



The Montague Reporter

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

YEAR 13 – NO. 20

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 5, 2015

Leverett Looks for “Wow Factor” in Regional School Consolidation

By JEFF SINGLETON

On Thursday, February 26 approximately thirty-five residents attended a presentation of the proposal to expand the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District to include elementary schools. The discussion at the Leverett Elementary School was lively but not contentious, with most of the elements of the proposal touched upon at least briefly.

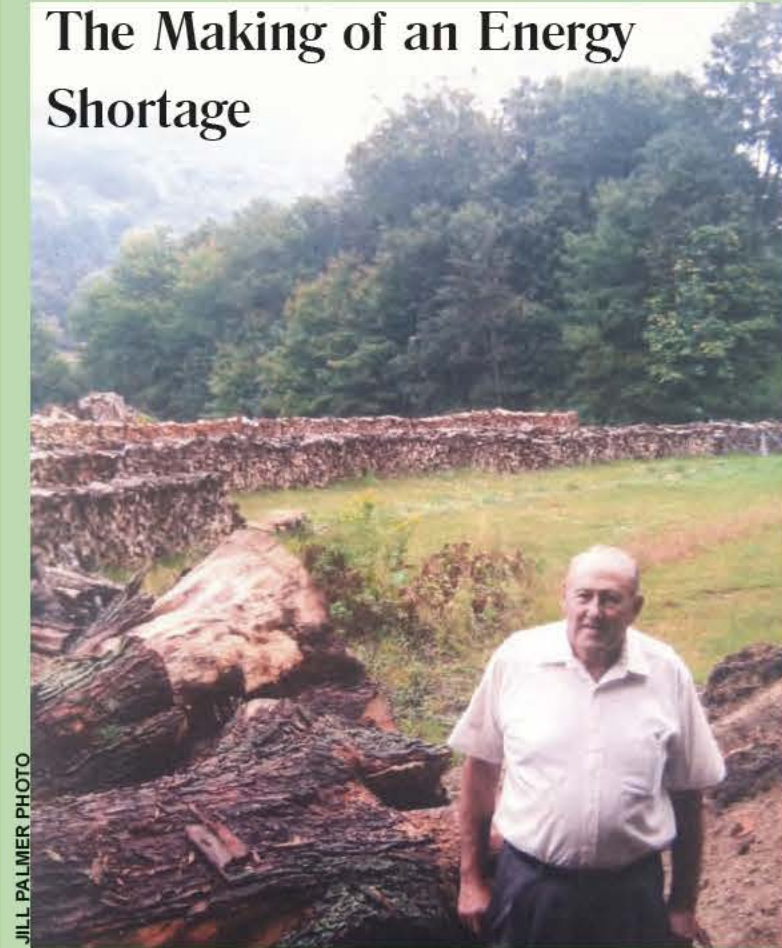
The proposal is actually a series of amendments to the current middle school/high school regional agreement. The amendments were presented to the Amherst Pelham Regional School Committee on January 13 by a subcommittee called RAWG (The Regional Agreement Working Group).

The original plan was for the regional committee to vote on the proposal at its March 10 meeting and to send it on to town meetings this spring. However, it now appears that such a timeframe is unrealistic. The amendments may not be placed before town meetings until the spring of 2016, which would mean potential consolidation would be delayed until 2017.

The proposed amendments would expand the district to include elementary schools in the four

see **SCHOOLS** page A4

Where’s the Cordwood? The Making of an Energy Shortage



JILL PALMER PHOTO

Leverett’s Lee Glazier, in fairer weather.

By TIA FATTARUSO

LEVERETT – “I’ve had people totally out of the woodwork call and ask me [for firewood],” said Isaiah Robison, when asked about the firewood shortage being felt in Franklin County.

For someone who makes a relatively small amount of firewood, about 40 to 45 cords per year,

which includes his own family’s heating needs, that’s unusual, Robison said. At that quantity, he is usually just producing a standing order for returning customers.

“I haven’t had any wood in a long time. I sell what people order, and don’t have extra sitting around...We try and make sure there’s communication in spring

see **WOOD** page A5

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Town to Market Building 11 Of Strathmore Complex

By JEFF SINGLETON

The town of Montague will again attempt to sell Building 11, a stand-alone building in the Strathmore mill complex, under its Commercial Homesteading program. According to Town Planner Walter Ramsey, who presented the proposal to the Montague selectboard at its March 2 meeting, this effort represents a new strategy for dealing with the former paper mill.

Recent attempts to sell the entire complex, or market larger sections of it, have not been successful.

The Strathmore Mill complex,

which dates to the late nineteenth century, is located on the power canal in Turners Falls. One of the buildings houses Swift River Hydro, which owns a power plant formerly operated by the paper company. The rest is vacant.

Access to the Strathmore is limited, and the town has been negotiating with FirstLight Power Company, which owns the canal, to open two key bridges. These include a footbridge directly linking the mill to downtown Turners Falls.

The Strathmore property has been a source of frustration to both

see **MONTAGUE** page A4



NINA ROSSI PHOTO

The stand-alone Building 11 is seen as the easiest prospect for reuse.

Turners Reaches Final Four, Falls to Hopkins in Rubber Match

By MATT ROBINSON

AMHERST – A fantastic season for the Turners Falls Boys Basketball team is finally over. After moving past Granby last week, they were eliminated Monday in a semifinal game against Hopkins Academy at UMass-Amherst.

The Indians lost the game, but at 19 and 3, can still be proud of having the best basketball team in TFHS history.

February 26: TFHS 56, Granby 49

The Granby matchup was a game of runs. Both teams went on scoring streaks but neither team was able to put the other away.

Granby got off to a quick, 6 - 0 lead that increased to 12 to 5 with 2:43 to play in the first period. However, Blue stormed back, and knotted the score at 12 after one.

Turners’ sixth man, Emmett Turn, made an early appearance, at times coming in for Tionne Brown. When Tyler Charbonneau was hit in the face, Emmett came in.

“Both Yorkie [Nick York] and Charbs [Tyler Charbonneau] were struggling last night, and Emmett was doing a decent job filling in,”

coach Gary Mullins said after the game. “Emmett is athletic and he grabbed a few rebounds, blocked a few shots, and played decent defense.”

In the second period, Powertown went on an 8 - 2 run to take the lead, 20 to 14, but fouls, errant passes and traveling calls kept the Rams within reach. They held on and tied it 22-all with 2:52 left to play in the half. And

when the whistle blew to end the first half, Turners was on the short end, 27-28.

“Our effort was pretty good, but we did not play well,” Mullins said after the game. “There were times we did some nice things, but several times we did things that were uncharacteristic of good team play.”

Yes, the Tribe’s effort

see **B-BALL** page A7



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Nick York looks for a shot at the UMass Curry Hicks Cage during the WMass Division 4 Semi-Final Game against Hopkins.

Large Selectboard Races Looking Likely in Montague, Erving

By MIKE JACKSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – As elected and appointed officials in our slush-bound towns trudge steadily into what many call “budget season,” some have an eye on another spring government tradition: annual town elections.

Residents considering a run for town office have been taking out nomination papers, and while they may not all decide to make their candidacies official by turning those papers back in, the *Reporter* has taken an early peek at how this season’s selectboard races are shaping up.

Board members are stepping down in Erving and Leverett, and in both Erving and Montague, three potential candidates have taken out papers so far.

The window to do so is closing. In Wendell and Erving, papers must be signed and turned in by Monday, March 16. Elections in those towns are May 4. Gill and Montague run two weeks later: the last day to submit papers is March 30, for elections on May 18. Leverett elects candidates from the floor of its town meeting, the last Saturday of April.

Let’s take a look at who might be running for our town selectboards.

Montague

Two-term Montague selectboard member Mark Fairbrother says he intends to run for a third term.

But he has challengers. As of press time, two other residents have taken out papers.

Jacobo Roque of Millers Falls, who has run in the past, has already turned his papers in. “I’ve never been the kind to just watch my community go by,” he said. “I’m a town meeting member for Precinct 2, and I want to get more involved.”

Roque says he is aware he is challenging an incumbent. “We’re all human, and we can’t help but have opinions,” he said. “But when you hold certain elected seats, you can’t let that guide you – you’ve got to remember the people you’re there to represent. There’s certain things [Fairbrother] has done without considering the people.”

As an example, Roque cited the recent approval of multiple liquor licenses for Millers Falls, which he said “already has noise and fighting issues” due to the neighborhood’s two existing bars.

“I understand our police chief doesn’t have the manpower he needs to have a presence here,” he said, adding that earlier this week, he and his wife called the police about a bar fight outside their window and it took “fifteen to twenty minutes” for the department to respond.

“It’s small things like that,” Roque said, adding that he would regularly talk to citizens to stay in touch with their needs.

Chris Menegoni of Turners Falls, proprietor of the Great Falls Harvest restaurant on Third Street, says he is gathering signatures and plans to run for the seat: “Somebody asked me to,” he said.

“In the coming years, there are some important decisions to be made” in Montague, he continued, that will require “working with people in all the villages, making the town as a whole come together and become more unified, making everyone feel like they’re accounted for.”

Since moving to town 8 years ago, Menegoni said he has “slowly been getting involved” in the town, mostly through his involvement in two businesses, the restaurant and a food market he hopes to help develop in

see **RACES** page A7

The Montague Reporter

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Promise, and Concern

Sunday night was by all accounts a great night at Turners Falls' Shea Theater. Oklahoma roots rocker JD McPherson and his band brought the house down, at the end of the same week his new album, *Let the Good Times Roll*, hit #1 on the Billboard Heatseekers chart.

The show was booked by Northampton's Signature Sounds, who last year took ownership of the Green River Festival. We hope they continue to keep the Shea in mind as a venue for national-level touring acts.

The event spread the love around downtown, giving a noticeable boost to many bars and restaurants. Rumor has it McPherson even resurfaced for an encore performance at the TNT Productions karaoke night at the Rendezvous. ("Runnin' With the Devil," we heard? Nice.)

But the theater is in a tough spot. Owned by the town of Montague and operated by a nonprofit that has had a bumpy few years, its future is currently uncertain.

We imagine it's no easy task to maintain a building like the Shea and keep it booked. It's an old, leaky building in a rural market. Every volunteer who has put in extra time to help the place run deserves a commendation.

Montague has reestablished an

oversight entity (the "Civic Center Commission") and put out a call for proposals for the building's use. The current organization's lease has been extended through December.

Most people we talk to around town seem to hope the existing nonprofit, which formed to do the job in question with no prior motive, will breathe in a lungful of fresh air and submit the best proposal.

Most people, then, had some bad news delivered on Monday. If what was reported at the town selectboard meeting is true, the organization only anticipates having enough cash on hand to meet another four months' utility bills.

The winter has been cold, and electricity has been expensive. We hope this isn't as serious as it sounds, and we'd hate to see any transition that sees the 320-seat theater shuttered this year.

Shows like Sunday's prove the theater can expand from its core strengths of community and youth theater. Audiences are willing to come to Turners for the right programming. It's easier said than done, and we aren't privy to the balance sheets, but it seems like it should be possible.

We have no wonderful advice to offer. Good luck to everyone working on this frustrating problem.

