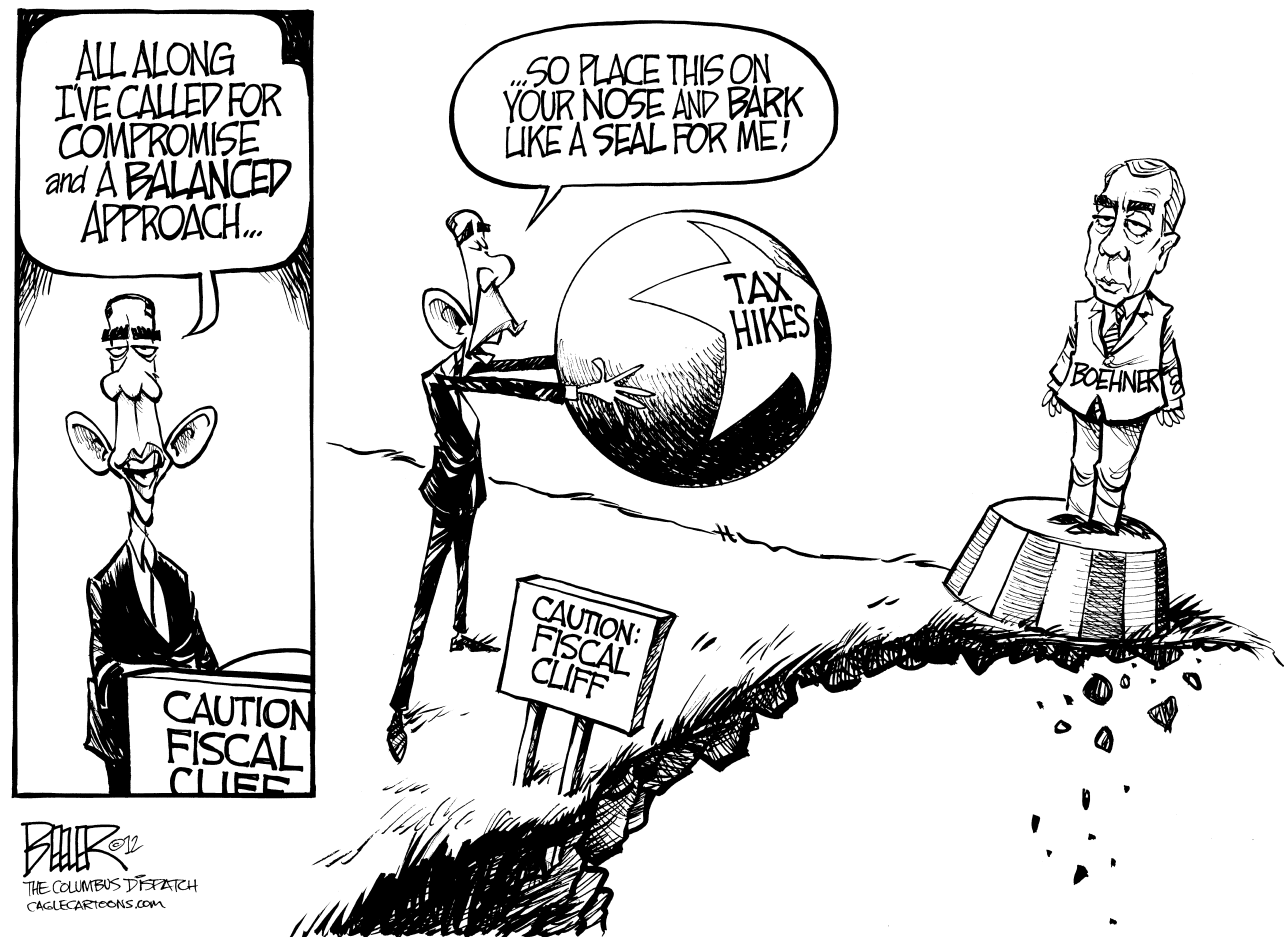
around dawn, To face off with Boehner on the White House's lawn." "Yeah right!" smiled old Joe, "Would love to assist, I ain't packing no pistol — what if I missed?"

And then, in a twinkling, Obama's next step, Was to call up more buddies, to be his next rep. "Now Pelosi! Now Clinton! Now Durbin and Reid! But all vanished from Washington with notable speed.

"Oh dear," mused Obama, "now what shall I do?" So he phoned up Boehner for a quick rendezvous. "My friend, we are beaten, let's abandon aggression." "Agreed," said the Speaker, "it's time for concession."

So they sprang into action, both recommending, Adding some taxes and cutting some spending. Then I heard them exclaim, "We've reached a consensus! Good-bye Fiscal Cliff, we've come to our senses."

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The fiscal-cliff traffic report

So, expect showers and gale-force winds over the next couple of days and don't forget that a high-surf advisory is in effect throughout the weekend. We may even see some downed power lines and scattered looting. That's the weather here on Capitol Hill. Now for the Congressional traffic report.

"Thanks Brandon. Well, its gotten pretty ugly out there, people. My best advice is, stay in your homes. As expected, following the holiday recess, we're seeing a lot of bluster and bombast building up on the Beltway, and the obstructionist blather has managed to stall headway on nearly every budget-deal ramp to a virtual crawl.

"Three or four 18-wheelers jam-packed with Election Day rancor have overturned, and as you might imagine, rubbernecking has resulted in hundreds of not-so-tender fender benders in both directions. It's gotten so bad that major media outlet trucks are stuck on the shoulder filming each other, filming each other.

"It's not just the Beltway that's backed up. Main Street and Wall Street and the Path to Prosperity all report major slowdowns due to a multitude of partisan pile-ups. Some drivers seem to be purposefully

ramming fellow travelers right off the road, while others speed across median strips to dive into oncoming traffic seemingly with no thought to life or limb. Casualties continue to mount and officials worry about running out of tarps.

"Sky Nine over the Bridge to the Future reports that progress remains hopelessly clogged, with all visible movement being of the backwards variety, and from their vantage all the right lanes look to be blocked as far as the eye can see. Left lanes: not much better. Center lanes: You don't want to know.

"Many reasons have been offered up for the Carmageddon spreading nationwide. Pure native stubbornness, leading to refusals to merge. Infrastructure deterioration. Widespread smoke screens creating low visibility. A plethora of misread signs due to intentionally misinterpreted polls. Death wishes. Insanity. Mad Cow.

"Part of the problem can be attributed to the numerous turnarounds closed by committee chairmen to restrict desertion from party-line

movement, and reports continue to stream in that a crazy person by the name of Grover Norquist has been single-handedly impeding traffic by standing in the ditch and flagging motorists off the road straight into various freeway abutments. Although it must be said, some cars do now seem to be aiming right for him.

"Due to the slick situation, eternal congestion and some inexplicable glitch that has turned all the surface street stop lights to red, further delays are expected to spread across the nation as the country experiences a massive impasse on all roads leading to the cutoff meant to avert the dreaded Fiscal Cliff.

"Veteran observers claim this activity is expected due to the mostly poor driving skills possessed by the residents of our nation's capital. But the upshot is, we're back to stalls and jams and near-total gridlock far into the foreseeable future. So remember to keep that dial here, where we bring you weather and traffic together on the eights, although to be perfectly honest, not much is expected to change any time soon. Back to you, Brandon."

WILL DURST is a political comedian who has performed around the world. He is a familiar pundit on television and radio. Email him at durst@caglecartoons.com.