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The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 13, 2014

No Decision Yet On Wendell's Next Fire Chief

By JOSH
HEINEMANN

With help from Orange fire chief Dennis Annear, the Wendell selectboard held a special meeting last Saturday afternoon to interview the two people who applied for the advertised part-time fire chief, to replace Wendell's long time chief, Everett Ricketts.



The town committee interviewed Joe Cuneo (l), who serves part time in New Salem, and Bud Meattay (r), chief of Erving's department until earlier this year, for the position long held by Ricketts.

Ricketts will retire at the end of February. Michael Idoine, who was instrumental in forming Wendell's succession committee, sat in the room as an interested citizen.

The two applicants, former Erving chief Almon "Bud" Meattay, and New Salem's part-time chief, Joe Cuneo, were interviewed one after the other, and the three selectboard members and Annear took turns asking each man the same set of ten questions.

After both had left the room, the four interviewers discussed their impressions, but held off from making a decision that will be a critical part of the Wendell fire department for the foreseeable future.

Questions included a description of management style, how

the individual sees the fire service in Franklin County developing in the next decade or more, the applicant's strengths and weaknesses, and how he would balance the needs of the department with the budgetary constraints of Wendell's small community.

Both men are well qualified. The fire service is becoming more complex, and small towns around the county are facing similar problems of an aging volunteer group, many of whom work out of town and are unavailable, or are available after a significant delay, during the day.

Cuneo brings the complication of a shared chief which is a new situation for fire departments, but he is familiar with Wendell and its fire department members.

Natural Gas Pipeline: Montague Selectboard Demands More Details; Water Commissioners Grant Surveying Rights

By MIKE JACKSON

On Monday night, in its first discussion of the matter, the Montague selectboard unanimously rejected a request by Kinder Morgan's subsidiary Tennessee Pipeline Company for access to survey a wooded parcel of town property near Millers Falls.

But on Tuesday, the Turners Falls Fire District's Board of Water Commissioners gave the company permission to survey the area around Green Pond, part of the town's Water Supply Protection District.

The company, which seeks to build a three-foot-diameter, 250-mile-long natural gas transmission line, is plotting out a possible route from the Pittsfield area to Dracut it reportedly identified via satellite imagery, making heavy use of transmission line right-of-ways.

The route apparently passes from Deerfield into Montague near Hatchery Road, and on through Millers Falls into Erving and Northfield.

The company's land agent seeks permission to survey 200 feet on either side of the proposed route, according to town administrator Frank Abbondanzio, and ultimately secure permanent easements for 100 feet on either side of the line.

The land agent, Joseph Gigliotti of Northeast Land Services LTD, has been contacting area landowners in recent weeks.

One town-owned plot, Map 35, Lot #27, falls within the swath that must be surveyed. The parcel is east of Route 63, south of South Prospect Street, on the northwest face of Country Hill.

"It's a little bit disconcerting... It's a very, very rocky area, and this is an underground pipeline," said Abbondanzio, who also happens to be one of that lot's nearest residents.

"I told him that I wanted to see a map," he said. "I said it was really important, that people, before they approved anything, would want to know all the details about the project. He said there were going to be public hearings - that those would happen in a matter of two or three weeks - but they needed these survey permissions. I think they need to come before the town."

The selectboard's official response



JACKSON PHOTO

The route Kinder Morgan appears to be pursuing would veer from the power lines here in the Water Supply Protection District, where they cross over Green Pond.

took under a minute. Board chair Mark Fairbrother declared that it was "almost an affront to this town" that the company had not sent a representative to answer for the project.

Selectboard member Christopher Boutwell made a motion not to sign the survey rights, "until someone comes to see us, and presents us with more detailed information about what their plans are."

Mike Nelson, attending via telephone, "strongly" seconded the motion, and all three voted in its favor.

Then the meeting, attended by a full room of potentially affected landowners and concerned citizens,

see SURVEYORS page A6

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Points To Possible Under-Reporting of Issues At VY

By CHRISTOPHER
SAWYER-LAUCANNO

VERNON, VT - Last Thursday, February 6, The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) announced in their quarterly inspection report on Vermont Yankee that the Vernon plant had been cited for a low-level safety violation.

According to the report, Entergy failed to fix a failed flood seal in underground pipes, which could have compromised the reactor's ability to withstand a flood. Although Entergy was aware of the problem in March, it wasn't fixed until November.

"The inspectors determined that Entergy had failed to restore compliance at the first opportunity within a reasonable period of time following the issues of the finding and the noncited violation," the report stated.

The NRC also noted, halfway through the 45-page report, that there had been a 22.5 percent drop in self-reported incidents in the 25 days after, and the 25 days before, Entergy announced on August 27 that VY would close.

NRC spokesman, Neil Sheehan, said: "We have observed a reduction in the rate of daily problems entered into the plant's corrective action

program since the announcement." Sheehan added that NRC resident inspectors had taken a "snapshot" of the reporting trends, and would return to the issue for further review.

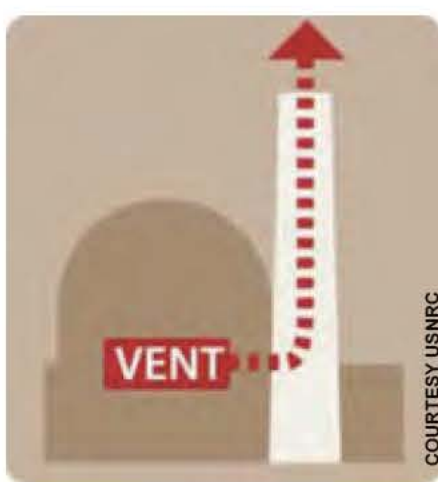
Sheehan said that on average, 10 to 20 issues have been reported on a daily basis, and that number doubles during a refueling outage.

"We're curious why the number dropped, but we don't have enough data yet. We concluded that Entergy's initial analysis was not sufficient and that further analysis was needed to ensure this rate reduction was not an adverse trend."

Entergy spokesman Robert Williams said, "Self-reporting is something we track closely, and we continue to reinforce the value of writing condition reports in this remaining cycle."

Christopher Recchia, commissioner of the Department of Public Service, said the department's chief engineer was reviewing the NRC report.

"In the big picture, we are aware of it and we are look-



COURTESY USNRC

In November, the company notified the NRC that it did not intend to spend resources on an analysis for hardened vents, required of U.S. nuclear plants in the wake of the Fukushima disaster.

ing at it, too," Recchia said. He also noted that the so-called self-reporting problems were areas of concern to employees and were often issues that were caught before they became bigger problems:

"They are condition reports that things are not quite right, but not big enough to be reported to the NRC."

Entergy "Under No Legal Obligation" To Close Plant

Last week, the NRC also said that Entergy "is under no legal obligation" to shut down the Vermont Yankee

see ENTERGY page A5

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Rewriting the Book on Sludge

By JEFF SINGLETON

"They're rewriting the book in Montague," declared Grant Weaver, a water treatment engineer, speaking to the Montague Selectboard on February 10.

Weaver was referring to innovations made at the Montague Wastewater Treatment Plant that appear to have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars, and potentially avoided several million more in future capital costs.

Weaver, accompanied by WPCF director Bob Trombley and a number of the treatment plant staff, portrayed the Montague innovations as influencing national policy on wastewater treatment. Weaver noted that projects in "Montana, Tennessee and Virginia" are building on what's going on in Montague.

According to Trombley it all began in 2008 with plant modifications designed to reduce the weight of sludge. The more water in the "solids," which must be hauled out of the system at a cost, the higher the line item in the WPCF budget.

Plant employees, portrayed by Trombley as a committed and innovative group, began to notice a reduction in nitrogen levels of water being returned to the river.

"Things were going very

well," he said, "but we were not really sure why."

Enter Grant Weaver. Weaver is a biologist and engineer who in 2007 founded The Water Planet, a consulting firm located in New London, CT.

According to its website, the company "provides operational support to wastewater treatment facilities all across North America. We make facilities perform in ways not imagined when they were constructed... our specialties are nutrient removal - ammonia, nitrogen, and phosphorus - and sludge reduction."

Weaver evaluated the plant and suggested more improvements within the scope of current equipment. He has also been promoting innovations apparently pioneered by the Montague plant nationwide.

A key issue Trombley

touched on at the meeting was the opportunity to avoid \$4 million in capital expenses that may be required to further reduce nutrients, mainly phosphorus and nitrogen, being poured into the river.

In 2011 the Montague plant purchased a Fournier rotary press, a sophisticated dewatering device, financed in part by a \$1 million dollar earmark placed in the federal budget by then Congressman John Olver.

Beginning in 2012, the plant began to bring in sludge from other towns for treatment, a revenue generating operation.

According to Trombley, such investments have produced \$75,000 in increased revenue and \$200,000 in savings so far this fiscal year.

Audience member Jeanne Golrick asked if sewer users

see SLUDGE page A5



WPCF PHOTO

The plant's million-dollar Fournier press dewateres sludge.

The Montague Reporter

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August, 2002

Gas Opponents: Against The Prevailing Wind?

If anyone in the packed room at Montague’s town hall Monday night – potential abutters, concerned residents, appointed and elected officials alike – had anything nice to say about the idea of a major natural gas transmission pipeline running through the town, they kept it to themselves.

Montague, where Kinder Morgan’s proposed Northeast Expansion pipeline would have to cross two rivers and a treacherous hodgepodge of geology and opinion, may well turn out to be where it meets its biggest challenge.

But our state wants the gas. According to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), Massachusetts is already the most energy-efficient state in the U.S., three years running.

The ACEEE notes that we have “one of the most aggressive energy efficiency resource standards in the country,” giving our utilities 19 out of 20 possible points, and calls our combined-heat-and-power policies the best in the country.

Natural gas is the carrier of 33% of the overall energy we use for residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation purposes, according to 2011 Energy Information Administration statistics. The next-largest source, 23%, is gasoline.

And even if the entirety of that 33% – or of the 70% of the state’s electricity generated at gas-fired plants – were consumed by the 85% of its residents who make their homes east of the Quabbin, it is nevertheless the state we are in.

It is very politically difficult to make the argument, on a regional level, that we must abstain from using more natural gas in the hopes that this will accelerate the shift toward renewables and more efficient, as in reduced, use.