Nectar of the Gods

We need a good run of cold nights and warm, sunny days to get those sugar maples' capillaries pumping. Word of a late start is leading to fear of a short season, and we're crossing our fingers that is not the case.

The USDA's ridiculous grade inflation becomes official this year, with the rest of the nation as always following Vermont's example, and our favorite syrup, overlooked by those not in the know, is now called "Grade A Dark Color and Robust Taste."

(Review samples may be delivered to 177 Avenue A in Turners Falls.)

While many know it for its characteristic sweet flavor and the sus-

tainable "pep" it lends the drinker, the real value of maple syrup lies in its many entirely real and not imagined health benefits. It is high in manganese, sucrose and zinc, three essential building blocks of all of the body's internal organs, and even many of its external ones.

So to all you tapping trees, dumping buckets, feeding fires, huffing sap vapor and sneaking sips from the dipper: we salute you. You are our region's finest and most essential workforce.

May your sap never spill, may your pan never scorch, and may you sell the majority of your product this year in those tiny super-marked-up bottles.

Know Someone in Costa Rica?

Do you know a former Montague, Wendell, Erving, Leverett, or Gill resident who now resides in Costa Rica?

Reporter-at-large Peter Wackernagel is interested in tracking down a Montagovian (or Wendellite, Er-

vinger, Leverettian or Gillbilly) now living in Costa Rica, to speak with him about their life in paradise and their past remembrances of our area. Please send tips, including name and contact information, to the Reporter office.



Measurable, and Immeasurable

As a member of a new arts organization working in part towards the revitalization of Millers Falls I feel I need to respond to a recent article by George Shapiro on the "creative economy" (*MR* February 12, "What Creative Economy?").

I have long been a fan of Mass MoCA, admiring their daring audacity to start a major museum in the face of economic austerity and resistance to change. They have struggled to succeed, and have proven themselves to be a strong institution in terms of supporting their community, creating a sustainable institution, and putting on very exciting programming in both the visual and performing arts.

They have brought jobs to the area directly, as well as by bringing in companies who in turn create jobs. They have inspired people to move to North Adams and to create their own businesses, such as the Porches Inn. Despite a devastating recession, Mass MoCA has kept its doors open and continues to expand.

It's true that Mass MoCA has not solved all of North Adams's problems – but what would the town be like without the museum? It is difficult to measure the economic impact since we don't know what would have happened if North Adams hadn't gotten a world class art museum.

It is even more difficult to measure the other impacts of the arts. Community pride and cohesiveness, for example, may not be as valuable as economic success, but they are certainly worth considering. Quality of life comes from more than money.

Americans for the Arts conducted a major study of the impact of the arts on local economies and found very different general results than Mr. Shapiro found in his research of North Adams.

The study states, "Every day, more than 100,000 nonprofit arts and culture organizations populate America's cities and towns and make their communities more desirable places to live and work. They provide inspiration and enjoyment to residents, beautify shared public spaces, and strengthen the social fabric of our communities." (Americans for the Arts, *Arts & Economic Prosperity National Statistical Report*)

But they have also found that the arts DO contribute economically: "Nationally, the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$135.2 billion in economic activity every year – \$61.1 billion in spending by organizations and an additional \$74.1 billion in event-related spending by their audiences. The impact of this activity is significant; these dollars support 4.1 million U.S. jobs and generate \$22.3 billion in govern-

ment revenue." (Americans for the Arts, *Arts & Economic Prosperity National Statistical Report*)

The fact that North Adams has not become San Francisco, as Shapiro suggests we had all hoped for, does not negate the positive impact that Mass MoCA – and the arts in general – have on a community.

I believe in the power of the arts to improve our lives and our communities. That's why I have joined the Millers Falls Arts Bridge.

Through an artists residency program we will build bridges between two very different cultures – China and the United States. We will restore a space that was once a center of the community, and make sure that it plays that role once more.

Yes, our project will bring money into the community: through jobs, both temporary and long term; by bringing in artists who will spend money while they are here; and by attracting more and more visitors as our programming builds.

More importantly we will bring energy, life, and hope. We will provide space and opportunity for the community to come together and enjoy those immeasurable things that will never show up on a census.

Kate Martineau
Director of Programming,
Millers Falls Arts Bridge

Gill Cable Volunteering

Since many people think I film Gill selectboard meetings "for MCTV," I want to clarify my role behind the camera at Gill events.

While MCTV has been an extremely valuable and necessary ally with technical support, I am not from MCTV as many people assume. I am on the Gill Cable Commission and as such, I record Gill selectboard meetings, and at the request of the selectboard, some other town meetings.

I also record other Gill events, like our Arts Council-funded Common People Concerts and our Energy Commission-sponsored workshops, all using the camera and sound equipment Gill purchased

with the money we receive from a percentage of Gill's Comcast subscriptions.

Gill has, in the past, broadcast community announcements directly to channel 17, overriding Montague programming, and we are in the process of buying new equipment to broadcast meetings live from town hall.

If you would like to join the cable commission or become a part of the video crew at this exciting time, please contact me at jmasucci@msn.com or (413) 863-8694. I'd love to see more of Gill on TV.

Janet Masucci
Gill Cable Commission

Hydrants

Many of us are doing our part to remove snow from fire hydrants, but we must continue our efforts for the rest of winter. Do not hesitate to call MassDOT for state property at (413) 582-0599, or the state fire marshal at (978) 567-3100.

We need the support from all levels of government to make us safe in emergencies. Our roads can be cleared for fire trucks, but they also need fire hydrants.

The governor has approved monies for winter emergency. Let's encourage it be used for removal of snow from hydrants in each and every part of the state.

Betty Tegel
Turners Falls

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

It is **Spring forward time**. Set your clocks ahead on Saturday night, March 7.

The **Greenfield Winter Farmers' Market** returns on Saturday, March 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Greenfield Middle School, 195 Federal Street, Greenfield

It may be freezing outside but our farmers still have plenty of delicious, locally grown food to fill your fridge, freezer, and pantry. Throughout the winter you will find a wide variety of food including fresh and frozen vegetables, fruit, meat, honey, maple products, fresh bread, handcrafted items, and much more.

You can find the market once a month at the Greenfield Middle School. There is parking on both the North and South sides of the school. Follow the signs in the school and you will find the market in the cafeteria. SNAP benefits, credit and debit cards are accepted.

Aloha from the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls. Enjoy a bit of paradise with Larry Fader and his Pioneer Valley Hawaiian Island meet-up group on Saturday, March 7, from 10 a.m. to noon as they explore the Islands with all their beauty, warmth and adventure.

Experience native music and dance as well as art forms and the enchanting lure of the 50th State. Watch videos which capture the very

soul of the Islands while also sharing travel photos and future plans.

Dale Monette will present **Visions of the Past** on Saturday, March 7, from 1 to 2 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

This program compares images of properties in the Swift River Valley before the Quabbin Reservoir was constructed 77 years ago – with views of each location photographed from the same vantage point today.

The Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission took photographs of each property that was to be removed or destroyed in order to create the reservoir and its watershed. With today's scanning technology providing enlarged views, previously unnoticed details can now be seen in the MDWSC's "real estate" photographs of homes and other sites.

Monette's work at the Quabbin Visitor Center gave him a unique vantage point to learn about and photograph some of these properties today, providing a fascinating angle on the Quabbin story.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery at the Bookmill is having an Opening Reception on Sunday, March 8, from 2 to 4 p.m. for an exhibit of **Conceptual/Landscapes**, photography of Collin Chmielowiec and Josh Allen.

Chmielowiec, originally from Arizona, and Allen, a native of Ohio, are both trained at the Hallmark Institute of Photography, in Turners

Falls. They have returned to Western Massachusetts to showcase new work The Gallery is very excited to represent these young artists.

With an extra hour of daylight at the end of the day it's the perfect time to enjoy brisk, outdoor exercise.

On Tuesday, March 10, from 5 until 6:30 p.m., join Herbalist Jean Bergstrom and Northfield Mountain's Kim Noyes for the first in a series of **free, outdoor fitness walks this spring**.

Scientific research has uncovered surprising results from "green exercise" – outdoor physical activity can have a 50% greater positive effect on mental health compared with exercising indoors. You will walk along Migratory Way in Turners Falls, with water views in the late afternoon light. This two-mile walk is on a flat, paved surface with brief stops to explore seasonal highlights, wellness and fitness benefits.

Wear comfortable walking shoes and dress in layers. Meeting location is the parking lot at the entrance to Migratory Way at the intersection of G and 15th Streets in Turners Falls (The Patch.) The event is free. Please call to pre-register at 1(800) 859-2960.

Acoustic, finger-style guitarist/singer Caleb Wetherbee performs at the **Great Falls Discovery Coffeehouse Series**, accompanied by his wife Nina Rossi on bass, on Friday, March 13, starting at 7 p.m.

The coffeehouse takes place in the historic Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center at 2 Avenue A, in downtown Turners Falls. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Coffee and homemade baked goods are available.

The museum and museum store are open during intermission. Suggested sliding scale donation \$6 to \$12, free for children. Donations help the Friends of the Discovery

Center provide free nature programming for the public.

Comedy, Dinner & Dancing at French King Bowling Center on Sturday, March 14, starting at 7 p.m. Portion of the Proceeds to **benefit the Franklin County Sheriff's Office Regional Dog Shelter & Kennel**. Bring an item to donate to the shelter and be entered in to win a \$50 gift certificate to Christina's Restaurant in Erving. There will also be a 50/50 raffle with proceeds going to the dog shelter.

Buffet dinner catered by Christina's restaurant begins at 7 p.m., Comedy show starts at 8 p.m. with Marty Caproni headlining and feature comedian Dr. Jay Sutay, pediatrician by day, comedian by night. Dancing with DJ Anthony Manzi following the comedy show. Tickets are \$25 per person and can be purchased at the bowling center, at the Weatherhead's Convenience Store in Erving or online at www.mtpshows.com.

There will be a **Stop the Pipeline Go Green Fundraiser** at the Arts Block in Greenfield on Sunday, March 15 from 2 to 5 p.m.

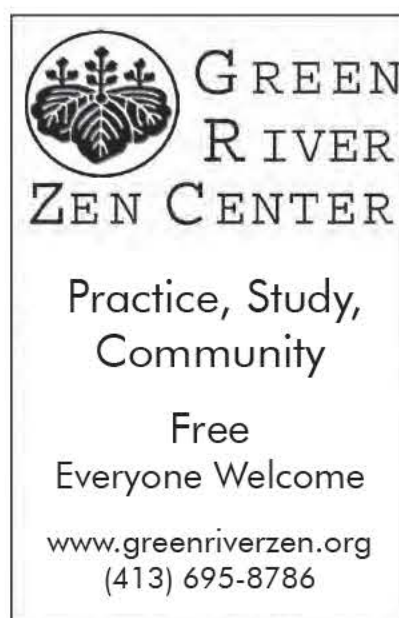
Quabbin Pipeline Action is sponsoring a fundraiser to support continuing work to oppose the proposed Kinder Morgan/TGP pipeline project. Join supporters for a fun time with musicians Court Dorsey, Pat & Tex, Richard Chase, and Moonlight & Morningstar providing entertainment. There will be a silent auction, light refreshments, and other events.

