

## Syracuse liquor store owner who was shot says 'I'm not done yet'



By [Dick Case, Post-Standard columnist](#)

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"And I'm not done yet."

Those were quoted as Tom Dotterer's words via the e-mail I got Monday morning. Good Old Tom. Wonderful and defiant, as always.

The writer added a line from Revolutionary War era author, Thomas Paine: "These are the times that try men's souls."

Tom lost an eye [in a robbery](#) at his little and colorful Salina Liquor and Wine Store, 1428 N. Salina St. last week. The dirty coward fired a gun at Tom, hitting him in the head, before he took off. The cops got him and he's been charged. Tom remains in the hospital, apparently recovering slowly.

I'd like to imagine Tom fighting back at someone trying to rob him. As always.

Back in 2005, he'd resisted when another jerk tried to steal money. The bad guy ended up under arrest and in the hospital. Tom was back at work the next day.

When I dropped by later, Tom didn't want to be made into a hero. He'd done what any human being would do when confronted by a stranger who wanted to rob him and cut him up with a busted liquor bottle.

End of story, by Tom's measure.

Tom and his kin have been around the North Side more than a century. His brother, "Dutch" Dotterer, used to have the book store next door. When he died in 1994, Tom's wife, Joanne, took over, selling out of a shop I'd call quaint. The store's been closed since Mrs. Dotterer retired. She and Tom had six kids.

Both Tom and Dutch were pretty fair baseball players, getting up into the Big Show. Tom still coaches the game to kids at CBA.

It's not been an easy run for the Dotterers, all these years. One time a woman drove into the front of Dutch's place. He was OK.

Tom's dad's Henry "Dutch," who scouted for Cleveland and the Yankees, opened the store in 1944. Tom's been there

close to 50 years, selling liquor and lottery tickets to neighbors, some he knows are not Syracuse's finest.

He once said to me: "I deal in two products no one needs – alcohol and gambling." He reads lots of books.

Tom himself has the look of an Old Testament prophet. A black eye patch would be a neat accessory.

Take care, my friend...

### **Old Woolworth's front**

The wind blew away the metal covering Rite Aid drugs store front at Fayette and South Salina streets last week. Underneath is the building put up at that corner by F.W. Woolworth in 1941. The five and dime closed 38 years later and the new owners, Rite Aid, covered up some of the front, including a clock set into the corner which gave Syracusans the right time for years.

My colleague Gerard Carroll, a careful downtown watcher, suggests with all the restorations going on in the city center, now is the perfect time for Rite Aid to the restore the front. Good idea, I say.

### **Marvin's books**

Marvin Druger has turned into a writing machine, since he retired from teaching biology at Syracuse University. The legendary teacher is not one to rest on his laurels.

Marvin's latest are "Even Stranger Creatures and Other Poems" and "Mr. Moocho and the Lucky Chicken" with illustrations by Roberta Wackett.

### **I-81 In book**

Joseph DiMento, of the University of California, is one of the authors of a new book on urban freeways published by MIT Press, which includes a section on Route 81 through Syracuse. The roadway is being redesigned and possibly eliminated by the state Department of Transportation.

DiMento will sign copies of the book, "Changing Lanes; Visions and Histories of Urban Freeways," at 4:30 p.m. March 6 at the Onondaga Historical Association museum downtown. Los Angeles and Memphis also are in the book.

### **Arlene and Sharon**

Two of my favorite artists are showing works in Syracuse.

"Within," cast resin sculpture by Arlene Abend, will be at Redhouse Arts Center through March 22. Wilson Art Gallery at LeMoyne College, is showing sculpture by Sharon BuMann and Gail Hoffman through Feb. 22. Sharon's public works include the Jerry Rescue Memorial in Clinton Square and the renovation of sculptures in city parks.

## **West Colvin House**

Mary Matteson Meeker writes: "My sister sent me the Post-Standard article about our family home, 301 W. Colvin Street. The house is being refurbished for veterans. What a great idea.

"I lived there in the early 1950s. My dad, Reginald Matteson, was an osteopathic physician and had an office in the house. Life moves on!"

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