In recent weeks, Salem, not Montague, has been the focus of the state’s emerging natural gas politics. The Salem Harbor Power Station, a 738-megawatt, coal-burning behemoth from the 1950s, has been decommissioned and is shutting down in June.

In its place, Footprint Power LLC intends to build a state-of-the-art, 674-megawatt gas-fired plant, which would emit 2.2 million tons of CO2 a year.

The Conservation Law Foundation filed against Footprint’s approval, arguing that the state’s 2008 Global Warming Solutions

Act (GWSA) was not properly taken into account by the Energy Facilities Siting Board.

The GWSA requires the state to attempt a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, by 2020, from our 1990 baseline. We had reduced them by 11% as of 2010.

The Salem case is tied up in the Supreme Judicial Court. On Saturday, four hundred of Footprint’s opponents, including Grassroots Against Another Salem Power Plant (GAASPP) and members of 350 Massachusetts, marched to the gates of Salem Harbor to express their opposition to the plans for the gas-fired plant.

The Salem Alliance for the Environment (SAFE) skipped Saturday’s rally.

In its dissenting statement, SAFE argued that though the goal should be “to build a national transmission network powered by thousands of renewable energy projects distributed all over the system,” and though hydrofracking is “severely damaging the environment and people’s lives,” natural gas must nevertheless be accepted as a “transitional step.”

“Like the sponsors of the protest,” SAFE admitted, “we are in search of a viable path forward.”

With Vermont Yankee’s 605 mW coming offline this year, and the recent announcement that a 1.5 GW coal-burning plant in Somerset will shut down in 2017, it’s no wonder that regional grid operators are nervous, or that environmentalists are split on the Footprint case.

There is a strong consensus that the existing delivery network is badly strained by seasonal demand, as gas does double duty, heating half the state’s homes in the winter.

Last month, Governor Deval Patrick joined with the governors of Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine – acting as the New England States Committee on Electricity (NESCOE) – to propose a solution to this problem.

In a January 23 letter to ISO New England, the nonprofit body that coordinates the region’s power grid, the governors asked the ISO to file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in support of a tariff on power companies.

This tariff, which would be passed on to electricity consumers in the form of higher rates, would fund “the construction of new, or

Reporter Subscription Rates Going Up

For a good many years we have maintained our subscription rates at what we feel have been very reasonable prices. We intend to continue that but circumstances, described last week in this paper by our distribution manager, Don Clegg, compel us to ask some of you to pay a bit more for your weekly paper.

At last week’s Board of Directors meeting, our board voted to accept Don’s suggestion that subscription rates be raised for those who receive their paper in the mail, bundling with it a long-delayed increase for subscribers who live on routes where delivery is made by a driver.

Effective March 1, the annual subscripton rate will be raised from \$50 to \$60 for postal subscribers. For those on driving routes, the increase will be from \$30 to \$40 per year. If you currently get your paper delivered by a foot-propelled paper deliverer, the rate will stay the same, for now, at \$25 per year.

As Don pointed out, the price of stamps has continued to go up, but our rates haven’t. At this point, we barely break even on mailing the paper to our loyal subscribers. When the price of gas goes up, the same is true for those on our driving routes. We are on stable financial ground, thanks in part to the large number of our readers who tack additional amounts onto their renewal payments, but we shouldn’t be worried about breaking even on new subscribers.

We thank you all for your wonderful support and do hope that this does not create a hardship. If you ever feel the price has gotten too high, please contact our managing editor, Mike Jackson, at (413) 863-8666 or by email: mjackson@montaguereporter.org. We will gladly exchange a subscription for volunteer help.



expansion of existing, pipelines.”

Essentially, the states are proposing a tax to subsidize the pipeline industry, socializing some of the cost up front in order to accelerate proposed construction.

The letter, available online at nescoe.com, sets a goal of an additional 1 billion cubic feet per day by the end of 2017, pointing out that this would mean 600 million cubic feet per day (Mmcf/d) more than that which is currently planned by Spectra Energy’s Algonquin Incremental Market expansion through Connecticut.

This brings into fresh perspective the 500 Mmcf/d that Kinder Morgan, the nation’s biggest pipeline company, hopes to be moving through Montague, Massachusetts by the end of 2018.

It may also explain why the company did not afford the town the courtesy of sending a representative to answer questions about its plans.

If it can argue that the route through our backyards is the simplest and fastest way to pump gas into the region, it may not ultimately matter to Kinder Morgan whether local landowners, or the Board of Selectmen, or even Montague’s town meeting members approve of the idea.

Years of hearings and filings stretch ahead of the company. At the end of them it may win approval by FERC, and win a bonus prize of electricity consumers’ money to build as fast as it possibly can.

It may secure, by eminent domain, a right of way through a number of our residents’ private properties, fell a swath of trees, and dig a 12-foot trench at the center.

It may dig that trench through the Wildlife Management Area on the Plains, and through land designated for aquifer protection above Green Pond.

It may blast and rip its way through ledge rock. And it may bury a leaky pipeline in shifting ground, in close proximity to idling trains.

Who knows how it intends to cross the Connecticut and Millers rivers.

And when it’s done with Montague, it may proceed in much the same manner through Erving, Northfield, Warwick, Orange, Royalston, Athol, Winchendon, Ashburnham, Ashby, Lunenburg, Townsend, Pepperell, Dunstable, Tyngsborough, and on into Dracut.

It may just be that kind of world.

The dynamic between rural and urban populations is one of civilization’s oldest tensions. Turning it over and over, we find it’s a coin with two tails: the resident stewards of the land tend to consume more resources per capita, but also tend to get less benefit out of their consumption.

And in an era of austerity and unemployment, hardship is felt differently in different places, and rural and urban dwellers tend to resent each other’s privileges.

Living here, we see an ongoing retraction of services: FRTA’s bus routes being cut back, Bay-state shifting medical services from Greenfield to Springfield, extortionate internet rates in the hill towns, and WMECo planning to consolidate service centers in Hadley.

But outsiders might notice that between 1990 and 2010, Franklin County’s population grew at only one-fifth the rate of the rest of the state’s.

We were essentially skipped over by the subprime lending bubble, our water is good, our traffic unjammed, and we have more homeowners, farmers and firms per capita than the state as a whole.

Not to mention all the land out here. Franklin County has 6.5 acres of it per capita, as compared with 3/4 of an acre per capita statewide, and we have been doing a pretty good job at not using very much of it, and keeping it uncluttered with nuke plants, cell towers, big box stores, pipelines and the like.

So what does it mean to be rural? What do we want out of being rural? Is rural life, access to the land base, distance from the teeming masses, a privilege? Is it our right?

When Kinder Morgan finally sees fit to divulge to the public the plan it has been working on, if we decide that our land is of more value without a transmission pipeline than with one, the great challenge will be to communicate that judgment to our urban counterparts.

Published weekly on Thursdays.
Every other week in
July and August.
No paper last week of December.
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Compiled by DON CLEGG

Bellydance for Fun & Fitness with Hadama (Karen Traub) at Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A, Turners Falls, on Saturday, February 15 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. If you’ve always been curious, or wanted to give bellydancing a try, this free class is for you.

Dancing is fun and it is good for you. Traub was featured in the community room last year with relaxing and therapeutic acupressure chair massages and brings her love of dance and its health benefits to share this time. All ages and dance experience are welcome. Healthy snacks will be provided free of charge compliments of GSB. Call (413) 863-4316 for more information.

Also on Saturday, Memorial Hall in Shelburne Falls features **Who Are You: A Celebration of the Who – The Music of Tommy**, starting at 8 p.m.

They’ve played pre-shows for The Who in Boston and Philadelphia. They’ve toured the northeast United States, playing small theaters, casinos and outdoor events. And now, Who Are You brings their show to Shelburne Falls as a ben-

efit to help purchase a new movie screen for the Memorial Hall.

This is a multimedia presentation, complete with digital video, a surprise or two and all of the legendary band’s songs.

It is an elaborate rendering of The Who’s music, complete with hi-definition visuals and occasional props. It also features the work of Berkshire painter Dun Riddell.

Memorial Hall is at 51 Bridge Street in Shelburne Falls. Admission tickets are \$20 and available at: Boswell’s Books, Mocha Maya’s Coffee Shop, and World Eye Bookshop. For more information, visit www.shelburnefallsmemorialhall.org.

Montague Poets for a Montague Skatepark will read on Sunday, February 16 from 4 to 8:30 p.m. at the Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls in a benefit for the Montague skatepark. There will be music by the 4th Street Band.

Poets include Luke Buckham, Janel Nockleby, Chris Sawyer-Lau-canno, Paul Mariani, Kevin Smith, Allen Fowler, Edite Cunha, David Detmold, Patricia Pruitt, Kristin Bock and Chris Janke.

Calling all elementary school students to Greenfield Savings

Bank in Turners Falls on Thursday, February 20, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for a **winter reading camp**. Come for stories, crafts, pizza for lunch plus face painting at 1 p.m.

Also at GSB on February 20, from 3 to 4 p.m., Betsey Yetter will be available for free tax help.

Help is needed in Leverett, where a family recently had to move due to mold and **burst pipes** in their rented home. Many of their furnishings were ruined.

The community’s help with **donations of used items** is greatly appreciated, and just about everything they owned needs to be replaced. Also needed is someone to transport the items to Amherst.

If you can help with either a donation or transportation, please leave a message with Marilyn at (413) 548-9144.

Newt Guilbault baseball league sign-ups will be held at the Montague Police Department in the Community Room on Saturday, February 15 from 10 a.m. to noon, and Sunday, February 16, from noon to 2 p.m.

If your child is new to the league, please bring a copy of your child’s birth certificate. Please do not bring the original if you can help it. If you only have an original copy then a copy may be made at the Police Department.

Sign-ups are for Montague residents and surrounding communities, except Greenfield, Mohawk and Frontier school districts.

The Greenfield Garden Club presents the **Smith College Botanic Garden: Past, Present and Future**

in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center on Thursday, February 20 from 7 to 9 p.m.

The evening will feature two guest speakers. First, Cynthia Boettner of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge will present an update on new invasive species to the Franklin County area, and the things that can be done to prevent their spread.