Donations may be made to Millers River Watershed Council – "pipeline" (100 Main St., Athol, MA 01331). NQ Pipeline Action formed a year ago with residents from six area towns to stop the pipeline.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

School Choice and the Budget: A Response from the Superintendent

By MICHAEL SULLIVAN

I wish to speak to a few points made by Jeff Singleton in the *Reporter's* February 26 issue. First, I invite readers to review the Gill Montague FY 2016 budget presentation on our district website. There you will find data showing the significant long standing revenue losses experienced by the district through school choice and charter school departures.

In addition, other pages show projected FY'16 expenditure increases in many areas, including significantly higher costs for wages and benefits. Neither this budget presentation nor earlier ones attempts to paint a picture of the district's budget challenges as being solely a function of the cost of the school choice program, as Mr. Singleton implies.

Secondly, Mr. Singleton mischaracterized my presentation to the Foundation Budget Review Commission. As you may know, state aid to schools, called Chapter 70, is determined by subtracting communities' minimum contribution assessments, from their foundation budget amounts.

Mr. Singleton is passionate in his view that there are problems with how the state calculates minimum contributions, and how these work in combination with the foundation budget calculations to arrive at

Chapter 70 aid amounts. Thus, he rightly advocates a review of the whole landscape.

Unfortunately, the Review Commission is only charged with reviewing half the equation, the adequacy and parameters used to determine foundation budgets.

In my prepared statement to the Commission, which is also viewable on the district website, I addressed the topic of what would constitute adequate levels of school funding, and I provided feedback about some of the assumptions used in calculating foundation budgets. I also provided the Review Commission with our school committee's and town boards' Chapter 70 statement, authored by Mr. Singleton. However, I did not cover this same ground again in my own statement.

Finally, I would like readers to know of the specific recommendations I have recently made to the Review Commission.

Foundation budgets are calculated by starting with the number of students a district has in different categories, from grade range categories like elementary and high school, to characteristic categories such as low income and special education, with varying cost factors assigned to each category. In Gill-Montague, when you add up all the cost factors assigned to each category and

apply them to our enrollment, you get a foundation budget of just over \$10,367 per pupil.

When the district loses or gains students via the school choice program, the tuition amounts that follow them are approximately \$5,000 per student. Clearly, when we lose a student through school choice our costs do not decline \$10,000, or even \$5,000 a year, as none of our fixed costs, from salaries, to utilities, to health insurance, decline.

In fact, hardly any variable costs, such as the costs of copy paper or pencils, decline with the departure of a handful of students. All of this means the district must reduce fixed costs somewhere, in order to make up for the lost revenues through school choice.

This scenario repeats itself, but at a much more costly level, with charter school students. This year the average per-pupil cost to the district of students lost to charter schools is \$13,605. This is revenue that would have come to the district but will instead go to fund a charter school.

Again, the district's costs barely decline at all with the loss of a single student to a charter school. In fact, it is not until perhaps seven or more students in a single grade level leave that the district can reduce a teaching position and realize any significant cost savings.

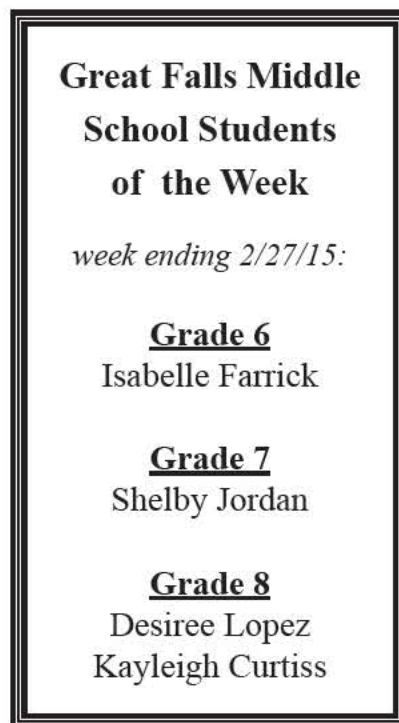
Through the current mechanism of funding charter schools, districts like Gill-Montague make significant contributions towards paying for the fixed costs for charters while they are financially penalized well beyond their capacity to reduce costs in proportion to their lost revenue.

To add a bit of insult to this injury, the per-pupil costs incurred for charter school students far exceeds our per-pupil foundation budget, the amount we are supposed to need to provide students with an adequate education within the district.

For these reasons, I believe the state should change the way it funds charter schools. One way it could do this would be to transfer tuition funds for charter schools at the same rate it does for school choice students up to a point, say for the first 1 to 6 students who leave.

Then, if a district reaches a higher loss threshold of students to a particular charter school, say from seven to ten students, it would be assessed at a rate of perhaps \$10,000 per student. A funding mechanism along these lines would reflect the true cost structures of schools and their ability to match resources with shifts in student enrollment.

Michael Sullivan, Ed.D.,
is Superintendent of Schools
for the GMRSD.



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closed Mondays

SCHOOLS from page A1

towns – Leverett, Shutesbury, Amherst, and Pelham. They would allow at least two towns to maintain administration of their elementary schools, joining the district at the middle school/high school level.

Proposed amendments deal with such issues as the composition and method of electing a new school committee; a method for assessing member towns; a process for joining the district at a later date; and a process for closing a school within the district.

At the February 26 public meeting, Leverett School Committee member Kip Fonsh, along with Selectboard member Julie Shively and Finance Committee member Ann Delano, sat at a front table describing the rationale for the proposal and answering questions about the details. The discussion was dominated by comments and questions from the audience.

Fonsh and his colleagues, in justifying the proposal, focused on the “sustainability” of the current elementary school in Leverett, with rising costs and declining enrollment.

They also argued that a consolidation would improve “efficiency,” with the amount of paperwork and number of meetings required by the administrative staff being reduced. This would allow more time for administrators to focus on “education.”

The proposal, along with its rationale, is available via the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District website at: www.tinyurl.com/qvead3j

MONTAGUE from page A1

town officials and town meeting members. The latter have reluctantly approved recent requests for funds to stabilize the structure. Town officials have argued that it would cost several million dollars to tear the complex down and remediate hazardous materials.

A former owner of the mill used it to store recycled paper, much of which was left in the buildings when the town took them over for back taxes. Copper wiring has also been stripped from the complex, roof leaks were not fixed; water and sewer lines to the former mill were allowed to degrade. Last year the town was ordered by the Turners Falls Fire Department to clear out the paper and restore utility services to the buildings.

Ramsey suggested that the recent work by the town, in conjunction with the improved real estate market, has created a new opportunity to find potential buyers. Sale of a single building under the Commercial Homesteading program gives the town more control over the redevelopment process and the viability of the potential buyer.

Ramsey outlined the terms of a possible request for proposals (RFP). Preferred uses for the building would include manufacturing, research, artist work spaces, warehousing and cold storage. Ramsey also stated a proposal could include up to five living spaces. The buyer would be responsible for developing all utilities.

Ramsey estimated the current value of the building at \$75,000, but stated there should be no “minimum sale price.” He did suggest, however, that the purchaser should be required to put at least \$100,000

Former school committee member Farshid Hajir, who claimed not to have a position on the proposal, stressed the large number of meetings current committee members, who are linked to the superintendent Union 28, have to attend.

Hajir stated that they have to attend numerous subcommittee meetings and are represented on the Amherst-Pelham high regional committee. “The current structure is very exhausting for school committee members,” he argued.

“I cherish Leverett Elementary School,” stated Judy Ricker, “But to me it makes sense to have one system.” Ricker questioned the “New England pattern” of “one school/one town,” which she called “unsound.”

Jai Fuller, on the other hand, seemed to like the New England pattern. She said she had moved from Virginia recently and the difference between schools in the two states is “like night and day.” Teachers she had spoken to at Leverett Elementary School were not in favor of the consolidation, fearing “possibly getting lost in that bigger expansion.”

Gordon Fretwell of North Leverett was more emphatic in summarizing the potential negatives of consolidation. “Because we don’t know what the future holds we should jump off a cliff,” he stated metaphorically.

Bob Mahler, current superintendent of Union 28, also resorted to colorful language to make his point: “I don’t see a ‘wow factor,’ in terms of educational benefits,” he stated. He also questioned whether the pur-

ported financial benefits would continue in the long term.

Fonsh argued that Leverett, standing alone, could not continue to rely on school choice revenues to fund its elementary school. Several speakers noted that Amherst relies heavily on school choice revenues and has fewer reservations about the policy than Leverett.

An estimate of local assessments in a consolidated district under four different scenarios was distributed. It showed that under a consolidation involving all four towns, total assessment reductions would be \$604,677 out of a total local assessment \$41,567,714.

Sean Mangano, business manager for the current middle school/high school district, explained that these estimates were based on Fiscal Year 2014 numbers. Approximately half of the savings derive from increased state reimbursement for regional transportation.

A number of residents expressed the view that Leverett Elementary would lose its identity, becoming a “cookie-cutter school” under a “one size fits all” mentality.

Julie Shively argued that in Amherst “all the schools are different” and that there is “no desire to change the community nature of those schools through consolidation.”

Questions were raised about the proposed governance structure, which would give Leverett two votes out of a potential thirteen on the new school committee. It was pointed out that under the current middle school/high school regional agreement Leverett has only one

vote out of nine, an even less favorable ratio.

D’Ann Kelty questioned the method of electing school committee members. Under the proposed agreement members would be chosen in at-large elections with a residency requirement. That is, voters in all four towns would vote for all candidates who would be required to reside in the town they “represent.”

Kelty suggested that this would require a candidate to campaign in four towns and that voters in the largest town, Amherst, would have a good deal more clout.

Fonsh argued that the proposal was “the best of what the state offers.” State law provides five options for choosing school committee members in regional districts. The current Leverett representative to the Amherst-Pelham district is chosen under an option that allows a locally-elected committee, in this case the Leverett School Committee, to make the choice.

The current Leverett representative on the regional committee, Sarah Dolven, stated that she had not yet taken a position on the proposal. However she said she would “encourage us to be open minded” and not be swayed by “the myth of local control.”

The state, she argued, could impose regional consolidation creating “one district for Franklin County” as was suggested a few years ago.

Fonsh stressed that the final decision about whether to join the region was up to the voters of Leverett. “This is your decision,” he concluded.

Other Business

In other news, Robert Trombly of the Water Pollution Control Facility came before the board with recommendations for sewer bill abatements for the second half of the fiscal year. Trombly recommended approval of five of six abatement requests, and the board followed his recommendations.

Trombly also requested that the board execute easements between the town and FirstLight Power Company for two pump station reconstruction projects. The easement negotiations with FirstLight have been concluded, but the title research, which Trombly said is now “one hundred pages long,” has not been completed.

Stating that the applications for state grants are in “crunch time,” he asked the board to sign off on the easements now so they could be sent on to the state without delay when the research is completed.

The board approved the request. The selectboard also approved a draft contract between the town and the cable company Comcast to serve as the basis for upcoming negotiations. Mark Fairbrother, who is currently on the town Cable Advisory Committee, noted that this is a preliminary document and “we won’t get it all.”

