



Father Roger and daughter Nicole Brewer have penned a book together called *Withstanding the Lie*.

Submitted photo

Father-daughter writing combo from Rockfall

By Sue VanDerzee
Town Times

It's hard enough to write a book (goodness knows, it's hard enough to write a newspaper story), but to write one with your daughter ... or your father ... now that's really something.

However, that is just what Roger Brewer, retired attorney of Rockfall, and his daughter Nicole, currently living in Queens, N.Y., have done.

And, just to put this in perspective, they've written a book about a painful topic – prejudice in America and how to cope with it as an individual. Called *Withstanding the Lie*, the Brewers' thesis is that individ-

uals faced with any kind of discrimination must find a way to deal with the hurt, whether it is based on race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender, handicapping condition, body type, sexual orientation or any of the myriad of other attributes that can be used as fodder for the bully mill.

Withstanding the Lie outlines their method, tried and tested in the fire of American racism, even in Durham and Middlefield. "The book really grew out of Nicole's struggles as one of a very few, sometimes even the only, African-American child in the school system," explained Roger. "We began talking about it in 2001 or 2002,

when she was in college."

Withstanding the Lie begins with memories – Roger's memories as the child of Georgia sharecroppers in the age of Jim Crow and Nicole's memories growing up in Rockfall and District 13 in the 1980s-'90s. What those memories have in common, besides the obvious pain of facing both institutional and casual racism, is the presence of supportive parents who instilled in the next generation the idea that demeaning information about themselves based on attributes over which they had no control was not to be believed. Roger writes, "My mother and father saw the hurt we (he and his siblings) were experiencing due to the way others treated us. They would tell us that it's not what other folks think about you that counts but who you are inside. I listened to the message and believed it ..." and obviously passed it on to Nicole.

What Roger and Sharon, his wife and Nicole's mother, were not really prepared for, having long ago internalized their own senses of self-worth, was the struggle Nicole would face in an almost completely white environment.

"Seeing Nicole struggle with these issues frightened me," Roger writes. "I was concerned not only about the immediate hurt she was feeling, but also about her long-term reaction to her experience. I was afraid she would fall into the trap that has captured so many others wherein hate, anger and resentment so dominate individual lives that there is little or no room for anything positive to develop... I also questioned whether Sharon and I had made a mistake putting Nicole into an essentially all-white public school system... We had encouraged Nicole to believe she could live her life as an individual based on her own merit and the content of her character."

Coginchaug was a particular problem for Nicole, partially because the teenage years are the years that people want to be part of the crowd, to fit in. For Nicole, fitting in was almost

impossible, and "it almost seemed like the harder they tried, the more I stuck out," she said.

While the Brewers' experiences are based on race, they easily point out how the heavy person, the person with a handicapping condition, the immigrant, the girl or woman, the elderly can all find themselves facing the same lie – that through no fault of their own, they're perceived as not as worthy as other people. In between fictional chapters and memory narratives, the authors give real solid tips on how to face down those lies and the liars who perpetrate them, a facing down that only occasionally involves confrontation, and they advise on where and when that might be important.

Perhaps most interesting, they also advise the reader on how to spot the lies we often believe about ourselves and how to do battle with the liar within. If this sounds like the Biblical advice to "Love your neighbor as yourself," meaning that loving others is impossible until we can love ourselves, then you've got the idea.

Looking back, Nicole believes with all her heart that her experiences have equipped her for her life without damaging her, but that's because of lots of hard work and loving support. "I wouldn't have done anything differently," she says emphatically.

She did, however, have some advice both for those who face discrimination and those who deplore it. The primary bit of advice comes from a story in her own life when a new girl refused to share her candy with a "black person," and Nicole's second grade best friend refused the candy also and walked away from the situation with Nicole. "That's the image I use to comfort myself when I am hurt even now," she explains. "It's like my own personal security blanket that someone would do that for me." When the reader notes

See **Brewers**, page 28

John Hancock
COLLEGE SAVINGS

1073155



According to a 2006 U.S. Census Bureau report, on average, a person with a bachelor's degree earns 86% more than someone with a high school diploma.¹

The only thing more costly than saving for college is not saving for college.

John Hancock Freedom 529 is a multi-managed 529 college savings plan that allows any earnings to grow tax-deferred and allows you to take qualified distributions federal income tax-free², while having your assets managed by some of the leading investment managers available today.