Michael Marcotrigiano, Professor of Biological Sciences and Director of the Botanic Garden at Smith College in Northampton, will give a talk highlighting the past, present, and future of the gardens. Smith College contains over 8,000 taxa of plants that are housed within its outdoor gardens, glass houses, and Arboretum. The public is welcome and the event is free.

On Friday, February 21, at 7 p.m. in Herrick Room of the Wendell Free Library, Claire Chang and John Ward, anti-nuclear activists and owners of the Solar Store in Greenfield, present **“Visioning a Solar Future in Franklin County.”**

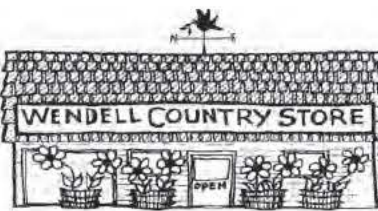
Chang and Ward will talk about their experience as educator-entrepreneurs, the rise of local interest in solar energy, and the obstacles – economic and philosophical – they have encountered along the way.

They have retrofitted their house in Gill to reduce carbon pollution, and have news of a new initiative that can benefit Franklin County homeowners and renters. Refreshments will be served.

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Montague Proposes Next Steps for FRTA Bus Route

By PATRICIA PRUITT

Jeff Singleton, a strong advocate for retaining the Greenfield-Amherst Franklin Regional Transportation Authority (FRTA) bus route, presented a letter to the Montague selectboard on Monday, February 10.

The letter, which the selectboard endorsed with some minor changes, will be sent on by the town to the FRTA.

All members of the board were in agreement that Singleton’s letter also reflected their thinking regarding fixed bus routes and the need for the FRTA and neighboring towns to continue discussion on the matter.

The letter outlined points of interest regarding the fixed routes issue which was raised when FRTA sought

to end Route 23 through Montague to Amherst.

The Montague letter seeks a meeting between FRTA and other interested town officials as well as the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

The Gill selectboard has also sent a letter with its concerns to FRTA, and it is likely other towns in Franklin County will follow Montague and Gill.

Montague’s letter presents three possible action points for the towns and FRTA to discuss as part of FRTA’s county-wide examination of the fixed route services and costs. The letter makes three main points.

The first request is for an open and inclusive planning process to consider future fixed route changes.

This process would include in-

volvement by town officials and key stakeholders including town planners and the FRCOG. The goal would be to develop a strong consensus on fixed route services in the region.

Second, the letter names a variety of options as proposed by stakeholders placed on the table with cost estimates and estimates of impacts of route changes on local assessments.

Essential to this effort would be the clear explanation of how local assessments are calculated, an explanation the FRTA administration is currently developing.

And finally, the letter proposes collaboration and coordination with other regional transit authorities, as well as cities and towns not part of FRTA but impacted by its decisions.

I Made It Through My First Year!

Editor’s Note: We thought it a good idea to check back in with Lance Rice in wake of last week’s report by Ellen Blanchette on the community health forum in Greenfield with Dr. Ruth Potee and Sheriff Chris Donelan.

As many of our readers recall, Mr. Rice eloquently spoke last year in these pages of how drugs had ruined his life, sending him to jail and into a court-ordered treatment center. His account below is part one of a two-part article.



By LANCE RICE

TURNERS FALLS – My name is Lance, and I am in recovery from heroin and cocaine, two substances that completely took my life from me in the blink of an eye. Staying away from them has been the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my life. I am 24 years old.

Many of you may remember my article that was printed in the *Montague Reporter* in May of 2013. At that time I was just beginning my journey of recovery from drugs and alcohol.

When I say the beginning, it surely was: I have endured tons of challenges and struggles throughout this last year of being clean. At times, I was so overwhelmed that I wasn’t sure I could persevere.

I began using at the age of 14. Despite getting high, I accomplished many things. I graduated from high school; I got a series of job promotions, and much more.

But as they say, you can’t hold on forever, and I couldn’t. The drugs I was hooked on began to enslave me and completely altered my brain into

a monster that I never knew I could be.

My addiction put me in jail several times, which is no place that any one wants to be. But looking back at it now, I am truly grateful that I went to jail when I did, for I know for a fact it saved my life.

When I wrote last year I was just fresh out of jail, with about 90 days clean, and was on my way to a court-ordered treatment program in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

I left for New Bedford on May 17. I was to stay there for 3 months and then go into a half-way house after that.

I had many struggles in that program that almost pushed me out the door. At times – many times – I wanted to quit but I didn’t.

The folks there really challenge you and push you to your limit, but they do it to show you how much you can truly endure if you put your mind to it. And that is very important knowledge.

I graduated from the program on August 16. The half-way house I chose was in Gardner, Massachusetts. I chose this facility out of the many because it was the closest one to home, and I wanted to at least be able to see my family from time to time.

I was feeling good leaving the New Bedford program. I now had 6 months clean, my head was starting to clear up, and I had learned a bunch of tools and information on how the drugs work and how to stay away from them.

I arrived at my new program in Gardner with the most positive attitude I could have. I was very open minded, and excited to meet the other men in the house.

But my enthusiasm was very short-lived. Within the first hour of being there, I had an altercation with the director of the program. His rudeness was overpowering.

Not only was there nothing resembling a

welcome to the program, he immediately began belittling me in every way. He accused me of being weak because I was on medication for my depression.

I knew it wasn’t going to work out for me there because I knew I wasn’t going to stand for it.

Even though I knew I would go back to jail if I left, I went up to my room, grabbed what I could, and ran out the door the same day I walked in.

I hitchhiked the hour and a half back to Turners Falls to my mom’s house, terrified that at any moment a cop could pull up and I would go to jail. But I had a plan, and I made it to my mom’s house and followed it.

I got home on a Friday. My plan was to stay the weekend and go to the court house Monday morning and turn myself in. I did just that.

And that Monday, I went to jail. And that Monday, I began to lose all hope.

While I sat in the cell I kept thinking to myself: how is all this bad stuff still happening? I’m clean, my life is supposed to be perfect. Everything is supposed to be better!

I learned very quickly that such a naïve feeling was very far from the truth.

What really happens, when you get clean from using drugs year after year, is that everything you have been avoiding all this time comes rushing over you at once. It is as if a hurricane has suddenly hit you.

And this is the reason many people begin to use again and relapse, because it is too much for an addict to handle. We know if we get high, all of it will go away for a little while.

But I had done that before. I knew and know what the result is of relapse, or giving up. I wasn’t going to give in that easy this time.

I resolved to fight through all of this, but I had doubts, because I knew it wasn’t going to be easy.

Continued next week.

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(week ending 2/7/14)

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Grade 7

Ciara Chagnon

Grade 8

Simon Lorenzo

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Ground Source Heat Pump
Proposed for Town Hall

By DAVID DETMOLD

Still trying to determine the best way to spend approximately \$130,000 remaining in the town's Green Communities grant award from the state Department of Energy Resources, Claire Chang, speaking for the town's energy commission, asked the selectboard on Monday to hold off on replacing the 82% efficient 1999 oil furnace at town hall with a \$15,818 new propane boiler and tank.

"We should use the grant to demonstrate non fossil fuel heating systems," said Chang. "We should be an example."

Reversing the recommendation of the energy commission from December 16 of last year, Chang said the commission now supported investing in a "ground source heat pump," a technology sometimes confused with geothermal energy.

Ground source heat pumps rely on the heat reservoir of the earth below the frost line to exchange heat from the earth to a building in winter, or heat from a building to the earth in summer, relying on an electrically powered heat pump, similar

to a refrigerator or air conditioner's, to boost the heat exchange.

In New England, dozens of feet below the surface, groundwater maintains a fairly steady temperature of around 50 degrees, said John Ward, chair of the selectboard.

In addition to their active involvement in town government, Ward and Chang happen to be co-owners of the Greenfield Solar Store. Ground source heat pumps are not listed among the inventory of items available at their store.

Chang said more research would need to be done to determine whether enough land existed around the town hall to accommodate a ground source system, which can require wells to be drilled 50 to 400 feet below grade, but she said she believed a ground source heat pump could adequately heat and cool town hall without a backup heating system, if the insulation at town hall is first upgraded in the walls and attic.

In December, the energy commission recommended spending \$18,714 of the DOER grant to upgrade the insulation in town hall.

Selectboard member Randy Crochier said, "Until someone shows

me I can heat a building with 50 degree water, I can't vote for it."

Joining the meeting from her vacation home in Florida, Ann Banash said she supported doing the research on ground source heating and cooling, and advised the energy commission to get in touch with the building maintenance supervisor at the new transportation center in Greenfield, which uses a ground source heat pump combined with a pellet stove backup to heat that new, state of the art Green building, which is home to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and the Franklin Regional Transportation Authority (FRTA).

In other news, the selectboard sent a letter to the FRTA and FRCOG calling for an open and inclusive planning process before changes are implemented to FRTA's fixed route bus system.

Banash said she supported the call, initiated by the town of Montague, adding, "There needs to be a whole lot more public input going forward," in bus route changes.

A meeting planned between the highway department heads and town administrators of Gill and Montague to try to come up with answers to the complicated question of who should shovel the third of a mile long new sidewalk on the

Gill-Montague bridge was canceled last week due to a snowstorm.

The bridge was recently renovated to the tune of more than \$40 million dollars, but the state, so far, has declined to clear ice and snow from the brand new sidewalk.

The selectboard in Gill has noted that Riverside residents now must walk to Turners if they want to catch the bus, since the FRTA canceled fixed route service through Riverside four years ago, due to the bridge construction.

The board approved spending a little more than \$2,000 from the Quintus Allen Trust to pay for elementary art substitute Jocelyn Castro-Santos to work with children at the Gill Elementary School to design and install three clay tile art murals at the school.

Castro-Santos said the murals will "enhance the building and make it bright and beautiful."

The Friends of Gill will hold a chicken and biscuit supper at the Congregational Church on Saturday, February 15, at 6 p.m.

Finally, as talk turned to the upcoming FY'15 budget, Banash warned that the town could face a debt exclusion override, or overrides, this year, to pay for a new truck for the highway department, and a new roof at the safety complex.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Fulltime Firefighter
On Back Burner

By DAVID DETMOLD

Plans to hire a fulltime firefighter/EMT to staff the Leverett fire department during the day appeared to be on hold Tuesday, as selectboard member Peter d'Errico grilled fire chief John Moruzzi over the planned retirement dates of four senior firefighters – including Moruzzi, who turns 65 later this year.