Mike Nelson asked about the status of the public access contract between the town and the current provider, Montague Community Cable Incorporated. Fairbrother stated that he believed a contract proposal would be finalized in the near future.

The board then went into executive session to discuss personnel issues. The next scheduled board meeting is March 9.

Noting that other vendors had expressed interest in administering the Shea, Abbondanzio suggested that the selectboard might reconsider the current lease extension.

Abbondanzio called the unilateral notification by the Shea’s board of directors “a major potential shift” in policy.

Noting that other potential vendors had expressed interest in administering the Shea, he suggested that the board might consider revisiting the December 31 extension date. However, he noted, the current board may have already solicited bookings for the period after July 1.

Abbondanzio stated that he was having difficulty obtaining good information on the exact amounts of current monthly utility bills. No one from the Shea board spoke at the meeting in response to Abbondanzio’s comments.

As of press time on Wednesday, Shea president Michael Glazier had not responded to an email from the Reporter.

into the building.

Ramsey discussed a marketing strategy, including sending a press release to a network of developers, the use of the social media, newspaper advertising and targeting contacts associated with the Riverculture program.

Selectboard member Michael Nelson suggested that the town consider investing in the remediation of hazardous materials in the building, or at least costing out that option. Ramsey, who had just pegged remediation costs for the entire complex at \$702,000, said that he would break out the estimated cost for Building 11.

Selectboard member Mark Fairbrother discussed progress on recent negotiations, or lack thereof, with FirstLight Power Company regarding the bridges over the canal. Noting that FirstLight’s federal license was up for renewal, he called for the town to “take [the bridge issue] to the federal level.” Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said he had talked to the “new head” of FirstLight’s Northfield operation, who was “open to sitting down and talking to us.” He suggested a meeting with “our federal legislators.”

The board approved Ramsey’s request to develop an RFP.

Theater Warns of Cash Crunch

Abbondanzio announced that the private non-profit that administers the Shea Theater has informed him that it would not be able to pay utility bills for the building after July 1. The Shea building is owned by the town but the company that oversees programming is required to pay utilities under its current lease.

Administration of the Shea has recently been put out to bid under an

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GOOD USED USABLES

WOOD from page A1

about any increases in orders from last year," he said.

A larger firewood provider, such as Wagner Wood in Amherst or Lashway in Williamsburg, has the ability to store hundreds of cords of wood. But space is a limitation for smaller local producers meeting the needs of a few reliable customers.

"People come back every year. We try to build a relationship based on delivering a quality product at a reasonable price," Robison said.

In an unpredictable business like selling firewood, several factors combine to lead to a situation where there is a shortage and those who depend on wood and run out of it are unable to find it, or when they do, supply and demand ratio leads to an increase in price.

Advance Planning

Robison and others have directed calls to Jim Elwell of Jim's Tree Service in Greenfield, where there are still a few cords of seasoned wood left to buy at \$350 per cord. The price there was \$250 last July. When Elwell started selling wood 22 years ago it was going for \$75 a cord.

Elwell has the advantage of storage capacity, but, unlike Robison, does not have regular customers. "People come as they need it," he said. Tree work, not firewood, is his main business, and while he usually sells only five cords, this year he has sold 30.

"I'm getting several calls where I'm the ninth person they've called. It's almost like they're in love with me," he said, when they find out he has wood for them.

Elwell spoke to me on his way to warmer weather and watching the Red Sox at spring training in Fort Myers, FL.

"The last six weeks have been the coldest of my life," Elwell said, explaining one main reason for the shortage. "Some people have no other heat. Say your furnace went, and you have a wood stove," he said. In that situation a homeowner might choose to burn wood rather than immediately incur the greater cost of fixing or replacing a furnace.

"Big houses can be more efficient to heat with wood... if you have two stoves, you're using both," he said, due to the current frigid temperatures. Last year's cold winter did not help. "Last year, everyone used all their wood," he said. "Sometimes you'll have a cord left over but not now."

Elwell guessed there might be 1,000 Franklin County residences heated by wood. (We couldn't find reliable statistics on this, but according to Matt Kakley of the Clean Energy Center, 1.7% of households statewide use wood as a primary heat source).

In a mild winter, each home might burn a cord less than ordered. The following year they order less, and over time expect to burn a certain amount of wood. After a few cold winters any home might be underprepared, "and that's 1,000 more cords you need" later in the season,

Elwell explained.

This irregular market, where suppliers and consumers "don't know what's happening year to year," as Elwell said, is exacerbated by the particular nature of using wood for heat. Freshly cut wood is "green," too moist to burn efficiently in a home wood stove. It burns slowly, does not draft properly, and is much more likely to cause a chimney fire.

Firewood should dry for at least a year, and not much more than two, so as not to begin to rot and begin to lose energy before it is burned. Consequently, each year's supply is determined by how much was cut the year before. If mild winters caused customers to order less, and producers made less so as not to have extra sitting around, a few cold winters could lead to a shortage.

According to Gordon Boyce of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, "the cold and snow make it very hard for timber operators to get to trees. Equipment doesn't operate as well in the cold."

Robison said that it has been harder for him to get log-length wood for next year, and that he is still ten cords short of what he would normally have by now.

He also noted that there has been a notable increase in homeowners keeping wood from trees and branches taken down on their properties, which keeps that amount of firewood off the market, making it that much harder to track.

A Volume Game

"It's a funny business," said Walker Korby, project manager with tree care service The Whole Tree out of Leverett. The Whole Tree's main focus is tree care, but the byproduct is wood, for which Korby and owner Andrew Young try to find "the highest and best use," Korby said. "[It's] more time and effort, but worth it morally for us."

That may mean using quality wood for lumber or turning mixed hardwood into firewood, either for the customer's use or their own, for personal usage or to barter for services or equipment they might need extra help with.

Korby and a friend once calculated the "real" cost of a single cord of wood, a 128-cubic-foot measurement (four by four by eight), figuring in real wage and tractor usage, to be \$600. "It takes a lot of machinery and back labor," he said. "To be plausible, it has to be on a large scale that allows you to use mechanized equipment."

Jacob Doody of Wendell does just that, an impressively large scale firewood operation for just one man - with a chain saw, logging skidder, wood processor, tractor and dump truck.

Doody has consistently made about 350 cords of wood over the last seven years, serving from 75 to 100 customers within a ten-mile range. He said most of his customers have what they need, but that the shortage "seems to be an annual problem," especially these last two winters.

"I'm a logger first," said Doody,

who makes firewood additionally in order to be profitable, to capitalize on the equipment he uses to log, which is expensive to maintain. "It's a volume game. I'm one guy doing it by myself."

Doody got his bachelor's degree in arboriculture because he wanted to spend time in the woods. When logging crashed with the downturn of the economy, he shifted his business toward firewood. Big logging companies had a surplus going into the decline, which "took a little while to chew through," Doody explained.

As the new guy, Doody offered a lower price, which he's kept, selling seasoned wood for \$235 a cord and green wood for \$175. "I could make more, but prefer [the] consistency and reliability [of customers]," he said. He is now turning customers away, as the logging market is better, and he hopes to downsize his firewood business.

When I asked him about the long-term sustainability of heating with wood, Doody said it is "absolutely sustainable. There's a shortage of people doing the work, not availability [of wood]." There are fewer loggers at an older average age, he explained. "I'm 38 and only know two loggers younger than me."

Doody noted paper pulp, wood chips and pellets as competing factors. "Cooley Dickinson burns chipped wood, [which] consumes the raw material I make firewood out of," he said.

According to Boyce, much of western Massachusetts' wood goes to a plant in Jaffrey, NH to be processed into pellets.

Globalization also plays a role, as resources that were once kept and used locally are exported based on market trends.

"I don't see that changing at

all. It's accelerating," said Doody. "There's a demand for what we have in Japan. We want something from Brazil."

A Community Endeavor

That is a far cry from the story of Lee Glazier, who turns 87 next week and has been making firewood since he was ten.

I visited Glazier and his wife Marjorie at their Leverett home, an old schoolhouse moved to Hemenway Road in 1865 by 16 team of oxen to make room for the building of charcoal kilns. They pointed out the wood ceiling of their kitchen, a telltale sign that it had once been the school's wood shed.

Glazier has been handling wood since he worked as a boy for his father Perry, who owned and operated the sawmill at Moore's Corner for a time. As a young couple, he and Marjorie would saw slab wood as late as ten o'clock at night, when Glazier would return from picking up milk all day, so that she would have wood to burn in the furnace the following day.

Not long after, Glazier started receiving log-length trees from loggers, splitting, stacking and drying them in his yard in what has become a common sight.

"When I've got a lot of wood out there, they'll stop quite often," he said. "I used to make... well, one year I sold about 40 cord."

Now the Glaziers have help from their son Jeff. "He saws it to length that I can pick up. I put it on the wood splitter," Glazier said. "I got my finger in it one day, but it's alright, I still got it."

They make just enough firewood now to share with a friend or two in need, and for the four cords they go through themselves, but it was a job

begun out of necessity that grew to strengthen a community.

"People can't afford, like us, to buy wood," Marjorie said.

Often, rather than give a price, "people would quote what they would give," Glazier said. When they started out, firewood was around \$35 a cord, but came up to \$75 about ten years ago and then \$200 three years ago or so.

"We kept moving it up, but you couldn't stop people from buying it," said Glazier, laughing. "I guess I'm gonna be doing it still when I'm 100."

Thinking Ahead

As for the future of firewood, it still seems like a community endeavor. When Isaiah Robison first started in the business, he was making enough for his own heat and to help keep his parents warm, but decided it made sense to make and sell a few extra cords to cover maintenance and upkeep of his tools.

As his customer base grew, he began sharing resources with Grassroots Landscaping, also of Leverett, using their wood processor to make the work faster and more efficient, and building a relationship that would benefit both parties and their customers over time.

Robison is shifting toward selling more green wood. "The smartest customers buy wood green," he said, when it costs less and is readily available, then store and dry it themselves. This saves the consumer money, and ideally the hassle of running out of wood mid-winter, but requires more preparation and forethought, and eliminates the question of storage for the producer.

"A lot of people are burning firewood and pellets now, because it's a local, renewable fuel, rather than a fossil fuel," said the DCR's Boyce.

"Firewood is great. I don't have an oil well, but I have a chain saw," said Korby. He added that if everybody were to use wood, there would have to be "more management and home insulation... but properly managed, forest can produce one cord per acre annually."

And getting heat close to home can take a little of the burn off that global market Doody mentioned.

While wood is considered a carbon-neutral source of heat, it produces particulates and it is advisable to look into EPA-certified wood stoves when buying or upgrading.

Kakley of the Clean Energy Center said that newer stoves are 50% more energy-efficient, which means they generate the same amount of heat from 2/3 the wood. 75% of woodstoves currently in use are later models.

There are still many incentive programs available through Mass-Save to help homeowners weatherize their homes with insulation and air-sealing to lower overall energy use and increase home comfort, regardless of heat source.

While that is beyond the scope of this story, homeowners can visit www.masssave.com for more information.



Lee and Marjorie Glazier with their woodstove.

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Town of Wendell NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Wendell Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. at the Wendell Town Offices to review the application of Amy Palmer and Robin Heubel for the establishment of a small kennel home dog-sitting business in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A and the Town of Wendell Zoning Bylaws.