JOHN HANCOCK FREEDOM 529 THE MULTI-MANAGED WAY TO SAVE FOR COLLEGE

Offered by the EDUCATION TRUST OF ALASKA

Event: Freedom 529 Seminar

Date/Time: 08/28/08 @ 4:00 PM

Location: Perk on Main, 6 Main St., Durham, CT 06422

Contact: Matthew R. Christopher, CFS (860) 349-3826

¹ Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006, U.S. Census Bureau.

² State tax laws and treatment may vary. Earnings on non-qualified distributions will be subject to income tax and a 10% federal penalty tax. Please consult your tax adviser for more information.

If your state or your designated Beneficiary's state offers a 529 plan you may want to consider what, if any, potential state income tax or other benefits it offers, before investing. State tax or other benefits should be one of many factors to be considered prior to making an investment decision. Please consult with your financial, tax or other advisor about how these state benefits, if any, may apply in your specific circumstances. You may also contact your state 529 plan or any other 529 college savings plan to learn more about their features. Please contact your financial consultant or call 1-866-222-7498 to obtain a Plan Disclosure Document or prospectus for any of the underlying funds. The Plan Disclosure Document contains complete details on investment objectives, risks, fees, charges and expenses, as well as more information about municipal fund securities and the underlying investment companies that should be considered before investing. Please read the Plan Disclosure Document carefully prior to investing.

John Hancock Freedom 529 is a college savings plan offered by the Education Trust of Alaska, managed by T. Rowe Price, and distributed by John Hancock Distributors LLC through other broker/dealers that have a selling agreement with John Hancock Distributors LLC. John Hancock Distributors LLC is a member of Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), formerly NASD, and is listed with the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB). (c)2008, John Hancock. All rights reserved. Information included in this material is believed to be accurate as of the February 2008 printing date.

529 plans are not FDIC insured, may lose value and are not bank or state guaranteed.

0208:5291405

MLI1213078588

John Hancock
the future is yours

John Hancock Freedom 529

P.O. Box 17603

Baltimore, MD 21297-1603

1-866-222-7498

www.johnhancockfreedom529.com

All you need to know about
Fishing starts here:

www.blackhawksporfishing.com

Black Hawk II • Niantic, CT

800-382-2824

Striped Bass &
Blues

Sailing
7 Days
a Week



1073922

Town Times Real Estate Page

Durham property transfers

Arthur Ellis from Arthur and Evelyn Goddard, 39 Anthony Ter., \$326,000;

Kenneth Turner from Walter Michanczyk, 88 Cherry Ln., \$250,000;

Steven and Michelle Reynolds from Elaine Cunningham, 90 Royal Oak Dr., \$335,000; and

143 LLC from John Meadows, Wallingford Rd., \$60,000.

OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY 1-3 PM



SOUTH DISTRICT AREA MIDDLETOWN

Brick Cape, 4 BR, 2 full baths, granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, HW flrs. throughout. Completely renovated. \$249,900.

Call 860-818-0136.

DIRECTIONS: Rte. 17 to Randolph Rd. to 104 Margarite Rd.

Brewers

(Continued from page 6)

that the image is of two seven-year-old girls, the idea that we each have the power to heal, no matter what our age, is powerful indeed.

Her second piece of advice, for all parents, is to have the conversation that it's OK to talk about your hurts. As an example, Nicole said that her own parents, supportive, loving and involved as they were, never knew the story of her second grade friend until they began to write the book. "I think it's important to raise the issue with children that they're not at fault if someone

demeans them and that they can tell you," she said. "It's also important to let them know that they have the power to help others who are hurt, even if they are very young."

The father-daughter writing team, who were interviewed separately, both laughed when asked about the difficulties of working together. "We have different styles," Roger confided, adding that he likes to plan and Nicole's idea was to "Just do it and see where it goes." Nicole laughingly agreed with that formulation of their working arrangement.

This is Roger's second book; in 1991 he published *The Purg-ing of an Evil*, a very political book about racism in America and the necessity to move away from race-consciousness.

Withstanding the Lie is available at Amazon.com, and the Levi Coe Library will be scheduling a book-signing in early October. Watch for it and come meet this remarkable writing duo. Meanwhile, Nicole, who earned a Master's degree from NYU in creative writing, is working on a science fiction novel based on the subject of identity.

Town Times & www.towntimes.com

Your sources for local news and events

MIDDLETOWN

BERARDINO REALTORS

40 Main St., Durham
349-0344
www.berardino.com

For Lease

New custom built Cape featuring a 1st floor MBR suite, 2 car garage and includes all snow/lawn care for hassle free living! This home offers an open floor plan w/over 2300 sq ft, 3 bedrms, eat in kit, large deck and a beautiful, landscaped level yard. Situated in a quiet neighborhood with convenient access to highways and shopping. \$2200 mo. Call Berardino Co. Realtors 349-0344.