When the selectboard appointed an ad hoc committee to look into staffing and make recommendations for the future needs of the department, d'Errico welcomed their report in August of 2013. He said it was a "no brainer" that the department should seek to hire a fulltime firefighter and EMT to provide coverage during the day, when most of the town's call force is at work out of town.

In a follow-up hearing, d'Errico wondered whether it would be "putting the cart before the horse," to hire a fulltime firefighter while the retirement date of chief Moruzzi was still unknown.

Would the town be hiring a fulltime firefighter to work with the parttime chief, or would the town be hiring a new chief at the same time, or perhaps seeking to share a chief with an adjacent town, like Shutesbury or Sunderland?

Moruzzi, who has served the town for 40 years as a firefighter, and as chief for the last 26, came before the selectboard on Tuesday to offer his preliminary budget for FY'15, and that's when the fireworks started.

"I'm tired of putting up with ambiguity," d'Errico told Moruzzi, heatedly. "You're going to be 65 in a year. You're going to be retiring at 65, right?"

Moruzzi retorted, "According to you, I am."

D'Errico repeated, "I'm at the end of my patience with ambiguity."

Moruzzi replied, "I've been doing this for 26 years. What is retirement? Are we going to get a pension? That's retirement, to me. The other thing is resignation."

Board member Julie Shively interceded, saying, "I believe [retirement at age 65] is a retirement board requirement."

D'Errico said, "We can't make decisions without knowing the makeup of the department."

Moruzzi countered by saying, unlike the police and highway chiefs, he is asked to fill the ranks of his volunteer department through his own efforts, and held accountable if the fire department cannot fill its ranks.

He added, "I haven't said I'm retiring in a year, because I don't know if I am retiring."

Town administrator Margie McGinnis made the point that the town's insurer would cover firefighters until the age of 70.

Board chair Rich Brazeau remained silent during the fiery interchange. But as the smoke cleared, one thing came clearly into view: Plans to put a warrant article asking the voters of Leverett to fund a fulltime firefighter at spring town meeting

have been put on the back burner, for now, with the flame on low.

Judy Weinthal, chair of the fire department study committee, reached for comment on Wednesday said, "We're still holding to: 'We need a fulltime firefighter' now that it's pretty clear that the chief will be leaving, or at least that seems to be what transpired last night..."

Weinthal added, "It seems a little premature to go ahead full steam with that right now." She said a recent FRCOG study on the needs of small town fire departments had given new impetus to the push for regional and cooperative solutions.

And though at a September hearing last year she said, "We're talking... as if regionalization is the panacea. It's meaningless. We're not going to have a regional fire department for all of Franklin County," Weinthal said on Tuesday that the town's budget constraints and an evolving consensus in the county support the pursuit of cooperative arrangements with fire departments in nearby towns to help solve Leverett's fire department staffing problems.

Police & DPW Budget Requests

In contrast to Moruzzi's \$86,000 budget request, police chief Gary Billings' bid for approximately \$190,000 for FY'15 sailed through the selectboard hearing almost without comment, except for inquiries about the freezing weather and its possible impact on the timing of the maple syrup season.

Billings told the board his expense budget would increase by about \$2,000, in part to cover the purchase of Epipen packs, to equip both cruisers. Epipens provide a sin-

gle dose of epinephrine for an adult or a child to counteract the effects of anaphylactic shock, which can be caused by allergic reactions to certain foods or insect bites and can be swiftly fatal.

Will Stratford, presenting the highway department's level funded \$356,000 budget proposal, was supported by the selectboard to increase the line item for snow and ice expenses by \$15,000 for FY'15.

For the past two winters, the department has had to rely on deficit spending for its snow and ice budget, with the present forecast predicting a deficit in excess of \$30,000 to keep the roads safe for travel for the remainder of the winter.

The selectboard will seek bids on replacing the roof at the old highway garage, in part to secure the building's outer wall, against which the town plans to build an attached shed to house components for the coming municipally funded \$2.27 million high speed fiber optic network, scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

The garage currently houses highway equipment, along with a collection of highway signs on the second floor that would be "a fraternity's dream come true," according to town clerk Lisa Stratford.

Looking at one estimate for \$38,000 to replace the roof on the standard L-frame building, Brazeau said he considered that estimate "too high by half."

D'Errico encouraged the selectboard to sign onto a legislative initiative championed by the town of Pelham, calling for the state of Massachusetts to ban hydraulic fracking for natural gas in shale within state borders.

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SLUDGE from page A1

would see a lowering of the rates: “This all sounds great,” she said, “but town meeting members will probably ask about that.”

Trombley stated that the savings could go into so-called “retained earnings” which would then be used to lower rates, or to moderate would-be increases.

However he also noted financial demands on the sewer system, including paying for the recent breakdown at the industrial park and the need to upgrade the town’s pumping stations, made the latter scenario more likely.

Other Business

In other news, MJ Adams came to the Selectboard to obtain signatures on a variety of forms associated with Community Development Block Grants.

She also requested that \$3,500 be added to the grant application to design new lighting on Avenue A in Turners Falls. The funds will be used for a survey.

The board approved the request and signed the documents. Adams works for the Franklin Regional Housing Authority, which administers block grants for the town of Montague.

The board approved “common victualler” and entertainment licenses for Kali B’s Wings & Things on Avenue A.

Other items the board addressed Monday were a survey access request by the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company (see story, A1) and a letter suggesting changes in the Franklin Regional Transit Authority’s governance structure (see story, A4).

It approved signing the letter, and declined to grant access without further information from the company.



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Departments Submit Budget Requests

By KATIE NOLAN

On February 10, in the select-board meeting room, police chief Chris Blair, fire chief Philip Wonka, highway, water and wastewater director Paul Prest, and chief wastewater operator Pete Sanders presented their fiscal year 2015 departmental budget requests.

Meanwhile, in the basement meeting room, these department heads and representatives of other departments answered finance committee questions about FY’15 budget requests.

The departmental budgets presented to the board are generally

level-funded with FY’14, with the exception of cost-of-living adjustments to salaries.

The selectboard members present – Eugene Klepadlo and Margaret Sullivan (chair Andrew Goodwin was out sick) – said they were leaning toward a 1.5% COLA.

However, they asked town coordinator Tom Sharp to report back on the opinion of the fincom before the board sets the COLA.

The board has been considering adopting a merit-based raise system, but because there is currently no formal policy describing the merit-based system, raises will be based only on COLA in FY’15.

TURNERS FALLS FIRE DISTRICT NOMINATION PAPERS AVAILABLE

Nomination papers for the annual Turners Falls Fire District election are now available to all district residents from the District Office located at 226 Millers Falls Road until Friday, March 4.

Papers must be returned no later than Tuesday, March 8. The District Office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

All potential candidates need to obtain 30 signatures from registered voters of the Turners Falls Fire District.

Offices are as follows:

- District Clerk
- Moderator
- Treasurer
- Prudential Committee
- Water commissioner

All are for a 3-year term.

The annual election will be held on Tuesday, April 22*. The polls will open noon to 7 p.m.

District residents wishing to register to vote may do so at the Town Clerk’s office located in Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

** Announcement in last week’s paper said April 26 – please note correction!*

ENTERGY from page A1

plant.

In a letter sent to the company, Douglas Pickett, senior project manager for the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, wrote: “While the NRC staff fully understands your intentions to permanently shut down the Vermont Yankee facility, the staff also understands that Entergy is under no legal obligation to shut down the facility.”

Pickett said Entergy notified the NRC on Nov. 22 that it would not spend resources to perform the required post-Fukushima analysis for hardened vents, as well as prepare its overall post-Fukushima plan.

The NRC issued an Order on March 12, 2012, requiring all U.S. nuclear power plants with the Fukushima-style containment design to install a reliable, hardened vent.

Hardened vents remove heat and pressure before potential damage to a reactor core occurs. This not only helps preserve the integrity of the containment building, but can also help delay reactor core damage or melting. The NRC also examined the benefits of venting *after* reactor core damage occurs.

In June 2013, the NRC modified the Order to ensure those vents will remain functional in the conditions following reactor core damage.

The commission is also considering revising its regulations through

the rulemaking process to include strategies for filtering or otherwise confining radioactive material that gets released as a reactor core is damaged. These strategies would be in addition to the protections already in place.

In response to Entergy’s unwillingness to comply with the order, Pickett wrote: “The staff is concerned that if your current plans change and you decide to enter an extended shutdown period as opposed to submitting the (NRC) certifications, Vermont Yankee would not be prepared to meet the requirements of the order on schedule.”

NRC spokesman, Sheehan, said Entergy had also filed seven requests for exemptions from various NRC requirements or regulations covering the last year of its operation. He said none of the exemptions had been granted yet, and all were still under review.

The exemption requests include replacing on-shift control-room operators with certified fuel handlers, and allowing the fuel handlers to declare emergency conditions on security or weather-related issues.

Entergy also asked the NRC to relax secondary containment requirements when moving fuel.

Sheehan said these kinds of requests were not unusual at this stage of a plant’s operation.



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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

Project File No. 604696

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Rehabilitation of Hatchery Road and Greenfield Road Pedestrian Bridge project in Montague, MA.

WHERE: Montague Public Safety Complex, Community Meeting Room,
180 Turnpike Road, Turners Falls, MA 01376

WHEN: Thursday, February 20, 2014 @ 6:30 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Hatchery Road and Greenfield Road project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of replacing the existing pavement, widening of the roadway throughout the project limits to include shared use bicycle accommodations, construction of a limited shared-use pedestrian-cyclist bridge, reconstructing driveway aprons, drainage system repairs/ upgrades, installing new signs and pavement markings, and widening for a left-turn lane northbound on Turners Falls Road.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. MassDOT is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands.

MassDOT’s policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management Project File No. 604696. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing.

Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/

FRANCIS A. DEPAOLA, P.E.
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER

SURVEYORS from page A1 gave way to a general conversation. “The larger question is,” asked one resident, “what does Montague get, even if it were feasible? What makes it desirable for Montague?” Pam Hanold, who said she was living in New Mexico in 2000, when a gas transmission pipeline exploded near Carlsbad, killing twelve campers, voiced safety concerns. “We would be the first responders. Beyond particular issues around land ownership, there is a real need for a town to be aware, and be involved in it.”