The site is 23 Stone Road. An existing building will be repurposed. All interested parties should attend the hearing. A copy of the application is available with the Town Coordinator at the Town Offices during business hours.

Climate Group Airs Boggs Documentary

On Friday, March 13 from 7 to 9 p.m., the Wendell Climate Change Group welcomes back Anna Gyorgy with a film on heroism in the face of economic and environmental collapse.

As people around the world address the challenge of creating communities based on democracy, participation and ecological health, the almost 100-year-old philosopher-activist Grace Lee Boggs and the Boggs Center in Detroit (www.boggscenter.org) have offered models and inspiration for many.

The film *American Revolutionary: the Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs* tells the story of the workers and African-American social

movements Boggs helped to shape. With her husband, Jimmy Boggs, Grace championed Detroit Summer, and the push towards healthier, community-based, 'ground up' agriculture and other alternatives in a post-industrial world.

Following the film, Anna will lead a discussion of how the Boggs story might relate to our challenges in Wendell and Franklin County. Light refreshments will be served.

The event takes place at the Wendell Free Library at 7 Wendell Depot Road.

Please mark your calendars for this special event. For more information call Chris at (978) 544-0216.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Town to Auction Two Seized Properties

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Town Treasurer Carolyn Manley met the Wendell Selectboard early in its February 25 meeting and together they clarified details for an upcoming auction of two properties the town took for unpaid taxes.

That auction will take place 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 14 at the town hall, and if he agrees, Wendell's own Ted Lewis will be auctioneer. If he does not agree to be auctioneer, Manley said that she is willing.

One property is just south of the Wendell Country store, 65 Lockes Village Road, the other is near the top of Locke Hill, 16 Old Stage Road. Both properties have houses, but neither house is habitable according to both the building inspector and the board of health.

The house at 65 Lockes Village Road has been unoccupied for decades, has trees growing through it, and is suited only for demolition. Its lot, 2.43 acres, is smaller than Wendell's minimum, but the building existed before the town had zoning, and so it is grandfathered as a non-conforming lot.

The house on Locke Hill is also on a small non-conforming lot of 0.93 acres, but it too was in place before zoning, and so its lot can be considered a building lot.

Manley said that in an ideal world there is room on that lot for a well, a septic system, and a house. But its list of code and health violations is long, and property inspections showed no sign of a septic

system being on the site. Building inspector Phil Delorey said it was uninhabitable, but he stopped short of saying its only legal prospect was demolition.

Manley and selectboard members discussed whether there should be an open auction or sealed bids, and opted for an auction. The tax taking attorney recommended a \$5,000 minimum bid, and a \$5,000 deposit on the day of the auction, either as cash or a bank check. The check should be made out to the bidder so if his bid is topped he can redeem the money easily, and if his bid is accepted he can endorse it payable to Wendell.

Bus Route Through Wendell?

Jonathan von Ranson met the selectboard next. He has been representing Wendell at the Franklin Regional Transit Authority meetings, and he said the Authority is willing to entertain the thought of a regular scheduled bus route through town, especially if the route can include New Salem as well.

He asked the selectboard to send a letter to the FRCOG in support of such a route through town. He suggested possible routes for such a bus, one from Orange, through New Salem, Wendell center, Millers Falls and Montague where connections can be made to Amherst or Greenfield.

Nan Riebschlaeger was there and said both the energy committee and the planning board support the idea. Selectboard chair Christine Heard asked town coordinator Nancy Aldrich to draft the letter, stating overall support by the selectboard and even outlining a specific route if that seems appropriate at this stage.

Meetinghouse and Gazebo

Riebschlaeger actually came to meet the selectboard in her capacity as chair of the Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse. She was joined by Marianne Sundell and Gail Krutka.

As part of a plan to install a bathroom, which would go on the east side of the building where the lot line is close, the Friends had a survey done. Deed research done with the survey showed that the town owns the meetinghouse lot and building.

The most recent congregation who used the building as a church did not know that and gave the building to the Friends when insurance and other expenses were too high. At the time Ted Lewis was on the selectboard and at this meeting selectboard member Dan Keller recalled that Lewis said then that both the meetinghouse and the lot belonged to the town.

The survey shows the lot with a bump-out on the west side across Center Street so it includes the gazebo.

The Friends have raised money, paid for insurance, and started restoration of the building. One aim of the Friends is to host gatherings in the building, such as weddings, that might include wine and other alcohol. A town bylaw forbids alcohol on town property.

The selectboard may not give away town property, but a town meeting may be allowed to do

that.

Keller said that a call to town counsel might help clarify the situation and that if the town gives the meetinghouse to the Friends, it should divide the lot so the town stays owner of the gazebo as part of the north common.

Update on Wired West

Wired West has done a survey from maps to count houses that would be served by the high speed fiber optic internet connection that they are trying to build.

They passed their results on to the Wendell board of assessors to confirm or add to or subtract from their count.

Firefighters Equipment

Board members signed a memorandum of understanding with the towns of Leverett, Shutesbury, New Salem, and Montague Center for a grant application to pay for the towns getting new air packs, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA'S) for the towns' fire fighters.

Deficit in Snow and Ice Budget

With little discussion the selectboard approved deficit spending for the town's ice and snow removal budget.

Steel to Replace Wood Towers

Eversource energy informed the selectboard that they will be replacing wood towers with steel to support the high voltage wires as they pass through town across Farley Road and elsewhere. Work will take place in phases from March to December 2015.

2016 Building Projects

Aldrich asked for a list of town building projects for fiscal 2016 planning.

Still on that list is grading by the town hall cellar door, and overhauling the town hall heating system, although that might be paid for by green community grant money and so not cost the town directly.

Stipend for Slavas

Keller said he asked town engineer Jim Slavas for a proposal for his stipend.

Keller said that Slavas had spent four hours shoveling snow away from the town's emergency generators so that they can get air, and propane can be delivered, a job more suited for a teenager.

No Answer on Left Click

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser asked Aldrich what, if anything, Left Click Computers had told her about what specifically they have done backing up the town's computer records. With no answer, he suggested that the town start looking for another company for back up and security.

Agreement in Principle

Heard said that the New Salem selectboard agreed in principle to contribute to benefits to the shared fire chief, as the two towns already contribute to benefits for their shared administrative assistant.

Actually authorizing the money will wait for the annual town meetings.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Questions Over "Interim" Employee Benefits

By KATIE NOLAN

The Erving selectboard voted at its March 2 meeting to provide health insurance benefits to recently-hired interim senior center director Paula Betters. Selectboard member Margaret Sullivan said that when the selectboard hired Betters for the four to six month interim position, benefits were not discussed. Selectboard member Arthur Johnson said that he had envisioned the interim job as a non-benefited position.

However, the question arose as to whether the Affordable Care Act requires the town to provide health insurance for a full-time employee hired for more than three months.

Sullivan said she had contacted town counsel, the state Department of Revenue, and the town's insurance provider to get answers.

She reported that while town counsel Donna MacNicol and Hampshire Insurance felt that an interim employee should have health insurance benefits, the state Department of Revenue told her that an interim employee not eligible for retirement benefits is not eligible for health insurance benefits. The interim director is not considered eligible for retirement benefits.

Sullivan noted that the town's personnel policy does not mention or define the term "interim

employee," although "temporary employee" and "seasonal employee" are defined. Temporary and seasonal employees are not eligible for health insurance under the town's policy, "except where it may be required by law."

Johnson said, "Interim is temporary, and shouldn't get benefits."

Sullivan requested that the board put revision of the personnel policy on a future agenda.

Animal Control Policy

The board voted to approve the policy and procedures manual for the animal control officer developed by police chief Chris Blair and animal control officer Johnson. Johnson recused himself from the discussion and voting on the manual.

Noting the amount of time and commitment required for ACO duties, Johnson suggested that the board consider raising the ACO stipend from \$2,400 per year to \$5,200 per year, possibly in fiscal year 2017. Sullivan asked Johnson to provide a log of ACO calls to support the discussion.

FY'16 Budget Review Begins

The board reviewed General Government budget requests for fiscal year 2016. Most of the FY'16 requests were similar to FY'15 budgets.

Water supervisor and chief

wastewater operator Peter Sanders told the board that there was little change from FY'15 for the water and wastewater departments, except cost of living (COLA) salary increases and an increase in electricity costs, due to rate increases.

The board approved \$104,000 in capital improvements for the wastewater department, for electrical and engineering work. Finance committee member Jacob Smith remarked that the improvements were "energy saving in the long run."

Jacquelyn Boyden asked the board to include a \$500 stipend in the FY'16 budget for her work as technical coordinator, citing the work she has been doing on days off.

Boyden and Smith, the town's IT consultants, proposed initiating a continuing appropriation of \$8,000 per year to build up a fund for replacing town computers. They suggested that the town buy computers "in bulk" rather than individually by department, in order to take advantage of volume discounts and to standardize the computer models and software used in town departments.

The board approved a combined merit and COLA raise for the municipal clerk for FY'16, but put off deciding on a requested merit raise for the assistant tax collector until a later meeting.

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B-BALL from page A1

was good – good enough to win. Liam Ellis and Nick York began finding their marks, Jalen Sanders and Tyler Charbonneau worked the boards, and Tionne Brown and Emmett Turn controlled the ball.

In the third period, Turners' team play began to show results. By the end of the third, they held a 41-38 lead.

Granby played the Tribe close throughout the rest of the game, but they weren't able to keep pace. With less than 5 minutes in the game, Turners Falls took a 10-point lead, 50 – 40. The Rams did their

best to catch up but in the end, the Hampshire League Champs defeated them, 56 – 49.

Liam Ellis led the Tribe with 19, and just missed the triple double with 9 rebounds and 8 assists. Tyler Charbonneau scored 14 points and had 7 rebounds and an assist. Jalen Sanders put in 12 points and grabbed 9 rebounds. Nick York scored 7 points and pulled down 11 rebounds. Tionne Brown scored 4 points and had 7 rebounds and 5 assists. Emmett Turn snagged a defensive rebound, and Nick Croteau and Spencer Hubert also saw playing time.

March 2:

Hopkins 68, TFHS 46

"Revenge in high school sports is a very powerful motivator, and they will have that going into the tournament game against us," coach Mullins said before Monday's game. "They finished second to us, and that is something that motivates kids."

On Monday, March 2, the Hampshire League Champions, Turners Falls, fell to the Hopkins Golden Eagles, 68 to 46 in The Cage at UMass. The start of Monday's game was delayed for almost an hour because the previous games had run long, and the Turners Falls players and fans had to sit and watch the Hopkins girls play in their own quarterfinal game.

The Blue Tribe was out in force on Monday. Hundreds of blue-clad Powertown fans, some with letters emblazoned on their shirts, filled the bleachers. They yelled and cheered and screamed the whole game. And when the Boys in Blue walked off the court, the True Blue faithful gave them a well-deserved send off.

Hopkins jumped out to a 6 – 0 lead, but Liam Ellis sunk two and Jalen Sanders snagged a rebound. Tyler Charbonneau got a bucket and the game was now 6 to 4.