WILLIAM RAVEIS

— REAL ESTATE • MORTGAGE • INSURANCE —
New England's Largest Family-Owned Real Estate Company

Celebrating 35 Years in Business

We know what home means. As a family business, your real estate experience matters to us. We, along with our 2,000 sales associates and staff, share a passion to deliver the highest level of service to meet all your real estate needs. *Experience the William Raveis Difference.*

Sincerely, *R. Raveis, B. Raveis, C. Raveis*

Thank you for making us the #1 family-owned real estate company in New England

Visit raveis.com & type in MLS # or Street for multiple photos/details • Open houses online every Friday



OPEN
SUN. 1-3

156 Cherry Hill Road, Middlefield
Colonial, 4 BR, 2.1 BA, set back for privacy, great view, 2 story foyer, crown molding, central air, kitchen w/cherry cabinets, FR w/gas FP. DIR: Rt. 157/Cherry Hill. MLS# G496582. Linda Conchado 203-980-0549. \$469,900.



OPEN
SUN. 1-3

46 Stephen Woods, Durham
Price Reduced - Private neighborhood, Stunning 5 BR Colonial on 6.78 acres. Great floor plan, fabulous kitchen, office, huge family room, garden. DIR: Old Blue Hills / Stephen Woods. MLS #G489883. Anna Savaria 860-810-0706. \$620,000.



OPEN
SUN. 12-2

288 Johnson Lane, Durham
Don't let the age of this home fool you. Move-in condition. Custom built Dutch Colonial 3 BR, 2 BA, pool, gazebo & very private. DIR: Main Street/Haddam Quarter Road/Johnson Lane. MLS# G504796. Currlin Team 860-680-8227. \$425,000.



NEW
LISTING

Middlefield

Amazing Custom Colonial loaded with charm. 4 BR, 3.1 BA, potential for 1st floor MBR, central air, FR w/FP, large eat-in kit., vinyl siding, 2 car garage. MLS# G504816. Currlin Team 860-343-6818. \$449,900.



PRICE
REDUCTION

Durham

Federal style Colonial in the heart of Durham. Well kept 4 BR, 2.5 BA, 2 fireplaces, views & beautiful gardens. MLS #G503971. Don Dickson 860-250-6347. \$399,000.



PRICE
REDUCTION

Durham

Two level Ranch with stunning views, 3 BR, 1.1 BA, deck, secluded setting with mature landscaping. MLS #G492177. Don Dickson 860-250-6347. \$275,000.

*** - SPECIAL FINANCING**
with Raveis Mortgage Incentives (RMI)
Mary Beth Bain, Mortgage Broker
860.334.1406

CT 1st & 2nd Mortgage Lender/Broker
License No's 15524 & 15525

raveis.com

"The Best Website in Real Estate"

Find your home - 100,000+ Local MLS listings updated daily • School reports • Local housing charts & statistics
Multiple photos & enhanced descriptions • Mapping of all recently sold/listed homes • Online home evaluation
Qualify for low rates - William Raveis Insurance Co. - William Raveis Mortgage Co. - over 200 financing options

48 Main Street
Middletown, CT 06457
860.344.1658

Prudential Connecticut Realty

prudentialCT.com

Durham \$434,900
Gorgeous antique 4 bedroom Colonial, 2 master suites, 6 FP, family room, gar., gardens, views. mariecoughlin@prudentialct.com or 860-301-2425. G498559.

Durham \$665,900
Spectacular brick & stone Col. w/all cherry flrs. and 1st flr. master suite, 3 bdms. plus loft., great rm. w/flr. to ceiling FP, fin. bsmt. offer 800 sq. ft. Laura Bitondo 860-573-5475. G491477.

New to Market
Durham \$629,000
Super value! Brand new Col. w/views from front porch, 5 big BR, 2nd fl. play, mst. suite w/sitting rm., wd. flrs., 3 car gar., deck & level yd. Eric Davis 860-349-3681. G469229.

860-347-4486
890 Washington Street • CT River Valley

Servicing Middletown, Portland, Cromwell, Berlin, Middletown, Durham, Haddam, East Haddam

WILLIAM RAVEIS

— REAL ESTATE & HOME SERVICES —
New England's Largest Family-Owned Real Estate Company

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT

Thinking about selling? Call an experienced professional. Marsha will provide a no-obligation analysis of your home's value and discuss her exclusive marketing plan for your most significant asset. Call for your free consultation today. - 860-638-0309

Marsha
DESJARLAIS
Helping you make a Positive Change

48 Main Street
Middletown