Laura Chapdelaine of Greenfield Road said her husband had refused to sign survey rights to the company.

Talk soon turned to eminent domain. “That’s been my understanding all along,” said Abbondanzio, “that the utilities do have that authority, and they sort of imply that.”

“It’s like railroads,” added Fairbrother. “If a railroad really wants to put a new line in someplace, they’re going to do it.”

“So then what we need to know is what we can do to stop that, or derail that, or make it unprofitable,” said John Reynolds of Montague Center.

“They have to go through permitting first,” explained Gail Lagoy, who said she believes she abuts the expected route but has not been approached by the company.

“The more people refuse to survey, the more likely they are to not make it through the first round of permitting.”

Water Supply District

The following night, the Board of Water Commissioners of the Turners Falls Fire District voted to grant the company survey rights to seven tracts of land in the town’s Water Supply Protection District.

Mr. Gigliotti, approached at the Water Department office when he picked up the document granting survey permission on Wednesday afternoon, declined to answer any questions about the pipeline or its possible route, referring all inquiries to Kinder Morgan’s corporate headquarters in Texas.


Water Department superintendent Michael Brown said maps Gigliotti provided the department show the pipeline approaching Green Pond from the northwest, along the power lines, and diverting from their path where they pass over the pond, instead skirting its northeastern edge, and rejoining them later.

“They had everything mapped out,” Brown said. “They knew all the lots.”

All on Map 34, the lots are #01, #02, and #03, north of Green Pond Road; #05 and #06, between Green

Pond Road and Route 63, and #43 and #44, east of Route 63, on the west face of Country Hill.

“I can understand the selectboard’s part,” said water commissioner Ken Morin, “that they didn’t have much information. But we didn’t feel any harm in letting them take a look.”



Laura and Mark Chapdelaine refused Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. permission to survey on their Greenfield Road property.

The department, which is part of the Turners Falls Fire District, draws its water from wells rather than from exposed aquifers, though Lake Pleasant, which Green Pond filters into, is officially an emergency backup water supply.

This week, the department put the job to build a pump station for the Hannegan Brook Well out to bid. That well should be “online by next spring” as a primary water source, said Morin, after which Lake Pleasant may be officially retired from its backup supply status.

At that point, he said, the district plans to continue ownership of the lots around Green Pond, as the land is all designated for aquifer protection by the state.

“All we did last night was give them permission to survey,” said Morin, adding that any proposals for construction on the lots would be subject to review by the EPA and state Department of Environmental Protection.

Authority

The project would start in Wright, NY, making it interstate pipeline, and placing its approval under the ultimate jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

An educational booklet available on the FERC’s website, “An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land?,” suggests more modest dimensions than those discussed at Monday’s meeting are typical.

The top of the pipe tends to be three to five feet underground, it

says, and “the permanent right-of-way is usually about 50 feet wide.”

“If there is a conflict,” the booklet continues, between “local, county and state laws and zoning ordinances” and “what the Commission requires, the Commission requirement prevails.”

According to recent articles in

trains spark brush fires – “every dry year,” in fact, according to Mark.

And the electrical lines caught fire. And a water line ruptured.

Ribbons flutter in the Chapdelaines’ backyard, outlining a wetland area from a survey related to the MassDOT’s upcoming Greenfield and Hatchery Road project.

Laura expressed frustration that the property is now being sought by Tennessee Gas, and she does not want a pipeline added to the mix.

“We heat with wood,” she said. “We’re far from living off the grid, but we’ve chosen a pretty simple life. This is a bitter pill to swallow. All we really want is to feel safe living here.”

“[Joseph Gigliotti] showed Mark a map that had it coming over the railroad bridge, through our pond, through our field, and back behind our property,” she said at Monday’s selectboard meeting. “They’re certainly not being forthcoming about that 200-foot-wide swath.”

Fairbrother expressed amazement that the company would be looking to cross near the railroad bridge.

“We’re still in two or three lawsuits with the railroad from 1999, for the lost bridge,” he said, “and the geology there is incredibly complex and messed up. I’d love to see somebody try and ditch that and put a pipeline through there.”

Fairbrother later added, “I would imagine Fish & Wildlife would have something to say about them putting a pipeline X feet from a fish hatchery.”

The land agent also left a form for Bob and Lisa Adams, of Our Father’s Farm, which owns land on both sides of Hatchery Road, abutting the Chapdelaines’ property through the woods.

“We were told somebody would get in touch with us, but no one has yet,” said Lisa Adams, adding that if they do, “we would refuse permission.”

“It’s going to move fracked natural gas,” she continued, “which we don’t condone or approve of. The land here will need to be blasted to put the pipeline through, and all the land here is either under agricultural protection restriction or conservation restriction.”

Adams added that she planned to attend the February 20 hearing for the unrelated Greenfield and Hatchery Road project, where she is sure the proposed pipeline will be a topic of interest.

The Chapdelaine and Adams properties would reconnect the pipeline to the power line right-of-way, if it were to cross the Connecticut on Pan Am Railway’s Springfield Terminal rail bridge.



WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Poetry and Puppet Show

Sunday February 16, 2 p.m.

The Wendell Free Library will host a reception with **Anne Marie Meltzer** reading from her book “Coming of Age,” a collection of poems.

Ms. Meltzer of Greenfield, formerly of Wendell, explores the joys and challenges of aging, according to Haley’s Publishing of Athol, which recently released the 112-page book illustrated with watercolors by Ann Linde of Underhill, VT.

“Anne Marie’s poetry and meditations capture timeless and universal thoughts and images about the process of aging,” writes Rabbi Robert Sternberg of Temple Israel, Athol.

“Her words engage the energy of the heart, mind, and spirit. As a dancer, she also addresses the response of the body. Her works that contain Judaic content, while using a specifically Jewish metaphor, touch a universal chord.”

Books will be available for purchase, and the poet will autograph copies. See www.comingofagepoems.com.

Tuesday, February 18, 4 p.m.

Free Puppet Show: “Know Your Facts about Your Snacks”

Nicol Wander’s handcrafted puppets enact a story of health through nutrition via a colorful cast of animal and vegetable characters.

The performance finale is puppet Harry Otter promoting drinking water as a thirst quencher by singing, “You Know You Otter Drink Lots of Water.” Lots of fun puppets and audience participation.

The show is geared toward 1-3rd graders but younger and older siblings will enjoy it too. A healthy snack will be served before the program.

Nicol Wander has a BFA in Painting and Sculpture and a MFA in Puppetry, graduating from the Institute of Professional Puppetry.

She offers many children’s puppetry programs, some with recycling, some with nutritional themes, an entertaining way of teaching children about recycling and healthy foods.

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YEAR 12 – NO.17

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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

FEBRUARY 13, 2014

WEST ALONG THE RIVER:

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A BLUE JAY

By DAVID BRULE

*Among twenty snowy mountains
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird*
Wallace Stevens



LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES ILLUSTRATION

OLD DEERFIELD – The ethereal Estela Olevsky was seated at the piano in the Brick Church of Old Deerfield this past Sunday. The faint sunlight of a February Sabbath afternoon filtered through the windows of the historic church.

This was the church of the Reverend John Williams, his wife Eunice, his son Stephen, among others of the congregation. Pastor Williams, “The Redeemed Captive” had been taken off to Canada from Deerfield in the Raid of 1704, a few days hence on February 29, and 310 years ago.

Eunice never made it to Québec, dying as you know, in north Greenfield shortly after the Raid. Son Stephen became the “Boy Captive of Old Deerfield”, a story with which many of us from this part of the Valley grew up.

The church itself of course had been rebuilt and renovated many times, so that perhaps Williams would not recognize it today.

But I would venture a guess that the Protestant pew boxes that we were sitting in had changed little since the 1700s. They keep parishioners stiff, upright and conscious of the Reformationist desire to be rid of comfort and Papist pomp. Luckily for those of us attending this concert, members of the church had compromised with modernity and had contributed seating cushions in the pews.

Our pianist Estela had brought

us enthralled through a program of Mozart and Schubert, and now was poised to unveil a composition by Massachusetts professor Charles Bestor entitled “*Thirteen More Ways of Looking At a Blackbird.*”

His composition was based on a poem by Wallace Stevens. The zen simplicity of the blackbird images in the poem were read by Julie Nelson, alternating verses with piano phrasing and variations.

*“The river is moving.
The blackbird must be flying.”*

You all know what it’s like to be at a concert of classical music: some doze off in minutes, set to dreaming then actually sleeping with the music that soothes the savage beast.

Others, like myself, also find our minds wandering, set free from daily cares by the patterns of the baroque music. That’s the mood that brought me to reflecting on the blackbirds in the poem. Now I like blackbirds as much as Wallace Stevens, but for me, it’s more like blue jays that evoke thirteen ways of

see **WEST ALONG** page B2

Gift Made to Wendell Historical Society

By PAM RICHARDSON

The Wendell Historical Society continues to seek additions to its small, but growing collection and wishes to thank Adrian Montagano, artist and long-time Wendell resident, for a special gift he made to the Society last month: a wallet dating from the mid-1800s once owned by a hard-working Wendell farmer named Charles Hager.



The gentleman’s wallet or “pocketbook” is made of red leather and it still contains a slim pencil, worn down by use, in its folds. Interestingly, Benjamin Franklin carried an identical wallet and his, in much worse shape, is now owned by the Phillips Museum of Art in Lancaster, PA. (Google “Benjamin Franklin wallet” to see a photograph.)

Charles Hager’s parents, Martin Hager and Hannah Fairbanks Hager, came from Marlborough in 1806 and purchased eighty acres in Wendell.

Their property lay on both the east and west sides of what would become Wendell Depot Road, just north of what is today the Kemsley Academy.

The old, abandoned Cape, now much altered, but still standing by the power lines, is said to have been built in 1807 by Martin Hager.

er. There, Charles, the eldest of six children, was born on October 9, 1809.

As a child, he attended one of the half dozen or so “common” schools in Wendell for twelve weeks each winter, but soon enough his help was required full-time on his father’s farm.

He didn’t marry until he was 29 years old, taking Myra Holden Felton as his bride. (Her family lived in New Salem, but later moved to Deerfield.)