But then Tionne Brown and Nick York were both called for fouls. This was an indication of things to come, and when Tionne got his second foul, Emmett Turn came in.

The first quarter was rough, but close. Body checks, pushes and taunting made it difficult to concentrate on the play. But the Champs kept pace in spite of it all, the first quarter ended with the Tribe down 12 to 13.

"We are louder! We are louder!" the True Blue faithful chanted to open the second quarter, and the players responded. Blue stole a pass and Nick York put it in. Tyler Charbonneau put in two more. Then Jalen Sanders forced a jump-call, and Charbs put up another two. Suddenly, Turners was up, 17 to 13.

But then Tionne was called for another foul. Hopkins began to rebound effectively and soon the game

was knotted at 19. More taunting, pushing and bumping by both teams led to sloppy play and plenty of foul shots.

When Liam Ellis sunk two foul shots, the Tribe took a 26-25 lead. Then Tyler Charbonneau went to the line and tied it up at 27. And with 3 seconds on the clock, Turners committed a foul in 3-point territory and the Golden Hawks shot three foul shots, one of which landed, and the teams entered the locker room with the score 28-27, Hawks.

Turners took the early third-quarter lead, 31 to 30 but Charbonneau was called for another foul. Then Hopkins came alive.

With their bench depth, they were less concerned about fouling, and they played rough and hard. Their big players took position under the hoop and they pulled down rebounds. When a Turners player went for the ball, they were forced to go over the back and this led to frustration and more fouls. Hopkins went on an 11 – 0 run and soon led by 10, 41 to 31.

"Hopkins was physical with us, and they *killed us* on the boards," coach Mullins said after the game. "Their big kids are 6'4", 6'4" and 6'3", but also much wider. Then they bring in a kid who is 6'2" with a wide body.

"With this size and the physical way they handled Liam, we just wore down, and then started to play panic basketball."

And this worked for Hopkins. Banging on the boards and nullifying Turners' best player, Gold took a 45 to 33 lead into the fourth quarter.

Panic and frustration set-in for the Indians in the fourth quarter, and pushing, shoving and taunting led to more fouls. And soon Turners was in major-league foul trouble.

Tyler Charbonneau received his fifth foul at the beginning of the 4th quarter, and the bad blood continued. A double-technical foul followed and the game was rapidly disintegrating.

Turners didn't give up however. Coach Mullins called a time out to try to settle down his boys, who by now were trailing 48 to 34.

"Although I am very disappointed in myself for not finding a way to help the kids last night," Mullins lamented, "I am not sure we had an answer for the rebounding problem."

But with the game slipping away, Turners kept trying. York grabbed a steal but Ellis was called for a foul. Tionne was then called for his fourth foul, but Emmett Turn grabbed his own free-throw rebound and put it in. Then Nick York was called for his fifth, and had to take a seat. The Hawks stretched out their lead and the game ended with them winning 68 to 46.

In spite of all the taunting, shoving and bad blood, the game ended as they all do, with both teams shaking hands on the court. After all, it's only a game, and for the 2015 Turners Falls Boys Basketball Team, the season was over.

Jalen Sanders led the Tribe with 13 points, including a 3-pointer. Tyler Charbonneau ended with 12 points. Nick York added 6 points, including one in 3-point land. Liam Ellis had 4 points. Emmett Turn also scored 4. Tionne Brown got 3 points. Jeremy Wolfram came off the bench to sink a three. Nick Croteau sunk a free throw.

Best Ever!

The Turners Falls Boys Basketball team finished the 2014-15 season with a record of 19 and 3. With a regular-season record of 18 and 2, according to A. D. Adam Graves, they hold the best record in Turners Falls history.

They were Champions of the Hampshire Conference and advanced to the Final Four in the Tournament. And although they didn't win every single game and didn't advance to the Finals, the Boys in Blue learned to play as a team, to win against insurmountable odds, and to hold their heads up high, even in defeat.

The season is not over for two players. Liam Ellis and Nick York will travel to the Basketball Hall of Fame on Friday, March 20 to play in the Senior All-Star Game.



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Liam Ellis in action at the UMass Curry Hicks Cage during the WMass Division 4 Semi-Final match against Hopkins.

RACES from page A1

the Avenue A side of the same building.

"Being at selectboard meetings and seeing the process," he said, "it seems like sometimes they're not facilitating, and more inhibiting.... It seems like there are some flaws in the process, and one of them is my opponent."

Leverett

In addition to Julie Shively, whose term is up for reelection, selectboard chair Rich Brazeau is stepping down early – his seat will also be up for election this year.

Reached this week, Shively said she is undecided about running this year.

There are also two seats open on the school committee and board of health, one on the planning board, and three on the finance committee.

Leverett is the only town in the commonwealth that still nominates and elects candidates directly from the floor of its open town meeting, which takes place on April 25 at 9 a.m.

The town will hold its annual candidates night – a chance for candidates to make statements to the public in advance of town meeting elections – at town hall on March 24 at 7 p.m.

Erving

Erving's race is wide open, with incumbent Margaret Sullivan, who has also served the town as treasurer and assessor, declining to run for another term.

"I have enjoyed the past couple years but at the same time it has been extremely stressful at times," Sullivan told the Reporter. "I am at a point in my life where I need to start slowing down, and I want to have time to enjoy other things in life."

Sullivan does, however, plan to run for the assessor position she also occupies, and hopes that when her term as treasurer ends in 2017, the town will make that position an appointed, rather than elected one.

According to town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp, three potential candidates have taken out papers for her seat on the selectboard as of press time. One is Jacob Smith, firefighter and chair of the finance committee.

A second is George "Moonlight" Davis, who in October withdrew, citing health reasons, from the race for a seat vacated early by Eugene Klepadlo.

And a third potential candidate for the seat is Almon "Bud" Meatey, until last summer the town's fire chief. Meatey found himself

at the center of a townwide controversy when the selectboard declined to reappoint him as chief – a decision that led to the resignation of five additional members of the fire department.

Wendell

The scene in Wendell seems to be more placid. Jeffrey Pooser says he will run for a third term.

Reached at town hall on Wednesday, an assistant town clerk who asked not to be named reported that as far as she knew, there were no races in the works.

One seat still has a vacancy but no nominations: a one-year seat on the town planning board. Volunteers can take out papers by Thursday, March 12 and return them by the following Monday.

Gill

Like Fairbrother and Pooser, John Ward figures he'll go for a third term. "I've enjoyed the first two terms," he said. "We've got some good work done."

He pointed to efficiency improvements, the energy commission, infrastructure upgrades, and the fact that the town is "probably in better financial shape than we've been in many years."

"I'm also sitting with two really

great guys on the selectboard. It's a really easy time to continue," he said.

As of Wednesday, no potential rivals have taken out papers for the seat, though they still have some time to do so.

In fact, Gill so far seems to be preparing for orderly, uncontested continuation across the board. Town clerk Lynda Hodsdon Mayo said that incumbents have signed

nomination papers for nearly every position, with two exceptions: the library trustees, and the cemetery commission. She hopes that at least one candidate will offer themselves up for those positions. Papers must be taken out by the 26th and returned by the 30th.

So far, says Hodsdon Mayo, it doesn't look like there are any competitive races.



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ON THE ROAD

Reader Jeri Moran reads the Reporter as she kayaks among the mangroves in Florida. Going somewhere? Take us with you! Send photos to editor@montaguereporter.org.

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Basic Mediation Training

GREENFIELD – The Mediation & Training Collaborative is hosting a Basic Mediation Training on March 13, 14, 20 and 21, with an optional date on March 28. Classes run from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The training course is intended for supervisors, attorneys, mental health professionals, educators, human resource workers, leaders of faith communities, or anyone involved in helping others resolve disputes.

Learn how to help others

resolve conflicts, de-escalate angry and upset people, ask powerful questions, and identify the real issues in a dispute.

The Mediation & Training Collaborative is a program of Community Action, a partner agency of the United Way of Franklin County and of Hampshire County.

For more information, see www.mediationandtraining.org, call (413) 475-1505 or email mediation@communityaction.us.

Environmental Film Festival

SOUTH HADLEY – The Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC), as a non-profit underwriter, is pleased to support the Project Native Environmental Film Festival.

The free festival will kick off Sunday, March 15 at the Tower Theaters in South Hadley. The Festival will bring a full day of films to the Pioneer Valley.

Of the five films being shown, *Dam-Nation* and *Plastic Paradise* particularly highlight issues we are dealing with right now along the Connecticut River. For show times and details, see www.projectnative.org/Film_Festival.html.

DamNation explores the sea change

in our national attitude from pride in big dams as engineering wonders to the growing awareness that our own future is bound to the life and health of our rivers.

Plastic Paradise journalist/filmmaker Angela Sun travels on a personal journey of discovery to uncover the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

CRWC works to balance environmental protection for our rivers with human uses, such as hydroelectricity generation. CRWC is currently involved in the relicensing of five hydroelectric facilities along the CT River and the removal of obsolete dams on smaller rivers.

Reading and Book Signing

LEVERETT – On Sunday, March 8, the Leverett Peace Commission is sponsoring a book launch event for Penny Gill's *What in the World is Going On?: Wisdom Teachings For Our Time*.

The event runs from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Mount Toby Friends Meeting House on Long Plain Road (Route 63).

There will be a reading and book signing, and light refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

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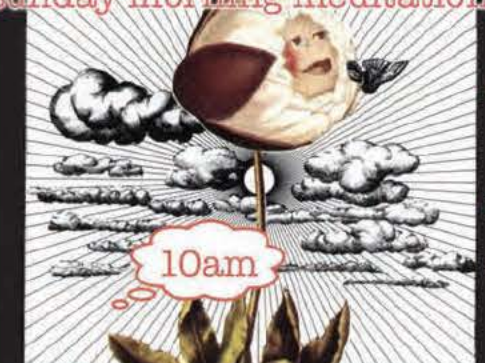


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MoRe

Country Players Stage Agatha Christie Classic at Frontier

By JOE KWIECINSKI

SOUTH DEERFIELD – A group of strangers. An unknown killer. Increasing fear and paranoia.

All three prime elements will be showcased this weekend when The Country Players stage Agatha Christie's play "And Then There Were None" at Frontier Regional High School Auditorium. Opening night is Friday at 7 p.m.

The classic mystery continues with performances Saturday at 7, March 13 and 14 at 7, and a matinee presentation Sunday, March 15 at 2 p.m. Adult tickets are \$12, while children's and seniors' are \$10.

Christie's 1943 play is adapted from her book published four years earlier. The stage production had its debut September 20, 1943. There have also been several film

versions. The 1945 movie featured the legendary Walter Huston.

A mysterious figure invites 10 people – eight guests and two servants – to stay at a house on an island off the English coast. All of the invitees, according to their host, have caused the death of an innocent party and must face judgment. Following the pattern of a poem, "Ten Little Soldier Boys," the members of the group meet their fate one by one.

Nicole LaRoche is serving as director of The Country Players' presentation. A native of Newtown, Connecticut, LaRoche is making her first solo direction. She's been active in local community theater since moving to Western Mass. five years ago.