One year later, circumstances necessitated his take-over of the farm and the support of his parents. A legal document signed by Martin Hager on Christmas Day, 1839 gives all Martin’s possessions to Charles, who “has become obligated to support and maintain me, the said Martin Hager, and Hannah Hager, [my] wife.”

Martin, who was 61 at that date,

see **WALLET** page B3



Charles Hager

Peter Pan Takes Flight at the Shea

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

TURNERS FALLS – The audience was enthusiastic last Sunday in its appreciation of “Peter Pan,” now in production at the Shea Theater. The theater was full of families and children, all laughing and applauding the wonderful actors, singers and dancers performing in this timeless classic.

This story, with its typical proper family, mother and father and children living the normal family life that is disrupted by a boy who flies and entices children to fly away with him to a land where children never grow up and never grow old, gives us all a moment to contemplate what it’s like to move from childhood to the life of an adult.

How tempting to stay a child, never face the fears and complexi-

ties of adulthood. And yet...

Peter Pan flies into the bedroom of the Darling children, Wendy, Michael and John, along with the fairy Tinkerbell, and takes them on a journey to Neverland.

There they encounter Pirates, Indians, the Lost Boys and a crocodile with a clock ticking in its belly.

The story may be familiar, but Ja’Duke does it justice bringing it to life onstage in this delightful romp through all of the wild chases – including some that go right through the audience – songs, dances, and



Center, Peter Pan (Kyle Woodcock) introduces Wendy (Megan Hrinda) to the Lost Boys of Neverland.

powerful, full-throated production pieces like “I Won’t Grow Up” led by Kyle Woodcock as Peter Pan.

Cast members span the age range from young children to teens to adults who mostly play pirates, except for the Darling family parents

see **FLIGHT** page B3

“6 X 6” SHOWS AT SAWMILL ARTS

By REPORTER STAFF

MONTAGUE CENTER – More than 100 art-lovers showed up to help Sawmill River Arts celebrate its grand opening on Saturday, February 8. The “6x6” exhibition featured more than 100 works by local artists ranging in age from 6 to 95.

Viewers were greeted with a wonderful array of artwork in many mediums from pencil, charcoal, oil, acrylic, crayon, glass, fabric, encaustic, and mixed media. Seventh graders from Greenfield Center School also added pieces to the show. All works are on sale for \$36.

The show runs until February 23, from Thursdays through Sundays, from noon to 6 p.m. The gallery is located in the Montague Mill in Montague Center.



Left: “Mophead” by Edith Hunsberger, and “The Barred Owl” by Lisa Henry. Above: 95-year-old Evelyn Mason (l) with Louise Minks, one of the founding members of Sawmill River Arts. They stand in front of two of Mason’s paintings.

KERRY STONE PHOTOS

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

A Look At Parkinson’s

erative disease in the United States, after Alzheimer’s.

The defining symptoms of PD include tremor, slowness of movement, rigidity, and impaired balance and coordination.

As these symptoms become more pronounced, patients may have difficulty walking, talking, or completing simple tasks. They also may experience depression, difficulty sleeping and other problems.

The progression of symptoms in PD may take 20 years or more. In some people, however, the disease progresses much more quickly.

In the early 1960s, scientists determined that the loss of brain cells was causing PD. The cells that were depleted produced dopamine, a chemical that helps control muscle activity. Today, PD is treated with drugs and surgery.

Medications for PD fall into three categories. The first includes drugs that increase the level of dopamine in the brain. The second category affects neurotransmitters in the body to ease some of the symptoms of the disease. The third category includes medications that help control the non-motor symptoms of the disease such as depression.

There are two commonly used surgical treatments for PD: pallidotomy and deep brain stimulation. Because these procedures are inva-

sive, they are usually reserved for severely afflicted Parkinson’s patients who do not get adequate relief from medications.

Surgeons discovered that, by removing or destroying parts of the brain that were “misfiring,” some of the symptoms of PD could be alleviated. One of these operations is pallidotomy.

Scientists have found that they can mimic the effects of pallidotomy by deep brain stimulation (DBS). With DBS, an electrode is implanted in the brain in a way that calms the abnormal neuronal firing. DBS is now the primary surgical intervention for PD.

A wide variety of complementary and supportive therapies may be used for PD.

Among these therapies are standard rehabilitation techniques, which can help with problems such as gait and voice disorders, tremors and rigidity, and cognitive decline. Exercise may help people improve their mobility.

While Parkinson’s is a complex disease, research has progressed a great deal in recent years. Halting the progression of PD, restoring lost function, and even preventing the disease are now considered realistic goals.

Questions? Send them to fred@healthygeezers.org.

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

By FRED CICETTI

Q. Is it true that pesticides are responsible for people getting Parkinson’s disease?

Although genetics is very important in Parkinson’s disease (PD), environmental exposures also increase a person’s risk of developing the disease.

Scientists have known for some time that farm workers who used pesticides, or people who lived or worked near fields where they could inhale drifting pesticides, have an increased risk of PD.

PD was first described in 1817 by Dr. James Parkinson, a British physician. It affects 1 in 100 people over the age of 60. It can also affect younger people. The average age of onset is 60. Research suggests that PD affects at least 500,000 people in the United States.

PD is a complex disorder of the central nervous system. It is the second most common neurodegen-

Pet of the Week

I am Sidney, a cat with a secret past. I was found as a declawed stray so I could be from Australia for all you know. But I will tell you something, I like my head scratched and I will talk your ear off with stories of all my adventures if you



“SIDNEY”

listen closely. I don't really care for other animals and would prefer to be the shining star of your home. Let me sit in your lap and we can chat the day away. Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.

Senior Center Activities
February 17 through 21

GILL and MONTAGUE
Gill / Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.
Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.
Due to weather, we had to base this week's Gill/Montague Senior Center schedule on a typical week, so it may be inaccurate. Please contact the above number to confirm.
Monday 2/17
10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise
12:45 p.m. Pot Luck and Bingo
1 p.m. No Knitting Circle
Tuesday 2/18
9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
Noon Lunch
1 p.m. Knitting Circle
Wednesday 2/19
10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise
Noon Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday 2/20
9 a.m. Tai Chi
Noon Lunch
1 p.m. Pitch
Friday 2/21
10:10 a.m. Aerobics
NO Chair Exercise
NO Writing Group
AARP Tax Prep by Appointment

WENDELL
Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for

hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center for a ride.
ERVING
Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Ervingside, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at (413) 423-3308, for meal information and reservations.
For information, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call the Center to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out when is the next blood pressure clinic.
Monday 2/17
CLOSED – PRESIDENTS' DAY
Tuesday 2/18
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10 a.m. Steve Damon – Name That Tune
10:45 Senior Business Meeting
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday 2/19
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
Noon Bingo
Thursday 2/20
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Muscles
Noon Cards
Friday 2/21
9 a.m. Bowling

LEVERETT
For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.
Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga – Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$5 (first class free).
Senior Lunch – Fridays at noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.



ANJA SCHÜTZ PHOTO

FACES & PLACES

Nicky P., lead singer of local ska-core legends O.F.C., whips the crowd into a frenzy at the Rendezvous in Turners Falls, leading off last Friday night's benefit show for the family of Greg Ellis. Ellis, who was killed in a car accident January 11, left behind his young son Anthony, and the community has responded with a string of fundraising events, including previous nights at Taylor's Tavern and Between the Uprights.

Friday's show was organized by Matt Rugowski and friends, and featured O.F.C., Greenfield MC Anonymous (who delivered a moving version of Puff Daddy and Faith Evans' "I'll Be Missing You" in Ellis's memory), gypsy rockers Hastel, and a cipher by Grin/Brown/Teausz. The event raised \$1,890, including a large cut of proceeds from a very busy bar, for a trust fund for Anthony.

WEST ALONG from pg B1
looking.
Many of you probably have a less than lofty opinion of the jay, but I rather like our blue-coated friend. Some see him as noisy and abusive, perhaps a scoffer and a clown.
In my 1917 edition of Birds of America, editor T. Gilbert Pearson calls him one of the handsomest of American birds, but also one of the wickedest.
Our jay has been called a rascal with a lot of audacity and cheek, but those very traits cause someone like me with a philosophical bent to say that our woods would not be the same without this mischievous and intelligent charmer.
On a cold and frosty morning such as this at zero degrees, thirty or more jays wing in together from the tall pines across the river in the oxbow swamp. Their electric blue glides in, cutting through the white landscape.
Full of northern life and energy, voracious in their early morning appetites, they bob and dance over the cracked corn scattered just for them under the bare lilac bower.
Their calls ring out, actually melodious, so much a part of our New

England woods.
But let one hint of a predator, death on the wing of a hawk, and then alarm-calls knife through the air, and every living creature scatters for cover until the jaybird sounds the all clear, or swoops back to the seed ahead of the crowd.
In fact, the jay has all sorts of voices and calls and can fool you with every sort of chatter and scream, yodel and clucking that will have you guessing what sort of new exotic bird is up there calling in the tree.
He's just such a ventriloquist and accomplished mimic. Certainly, if he spots any danger, then every jay in the neighborhood picks up the cry, and as Pearson notes, "Don't let anybody tell you that jays can't swear! They can come up with the most varied vilification and fluent cursing if an owl or a housecat ventures into the vicinity."
Even James Whitcomb Riley wrote of him:

"Mr. Blue Jay, full o' sass
In them base-ball clothes of his,
Sportin' 'round the orchard, jes'
Like he owned the premises!"

Oh. Where was I? As I warned you, some of us have minds that wander while listening to a concert. The piano piece is just finishing, closes with a flourish and the Thirteenth Way:

"It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was going to snow.
The blackbird sat
In the cedar-limbs."

So I have to defer to composer Bestor and poet Stevens in their choice of the blackbird. It's their concert after all.
But I still think both of them could come up with a little something about our rapsallion of a blue jay. He may be more noisy and more obstreperous than the blackbird, but I'd say there's more ways from Sunday, certainly more ways than thirteen, of looking at this bold deceiver.
And I do think I've got my count up to more than "Thirteen Ways" of looking at him!

For more of David's writing, visit his website: ancestryplaceandrace.com



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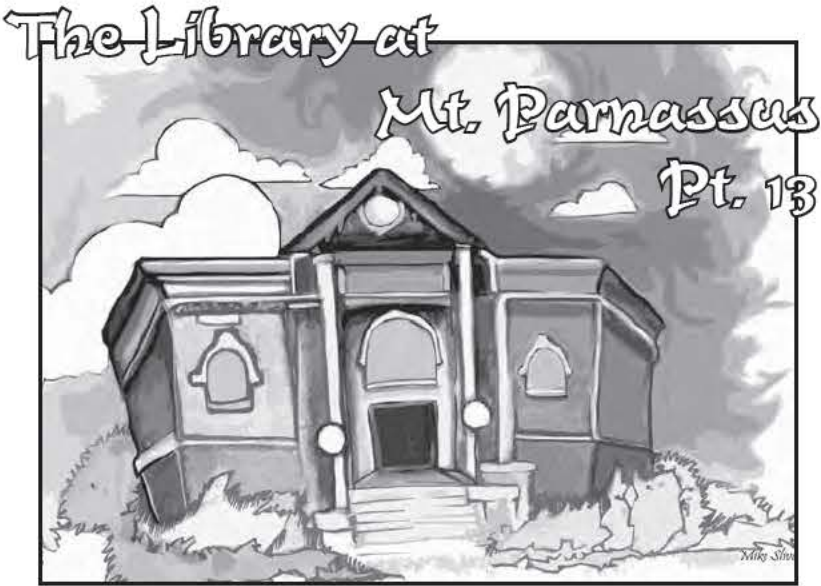
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Warm memories on an icy night in...



By DAVID DETMOLD

The moon was riding low in the east. In the cold fog of night, with our breath going out in clouds before us, the world became a silver plate daguerreotype through which we passed like ghosts. Objects seemed unreal, ethereal, mixed up in a shifting background where the long shadows of skeletal trees lay twisting in the pale glimmer of ice encrusted snow.

We passed Neon with his rattling shopping cart half full of empties, heading to the grocery store to redeem them for five cents a piece.

He did his rounds early in the morning and every evening, like rusticated clockwork, circling the few square blocks of downtown, combing through the back alley trash containers for carelessly discarded aluminum, glass and plastic deposit bottles.

In better times, Neon worked as an electrician, and I happened to know he was a good one, careful and diligent. He didn't have a license, so he undercut the regular contractors, but when the trades nosedived in the permanent recession he took to scavenging from dumpsters.

Now he lived in the homeless shelter, and spent his money on beer and cigarettes. I figured it took him an hour of careful search to fill a shopping cart with returnables, and if the machines were able to read all their tattered bar codes he might get \$5 for the load.

It wasn't much, but it was a steady living, banking on an inexhaustible supply of empties.

Two skate punks were out at night, even in this weather, tipping their boards up and over the icy curbs and clattering down the dark, obstructed sidewalks. They pulled up short when they spotted Clare and me.

"Can you spare a dollar? I need a pack of cigarettes," said one, a youth with long blue dreadlocks and elongated holes in his earlobes big enough to run through with a spear. "I'm short."

His comrade, dark skinned and hooded with sepia tattoos of snakes twisting prominently on each cheek, stood a little to one side and watched us, holding his board low like a cricket bat.

"Well, then, you should quit smoking," I said. "It stunts your growth."

"That's a myth," said Old Clare, who pulled a few coins from his pocket and gave them to the boy.

I heard them laughing as they walked away behind the frozen fountain.

Crossing 5th Street, we saw the lights on in Tony's third floor apartment, and I thought of all the good times we had enjoyed there, and the warmth and cheer we always found within.

Tony! Everyone knew him as Tony. His last name was Balducci, but nobody cared. Tony was on a first name basis with the world.

On summer nights, climbing the twisting, dark wainscotted stairwell like some M.C. Escher passage to the upper floors I would hear Coltrane coming through the walls, long before I got to Tony's landing.

I could tell a jam session was in progress; a jam session was always in progress at Tony's place.

I pushed through the hallway door, which enters on the kitchen, just a month ago or so, and I remember billows of steam pouring into the hall from a huge vat of pasta draining in the sink. The steam was clouded with the tang of marinara and the heavy aroma of clams. Tony was a marvelous cook.

Jack Coughlin was up there that night, blowing harp. Other musicians could be seen hanging out or going wild in various corners and alcoves of the long cluttered apartment.

A xylophone, piled high with books, sat the session out. But a cutting board and chopsticks had been pressed into service in its stead.

I remember Tony walking into the living room triumphant with a tarnished alto sax around his neck, wearing a plum colored apron and balancing a huge platter of garlic bread against one hip.

"Hey! That sounds great!" Tony yelled above the din. He dropped the platter on the coffee table and poised his sax, ready to dive in, wriggling the fingers of his plaster coated hand to show anything was possible.

"What key is it in?"

"I think it's in A, Tony, but don't let that bother you," Jack called back.

And the song rolled on, filling the walls with its discordant clatter and spilling out into the blue street.

Continued next week.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Jacket Jacked; Weed Smelled; Wastewater Recycled

Monday, 2/3

12:45 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Dell Street. Investigated.

7:55 a.m. Caller reported jacket and cell phone stolen while at Rendezvous last night. Report taken.

11:05 a.m. 911 call reported breaking/entering in progress. Officers responded and determined report to be unfounded. Caller's number linked to several previous false reports.

12:26 p.m. Report of someone trying to break into mailbox on Avenue A.

1:34 p.m. Caller's 4 year old daughter and her grandmother encountered a male party threatening people and using profanity at the Greenfield McDonalds. Daughter and grandmother home safe now. Caller referred to Greenfield PD.

2:31 p.m. Car vs. tree

motor vehicle accident at Swamp Road and Turners Falls Road. Passenger transported to hospital.

Tuesday, 2/4

8:51 a.m. First of four summonses issued for failure to register dogs.

9:32 a.m. Windshield wiper missing from vehicle on Church Street.

3:10 p.m. Chestnut Street resident reported that an elderly female and a teenaged girl came to her door and requested to do an air quality check in her home. Unable to locate.

8:53 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

Wednesday, 2/5

10:24 a.m. Caller from Greenfield concerned that a tenant in her building has a dog in violation of the lease and that the dog may be aggressive. Referred to Greenfield PD.

24-hour gap in logs provided to the Reporter by the Montague PD.

Thursday, 2/6

10:50 a.m. Request for officer to check Turners Falls-Gill Bridge for a man spotted attempting to jump from the French King Bridge earlier. Unable to locate.

2:50 p.m. Second Street resident reported that adjacent apartment reeked of marijuana. Investigated.

7:26 p.m. A male was taken into protective custody following a disturbance at Between the Uprights. Released to family.

9:40 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on two default warrants.

Friday, 2/7

9:10 a.m. Dispute between tenants over parking spaces in Third Street lot. Parties advised to contact

landlord and stay away from each other until issue is resolved.

53-hour gap in logs provided to the Reporter by the Montague PD.

Sunday, 2/9

2:46 p.m. Two-car accident at Willmark and Bulkeley Streets. One passenger transported to hospital.

5:50 p.m. Caller reported that while using her washing machine, she flushed the toilet and sewage shot from the washing machine hose. Plumber is stating that issue is on the town side. Dick Clough advised.

6:17 p.m. Dispute over custody of two chihuahuas. Determined to be civil matter. Advised of options.

7:30 p.m. 911 call from elderly female checking to make sure the phone was working. Advised on the proper use of 911.

FLIGHT from pg B1 of course.

Producer/director Nick Waynelovich and choreographer/director Kimberly Williams take advantage of their large cast, creating wonderful scenes with pirates and Indians, or Indians and Lost Boys, contests between the Indians and Lost Boys, large musical numbers that include lots of dancing, and singing.

These scenes are enjoyable to watch, with great costumes and sets, lots of movement, good coordination among the dancers, clear enunciation by the singers so the words are easy to understand.

Woodcock does a wonderful job as Peter Pan. He is onstage in almost every scene. He has great stage presence, a good strong singing voice, and lots of charm.

Megan Hrinda, playing Wendy, is lovely throughout, with a gentle manner that fits the part; her youthful sweet voice offers a sensitive touch to her solos. She seems sincerely caring towards the Lost Boys who look to her for guidance and call her Mother.

David Neil as Captain Cook is strong and funny in his exaggerated performance of a terrifying pirate who is scared of a ticking crocodile.

Caroline Burden is excellent in her performance of Tiger Lily, the beautiful Indian who dances like a dream as the leader of the Indians. She interacts well with Peter Pan as they form an alliance to fight the Pirates.

Contributing to the fun is Justin Begin as Smee, Captain Hook's first

mate, who does a great job as the generally terrified and intimidated object of Hook's threats.

The cast full of young singers and dancers are excellent in their skill and professionalism.

They sing on pitch, keep together in song and dance, and are always in time during production numbers that require movement be coordinated. They all look professional and sound just great.

This show will have another weekend of performances at the Shea, so if you haven't seen it already you have another chance.

Performances are Saturday, February 15, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and Sunday, February 16, at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$12 general admission, \$10 for children under 12 or adults 65 and older.



WALLET from pg B1

may have suffered from the same hereditary affliction (peripheral vascular disease) that years later caused Charles to lose the use of his legs and, later still, handicapped both Charles's grandson and great-granddaughter.

Included in the list of items transferred to Charles by that document were: "1 yearling colt, 1 pair of oxen, 1 pair of 2-year old steers, three cows, 3 last spring calves and 1 swine, also all my farming tools of all kinds [and] all my household furniture."

Charles's descendants own a hand-written list of tools and equipment that appears to have accompanied that document; included are 2 harrows, 3 horse sleds, 1 long sleigh, 1 short sleigh, 3 lumber wagons, 1 plow, 1 grindstone, 1 mowing machine and, significantly, "tobacco sash," valued at \$74.80 – the highest dollar amount on the list.

Charles and Myra had five chil-

dren and they worked their Wendell farm until 1855 when, for reasons lost to time, they moved their family to Deerfield.

Soon thereafter, Charles purchased his father-in-law's Deerfield farm to which he added an additional 100 acres and made \$12,000 worth of improvements. He also purchased a part of Sugarloaf Mountain.

The story of how Adrian Montagano came into possession of Charles Hager's wallet begins about 15 years ago when Adrian first met Fanny Hager, Charles Hager's great-granddaughter who was living in the family homestead in Deerfield.