This year is the 20th anniversary of LaRoche's first performance of the Christie classic. As a very see **CHRISTIE** page B4

A History of the Bridge of Names: Part 2

By DAVID JAMES

LAKE PLEASANT – A deep ravine divides the Village of Lake Pleasant in half, separating the Highlands to the northwest and the Bluffs to the southeast at the bottom of its namesake body of water. In 1888, contractor Frank Bickford of Greenfield, a warm-weather resident of the village, built a wooden footbridge spanning the ravine, thus unifying the village.

By 1929, the good-enough days of Bickford's bridge were gone. Minnie Rutter, a wealthy Spiritualist from Utica, New York, and Lake Pleasant cottage owner donated money to build a new bridge as a memorial to her son, who had been killed in a motor vehicle accident.

By the late 1950s, the Fred Rutter Memorial Bridge, too, had reached the end of its lifespan and according to variant village versions either collapsed, or was mercy-killed by unknown villagers.

For a decade and a half, the village was bridgeless and that bridgelessness, as had nature accomplished in times of eld, de-unified the village, causing connective incohesion and turning neighbors almost into strangers.

The conclusion of this two-part story focuses on the birth of the Bridge of Names in 1975, and the literal and symbolic reunification of Montague's youngest and tiniest village.

"When the bridge was gone, it split the sides apart," said Bob Beck of Montague Avenue, who was born in Lake Pleasant in 1942 and has lived there since, except for a three-year stint from 1960 to 1963 in the U.S. Army.

Being bridge-less isolated one-half of the village population from



The whole village pitched in on the project throughout the summer of 1975.

the other, he said, for all residents during long, cold, and snowy New England winters, and for the elderly and less-daring in all four of the calendar's seasons.

For villagers attempting to get from one side of the community to the other, then back home again, easily, quickly, and safely, the absence of a footbridge imposed stark alternative choices: either take a many times more roundabout hills-and-valleys trip to and fro by foot or motor vehicle, or endure the difficulty and risk the danger of a double set of descents and ascents through a steep-sided ravine gouged by Mother Nature during the retreat of the glaciers in the last Ice Age some 10,000 years ago.

According to an obituary published in 1982, following a career in the Army which included service in World War II and Korea, Robert Begg retired in 1967 as a sergeant major and headed home to his roots in Lake Pleasant. His family connection to the village extended through three generations, and his mother, Dorothy, lived in the Highlands.

Apparently, Beck said, "Bob Begg had acquired construction training and skills during military service. I think he was in the Army Corps of Engineers."

Beck described Begg as a charismatic man, someone who radiated energy and infected others with his enthusiasm. "He drew people to him and his ideas," Beck said. By 1974, Begg had spearheaded organization of the Lake Pleasant Village Association and fostered as its centerpiece a literal and symbolic reuniting of the village through creation of a new footbridge.

According to Volume 1, Number 2 of *The Villager*, dated June 26, 1974, and self-described as "an occasional publication of the Lake Pleasant Village Association," construction of the new footbridge was scheduled to begin in May, 1975, and be completed to coincide with an Old Home Days celebration planned for mid-August, 1975.

The Bridge Progress section of the newsletter concluded with the admonition that the fund-raising and construction clock was ticking and, indeed, was already well on the way to the sound of the chimes of its midnight hour ... "That is only a year away!"

To raise money for construction, Beck said, the LPVA conducted tag sales, bake sales, flea markets, Old Home Days, and sold the right for \$5 each to have a name routed in a see **BRIDGE** page B8



Ten plus one: the cast of *And Then There Were None*.

Art Forgers in Leverett

By LEE WICKS

Imagine, of all things, a library cultivating a cadre of criminals, encouraging forgeries of fine art and profiting from it. Disgraceful? Not really.

On Sunday, about a dozen people came to the Leverett Library to try their hand at forging great masterworks. This activity is part of this year's *Read it Leverett*, an annual event that brings the community together with a book to discuss and various activities to illustrate the narrative and themes.

This year's selection, *The Art Forger* by B.A. Shapiro, covers topics including art forgery, art theft, the professional art world and the creative process.

There has already been a discussion of the book and a screening of the film *Stolen*, a documentary about the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Art Heist.

Sunday's afternoon of forgery was planned to give experienced and novice artists an idea

of how hard it would be to truly "fake" a Matisse or Van Gogh. Library Director Ashley Blais said, "This was also a good way to bring the community together for some fun, much needed this long winter."

Gerald McFarland of Leverett tried his hand at a line drawing by Matisse, but said his presence on Sunday really reflected his appreciation for the library. "It's just a wonderful community resource and I'm here to support it," he said.

Beth Miler Pittman from Leverett had never painted before. With help from Chris Nelson, an artist with a studio at Leverett Crafts and Arts who taught art history for years, she began applying layers of color and form to a blank canvas. Like McFarland, she was anxious to support the library and try something new.

Bill Wilson is not new to forgery. He enthusiastically displayed drawings he had made that copy ancient Chinese and Japanese see **FORGERS** page B4



Bill Wilson and Juliette Blais, bard at work.

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

By LESLIE BROWN

We leave Florida on a bright, sunny but chilly day; the area is expecting a cold snap. Starting up Route 17 we have a couple of hours to revisit our home away from home for four weeks. We admire once again the broad expanse of the St. Johns River as we ride over it in Palatka and in Jacksonville.

The St. Johns travels 310 miles from the marshes of Melbourne in the south to Mayport near Jacksonville where it flows into the Atlantic. It is one of the few US rivers flowing northward to the ocean. Twice a day, at high tide, the river's flow is reversed. The Timucuan called it Welaka or river of lakes. Our own Lake George is the largest of these.

We had intended to take the local car ferry across the lake to take in its size, eleven miles at its widest, but have had to put that journey on next year's list.

Even as we leave, we are glad to think of returning next year as there are many more

Our Northern Florida Adventure, Part 4: The Long Journey Home

day trips to enjoy as well as the warmth and sunshine.

In addition to reserving the only remaining month available next January, we have, given this snow-laden winter, also reserved two additional weeks on the Mill Dam Lake, which borders the Ocala National Forest.

Homeward, we pass the St. Johns as it meets the ocean. We are traveling now on Interstate 95 as we will be until we near Washington, D.C. We pass the same loblolly, sweet gum, palms and live oaks that greeted us on our entry.

The slash pine has been cultivated by controlled burns which remove the undergrowth and blacken some trunks, but clean up the way for a clear cutting of pine for telephone poles, pulp and firewood. When the trees reach telephone pole size, the area is clear cut, the roots dug up and burned, and the soil levelled off. The cycle begins again.

We leave Florida and enter Georgia. The temperatures are holding in the high forties and low fifties, but when we stop at the state welcome center, we find a vigorous Northeast wind which makes it feel much colder. This wind will

blow us northward towards home for the next three days.

We travel through the edges of South Carolina and at last stop for the night in mid-North Carolina.

When we check into our motel, supper in hand, it is fifty-one degrees. The peeper frogs are singing in the nearby swamp.

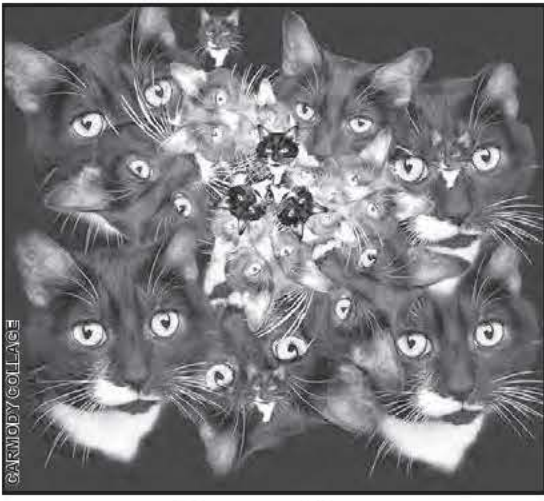
Next morning, after a rough night of restless sleep, the temperatures have dropped thirty degrees.

However, as we enter the state of Virginia on a bracing wind, we see large red buds on the soft maples and note that spring will arrive here before long.

We travel on through Virginia on Interstate 95 until just past Fredericksburg we veer off onto Route 17 again, skirting West Virginia and Maryland until we pick up Route 81 and head into Pennsylvania, which we think must be the most endless state in the union.

We stop early this night at a motel outside of Harrisburg as we are done in. The wind has made for white knuckle gripping of the steering wheel and a sharp eye to look out for those racing by at better see **GARDENER** p. B4

Pet of the Week



"GUS GUS"

Hello there, I'm Gus Gus and I'm 10 years old. I'm here at Dakin because my people moved away without me.

I am a mellow guy who loves everyone! I also get along well with other cats, and don't seem to mind dogs too much.

I am a social boy and love to be around people. I am an indoor only kind of cat, the outside world is just too crazy of a place for a down to earth guy like me.

If you're looking for a calm boy to share your home with, then come and meet me today!

Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at info@dpvhs.org.

FACES & PLACES

Last Wednesday saw a "Black History Month: Music and Diversity" event at Great Falls Harvest in Turners Falls.



Above: Harvest chef and owner Chris Menegoni, artist and writer Bob McNeil of New York, and event organizer Richie Richardson ham it up.



Top: Cellist Vernon C. David of the Forfia and David Duo provides entertainment.

Photos by G. E. Lomax, Hallmark School of Photography student.

Senior Center Activities March 9 to 13

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 closed.

Monday 3/9

8:30 a.m. Foot Clinic
10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:50 Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Roger Tinknell "Ireland to America"

Tuesday 3/10

9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
Noon Lunch
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting
1 p.m. Painting with David Sund

Wednesday 3/11

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:15 a.m. Friends' Meeting
Noon Birthday Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 3/12

10 a.m. Tech Tutor or Coffee & Conversation
Noon Lunch
1 p.m. Pitch

Friday 3/13

Reflexology and AARP Tax Aid, both by Appointment
No Scheduled activities

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.

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, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals.

Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at 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 to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

Monday 3/9

9 a.m. Tai Chi
10 a.m. Osteo Exercise
12:30 p.m. Movie

Tuesday 3/10

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
9:30 a.m. COA Meeting
10 a.m. Zumba Toning

Wednesday 3/11

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
Noon Bingo

Thursday 3/12

8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones, Muscles
Noon Cards

Friday 3/13

9 a.m. Bowling
11:30 a.m. Out-to-Lunch



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

Q. Is bursitis age-related?

Yes. Bursitis occurs more often as we get older.

Repetitive motions are the worst things for people who tend to get bursitis. Other causes include joint trauma, rheumatoid arthritis, gout and infection.

Bursitis is inflammation of a bursa, which is a small sac filled with fluid. We each have about 160 of these bursae, which act as shock absorbers and grease for our joints. They are buffers between bones and overlapping muscles or between bones and tendons/skin. When bursae become inflamed, they can ache.

If you have bursitis, you may feel pain or stiffness in the elbow, hip, knee, shoulder, heel, big toe or other joints; stronger pain with movement or pressure; swelling, warmth and redness.

While repetitive motions are the usual culprits in bursitis, simple pressure can cause inflammation, too. A couple of examples: Pushing a vacuum cleaner can give you

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Bursitis and Age

bursitis in your elbow. But sitting on a hard surface for a long time can inflame the bursa over a bone in your buttocks.