In her living room, he noticed a complete, bound set of the Theosophical Society's quarterly magazines as well as all of the books written by the head of that Society, Madame Helena P. Blavatsky, a late-18th century mystic.

Adrian, who began reading Blavatsky's work when he was 14, recognized in Fanny a kindred spirit

and in the ensuing years he became her devoted companion, caretaker and student.

One day, as Adrian tells it, he and Fanny were cleaning out the "birthing and dying room" in the old house – no small chore, apparently, because for generations of Hager men and women, no piece of string was deemed too short to save.

In a drawer of an antique dresser, they found an old red leather wallet and in it a note, in Fanny's mother's handwriting, identifying the wallet as having belonged to Charles.

Fanny gave the wallet to Adrian as a token of her affection and gratitude and now, thanks to Adrian, the wallet has come full circle back to the small hill-town where Charles was born.

(Adrian Montagano also salvaged the windows from the Hager homestead and donated the glass to the Friends of the Wendell Meeting-house, for use in their window restoration project.)



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the poetry page

It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

edited by Patricia Pruitt
Readers are invited to send
poems to the Montague Reporter
at: 177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

*The editors would like to thank the following for
their generous financial underwriting of this page:*
Klondike Sound, Green Fields Market,
and Montague Dental Arts

Valentine’s Day, 2014

It was a no-brainer for me.
I walked out of my childhood
and into your arms.
I never looked back.

Love seems easy
but isn’t.
Marriage seems easy
but isn’t.
Commitment does not seem easy
and isn’t.
But worth it.

When our eyes meet
our connection
our commitment
our love

Is there.

Love

- SKL

INFATUATION

Impulse
Myopic burst
Conducted imperfect
Neurons potentiate
 $P = I^2 R$
Diminished power.
Word
Held on breath
Letters formed
Roll off tongue
Subtle glide on lips.
Labor
Execution awkward
Intent diluted.

- R.J. DiDonato

Valentine’s Poem
For Patricia

Depth now
and perhaps time
but surely depth

Not the harsh wind
blowing the snow across the path
but the sun melting
the whirling flakes in mid flight.

We collect without collecting
hold precious
what some would think fool’s gold.

We utter each other’s words and thoughts,
anticipate movement,
uncover desire in a glance
or your arm in mine.

We know that time does not make poems,
that feeling truly is first
and that struggle becomes a gift.

And we know at the last hour
we will hop a rumbling freight train,
share an orange,
on a San Francisco hill.

- Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno

Give To Me a Heart as Young as Springtime

Give to me a heart as young as springtime,
Shagging flies in dandelion fields;
Leave me there to swing my bat in swing time
And run the bases love’s sweet game reveals.

Give to me a heart as full as summer,
Rich in promise, plentiful in bloom;
Leave me there the grace to just become her,
Rest my will, but let my arms have room!

Give to me a heart as hued as autumn,
Waxed with all the waning of the sun;
Leave me setting sails of billowing auburn
Crying scarlet ways to fall and run.

Give to me a heart as deep as winter;
Leave me all the seasons time within her.

- Matthew Lieff

Valentine’s Day Toast

Let’s raise our glass of table wine
That journeyed from its native vine
So far across the River Rhine
To fill this grateful glass of mine,

And toast, for Lo! without a sign,
Two quite divergent souls align
Their fates, and let their hearts entwine!
Can this be work of yours or mine?

Alone, I labored in vain to untwine
The twisted threads of Life’s design!
But here with you I can divine
True meaning in this life of mine!

So let us drink, before we dine
To our true friend, Saint Valentine,
And to all the threads that run so fine
That make me yours, and make you mine.

- Matthew Lieff

MECHAN GARMODY PHOTO

February’s Poets:
Ray DiDonato resides in Wendell and does wonderful things for this newspaper , in addition to sending his poems to the Poetry Page.
SKL is the signature given by the poet, a Montague resident with a deep heart.
Matthew Lieff , a resident of Turners Falls , is a writer, and illustrator as well as a poet.
Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno edits *The Montague Reporter*. His most recent book of poems is *Mussoorie-Montague Miscellany*.

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EVERY SUNDAY

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Celtic Sessions*, musicians of all levels welcome to play traditional Irish music, 10:30 a.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: TNT Karaoke, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

EVERY TUESDAY

The Millers Falls Library Club: Free after school program. 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Free *Texas Hold 'em* Poker tournament, with cash prizes.

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Carnegie Library: Children and their families are invited to come enjoy stories, crafts, music and snacks. 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

EVERY THURSDAY

Arts Block, Greenfield: Thursday Night Jazz, *Ted Wirt and John Harrison*, 5 to 7 p.m.

Montague Center Library: *Music and Movement with Tom Carroll & Laurie Davidson*. Children and their caregivers invited. 10 a.m.

EVERY FRIDAY

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Karaoke with Dirty Johnny*. 9 p.m. to midnight. Free.

ART SHOWS:

Augusta Savage Gallery, UMass, Amherst: Jose Tonito Rodriguez: *Inkterventions* on display through February 14th.

Hampden Gallery, UMass, Amherst: *Form and Content* curated by Jennifer Tibbetts on display through February 14.

Wendell Library, Wendell Center: *Flock of Days*, paintings by Heather Lenz and Monotypes by Pam Lawson on display through 2/28.

University Museum of Contemporary Art, UMass, Amherst: Lynne Cohen: *False Clues*, on display through March 14.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Third Annual Erotic Art Show, Sensual>Sexual>Smut*, exhibit of local artists ranging from mild to wild, through March 15.

CALL FOR POETRY:

2nd Annual Slate Roof Press Poetry Chapbook Contest. Contest winner's work is published by Slate Roof and author becomes a full member. Submit no more than 28 pages. \$25 reading fee. Deadline (upload/postmark): March 31, 2014. Full guidelines: www.slateroofpress.com or slateroofpresscontest.submittable.com/submit.

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Surly Temple*, Jim Henry, Guy DeVito, Doug Plavin and Tommy Boynton, 8 p.m.

Fine Arts Center, UMass Amherst: *Grace Kelly Quintet*,

Bowker Auditorium, \$, 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band*, 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Discovery Center, Great Falls Coffeehouse, Turners Falls: *Fire Pond*, Eveline MacDougall and Doug Reid, 7 p.m. Half of proceeds to benefit the Discovery Center.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Barrett Anderson*, renegade blues, 9 p.m.

Arts Block, Greenfield: *Trailer Park*: Benefit for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Franklin County, 9 p.m. Dance your heart out!

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Screw Valentine's Day! Mister*

Peter Pan by Ja'Duke, \$, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *The Music of Tommy* by *The Who* plus *Greatest Hits* presented by *Who Are You - A Celebration of The Who*, \$, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Mark Nomad Band*, a highly danceable mix of blues, funk and beyond, 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rockit Queer with DJ Fern*, \$, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63, Millers Falls: *Rock 201*, classic rock, \$, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Peter Pan* by Ja'Duke, \$, 2 p.m.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *book signing and reception for Coming of Age*, a collection of poetry by Ann Marie Meltzer, 2 pm. Books will be available for purchase, and the poet will autograph copies.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Poetry Reading to Benefit Skateboard Park*. Luke Buckham, Janel Nockleby, Chris Sawyer-Laucanno, and Paul Mariani will read during the first set, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Music break by the *4th Street Rhythm Band*. Kevin Smith, Allen Fowler, Edite Cunha, and David Detmold, followed by Patricia Pruitt, Kristen Bock and Chris Janke reading in the second set. The Rendezvous will donate 10% of sales between 4 and 8 p.m. to the Unity Skatepark campaign fund. Info: unityskatepark.com or rendezvousfma.com.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *John Sheldon – Up Close & Personal*, 8 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo!* 8 p.m. free!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Greenfield Garden Club Presents: *The Smith College Botanic Garden: Past,*

Present and Future. Guest speakers: Cynthia Boettner of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge, update on new invasive species to and Michael Marcotrigiano, Professor of Biological Sciences and Director of the Botanic Garden at Smith College. 7-9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half-Shaved Jazz*, 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Tommy Filiault Trio*, Acoustic Rock, with *Sturgis Cunningham & Klondike Koehler*, 8 p.m.



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NOTES FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Suspicious Minds

Monday, 1/20

7:35 a.m. Welfare check on Walnut Street resident whose life alert set off. All OK.
9:55 a.m. Motor vehicle accident on Hoe Shop Road. No personal injuries.

Wednesday, 1/22

5 a.m. Police information received regarding gang activity in the area. Use caution.
9:55 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle at French King Highway. Lost party/wrong house.

Thursday, 1/23

8:30 a.m. Nashua PD contacted regarding interview of resident for crimes in their community.
11:50 a.m. Suspicious activity at Main Road residence. Checked OK.

1 p.m. Subject trespassing in Factory Hollow construction site.

Friday, 1/24

9 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle on Munns Ferry Road. All checked OK.

Saturday, 1/25

2 p.m. Resident at station for stolen

property.

Sunday, 1/26

9:35 a.m. Jumper from French King Bridge. All involved units searching for same.

Monday, 1/27

7:55 a.m. Medical emergency at West Gill Road. Same transported.
8:30 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle on Northfield Mount Herman campus. Located owner of same.

10:20 a.m. Family disturbance on Mountain Road.

9:40 p.m. Medical emergency on Mountain Road. Party transported.

Tuesday, 1/28

9:30 a.m. Assisted Erving PD with emotionally disturbed subject.

5:45 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on Route 2. No injuries.

Wednesday, 1/29

3:10 p.m. Medical emergency on Mountain Road. Party transported.

Thursday, 1/30

9:40 a.m. Found property on West Gill Road.

1:25 p.m. Suspicious

motor vehicle and activity at French King Highway residence. Wrong residence.

Saturday 2/1

8:30 a.m. Business on French King Highway was broken into overnight. Under investigation.

11:45 a.m. Motor vehicle vs. deer accident on Route 2.

6 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with arrest of intoxicated party.

7:10 p.m. Suspicious activity on Pisgah Mountain Road. Motor vehicle gone on arrival.

9:10 p.m. Domestic disturbance reported on South Cross Road. Parties separated for evening.

Sunday, 2/2

1:25 p.m. Assisted Greenfield PD with motor vehicle accident.

5:25 p.m. Resident reportedly attempting deliberate overdose on prescription medications. Located and transported to Franklin Medical Center for evaluation.

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