You can usually take care of bursitis yourself. Rest the affected joint. An ice pack will reduce swelling. To reduce pain and inflammation, take a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) such as ibuprofen or aspirin, if your doctor approves. It usually takes a week or so for bursitis to go away.

You should go to your doctor if the symptoms don't subside after 10 days; you have a fever; there's excessive swelling, redness, bruising or a rash in the affected area; pain is sharp, shooting or disabling; you have a medical condition or you take drugs that may increase your risk of an infection.

If you need professional care, your doctor may recommend physical therapy or a cortisone injection into the bursa to relieve inflammation.

Ultrasound treatment is often used by physical therapists and many other healthcare providers to treat bursitis. Ultrasound relieves pain and inflammation, speeds healing, reduces muscle spasms and increases range of motion.

Ultrasound makes high frequency sound waves. The sound waves vibrate tissues deep inside the injured area. This creates heat that draws more blood into the tissues. The tissues then respond to healing

nutrients brought in by the blood.

Treatment is given with a soundhead that is moved gently in strokes or circles over the injured area. The procedure may be performed with the soundhead alone or with a topical anti-inflammatory drug or gel.

(Personal note: My wife, Gale, swears by ultrasound for treating her occasional bouts of bursitis.)

However, if the bursitis is caused by a bacterial infection of the bursa, it will have to be drained and you will need antibiotic treatment.

Here are some tips to help prevent bursitis:

* If you must undertake a job that requires repetitive movements, take many breaks.

* Avoid sustained pressure on a bursa. For example, don't sit on hard chairs for long periods. If you have to do a job on your hands and knees, use knee cushions. Don't rest your elbows on hard surfaces. Don't wear ill-fitting shoes.

* Exercise the muscles in the joints that tend to get bursitis. You can protect these joints by strengthening the muscles around them. Of course, don't exercise until all bursitis symptoms are gone.

* Prior to exercising you should always warm up and stretch your muscles.

If you would like to ask a question, write to fred@healthygeezers.com.

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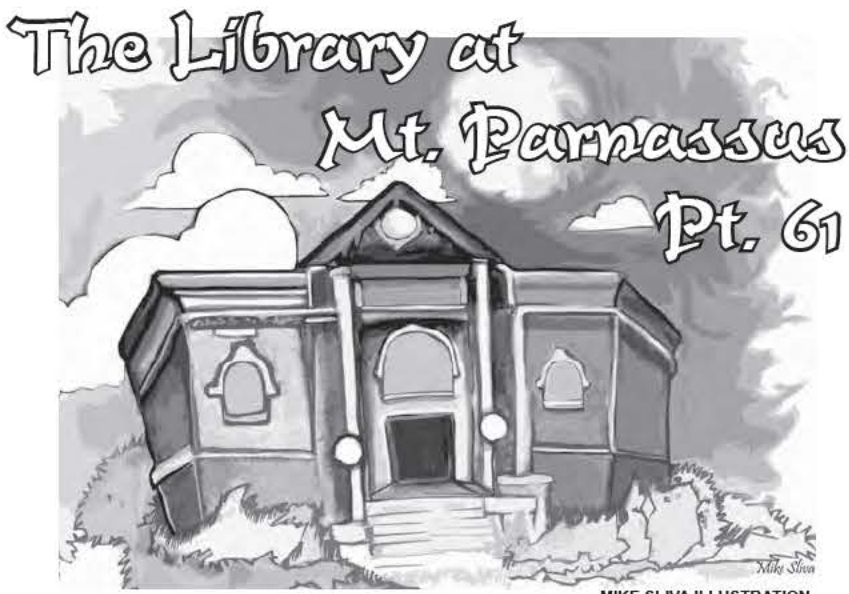
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Otis as tour guide. Lucius on the deli stand. The lottery.



By DAVID DETMOLD

I looked the guy over. He was tall with dark curly hair tied back with an ornate band. He had an open, ingenuous expression. He was wearing sandals. It was too cold out, I thought, to be wearing sandals.

"Oh, the war on poverty," I explained. "It's a byproduct of the welfare state, you know. It's a peculiar institution..." I waved toward the broken wine bottles, "for dealing with poor people, you might say."

"But poverty is the only honorable condition," he said. "Why would anyone treat a person of humble means in that degraded fashion?" We watched the woman being slowly dragged away.

"Well, for one thing," I said, "she's drunk. That never helps."

He smiled and said:

*Oh sweet upon the mountain
The dancing and the singing
The maddening rushing flight*

I looked at him more carefully. "Well, yes," I allowed. "But all things in moderation."

He seemed inordinately pleased at this remark. He leaned close and whispered, "Tell that to the maenads," and winked at me.

I had the sudden feeling someone else was listening, and looked up to find Lucius perched above us at the top of a tall display rack by the deli, stark naked. His pink toes dangled in the ropes of salami, garlic and string cheese.

"Lucius!" I called up to him. "What are you doing there?" I told the man beside me, "I've never seen him outside of the library before."

Lucius arched his bow-shaped mouth and put a pudgy finger to his lips.

"Well, after all," the man beside me said. "This is a holiday. Especially for little cherubs." He reached up and tickled the lad's toes. Lucius shifted his seat on the bare metal of the display rack and giggled.

"Come, my friend." The tall man took me by the arm. "Walk with me a while. I have more to ask, and you to tell, if you would be so kind."

We strolled along the islands, his hand on mine, warm and sympathetic. A scent of olive oil and bee balm drifted from the folds of his cloak. He was sucking an ambrosia plum and nibbling the goat cheese samples.

"What's all this?" he asked.

We had wandered over by the service desk, where long lines of people were plodding toward the blue computers.

"Oh that. The lottery."

"Ah," he said. "A familiar device. How does this one work?"

"Well, it's really quite simple. As you can see, people approach the counter, the computer terminals..."

"Anyone can play?"

"Yes. Poor people, mostly. The

unemployed. Retirees. Mill hands laid off when the factories went south. They approach the counter, give the clerk their money. Three, four, five dollars at a time. Sometimes twenty. Sometimes more. The clerk draws numbers for them at random from the computer banks. That's it. Then they find out if they've won."

"Do many win?"

"No, no. Small sums. Enough to keep them coming back. Overall, the losses are enormous, considering the income level of our town. But once in a while someone hits the jackpot."

"Oh?"

"The big money. Thousands of dollars. Millions even."

"And then?"

"The lucky winners? Oh... they are heroes for awhile. Get their pictures in the papers. Usually they move away to somewhere warmer."

"It's oddly similar."

"I guess things are the same the world over. Where are you from?"

"Olympia," he said.

We strolled past the butcher's counter, where a group of penitents lay prostrate on the floor, abasing themselves in front of a hooded man, who called out to them, "The Lamb of God!"

"Be with you always!" the penitents responded.

"The prologue is very good," remarked my friend. "Why aren't more people in the audience?"

"Perhaps they're waiting for the sequel."

"Is there a theater in this town?" In ethnic foods, he took a jar of stuffed grape leaves down off the shelf and opened it to inhale its aroma with closed eyes.

"The Palladium. But it's mostly closed in winter. A few speed punk bands rent it out on weekends, that's all." He put the jar back on the shelf and took my arm again.

"What sort of work do you do now, Otis?" he asked, as we strolled through housewares and stationery.

"I work for the Janus Corporation." Had I mentioned my name?

"I've heard of Janus. The Past Foretells the Future, right?"

"Something like that." He raised his brows quizzically. "They're into software, hardware, information storage and retrieval, intelligent network design, that sort of thing."

"And you enjoy it?"

"It's hard to say." He paused at a rack of discounted Valentines, picked one up at random and read aloud:

*Wishing you a lovely day
A little card for me to say
Simple words, forever true
Be mine, my darling, I love you.
"Execrable verse." He dropped the card back in the rack.*

Continued next week.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Horses on the Tracks; Human on the Ice

Monday, 2/23

8:42 a.m. Truck stuck on Canal Road by Paper Logic and the bridge, blocking traffic. MPD and GPD responding.

8:42 a.m. Vehicle vs. snowbank on North Leverett Road. No injuries. Report taken.

9:06 a.m. Disabled tractor trailer unit (blown brake line) on West Main Street. Services rendered.

9:34 a.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant Road reports that her neighbor's two horses were in her driveway and had moved onto the railroad tracks. Reached a railroad officer after multiple attempts; Pan Am will not allow trains to pass through until horses have been rounded up. Attempts to reach horse owners unsuccessful. Officer checked area and observed evidence showing that horses were in the area, but could not confirm with certainty that the horses were not on the tracks somewhere. Railroad officer advised Pan Am that they could resume service but to proceed with caution.

9:28 p.m. Caller reports that his RV is broken down at the Factory Hollow pull-off on Route 2 in Gill. Call given to state police; they advise that no Gill officer is on duty and that nearest MSP unit is in Ashfield. MPD en route to assist.

9:45 p.m. Chimney fire on Quarry Road. TFFD notified and en route.

Tuesday, 2/24

7:32 a.m. Two vehicle accident in parking lot of Hillside Plastics. Officer assisted parties in exchanging information.

10:31 a.m. Two vehicle accident on Vladish Avenue. One operator issued a verbal warning for failure to use care.

2:00 p.m. Report of a Jeep with CT plates stuck on a snowbank approximately halfway down Lake Pleasant Road. CT DMV lists vehicle as black in color; caller stated that vehicle was bright green. Operator tried to drive over the snowbank so she could go four-wheeling, but did not make it over. Other party assisted operator in digging vehicle out of snowbank.

2:16 p.m. Two vehicle accident on Route 47. No injuries. Report taken.

4:02 p.m. Complaint regarding a truck parked on Fifth Street with a ladder on top that is sticking out into traffic; caller is concerned that passing traffic may strike it. Officer found registered owner of truck, who will be moving the ladder.

4:27 p.m. Officer noticed a vehicle on Fifth Street with its mirror broken as if it had been struck. Spoke with registered

owner, who advised that his daughter drives the vehicle. Spoke with daughter, who stated that there is no damage to the vehicle and that the mirror was just turned in.

6:41 p.m. Caller reports a suspicious male walking up to the building just past the main Railroad Salvage building; caller concerned for party's safety. Referred to an officer.

7:06 p.m. Report of vehicle in Montague Center traveling at speeds between 20 and 30 mph, continually crossing the yellow line, at times driving in the middle of the road and opposite lane. Citation issued. Courtesy transport provided. Immediate threat filed.

Wednesday, 2/25

6:50 a.m. 911 caller from Leverett reporting 2 horses in the road in area of Hemenway Road and Cave Hill Road. Caller transferred to state police for assistance.

1:00 p.m. Caller reports a significant pothole at Montague City Road and Turnpike Road. Officer notified DPW, who stated that nothing could be done due to the weather.

2:32 p.m. Two car accident on Grout Circle involving a DPW vehicle. No injuries. Driver of DPW vehicle given a warning for failure to use care in backing.

4:19 p.m. Vehicle parked facing wrong way at Highland Cemetery. Occupants were stepping into cemetery to pay respects; now moving along.

7:35 p.m. Water leaking from ceiling down walls in a Bridge Street residence. TFFD en route.

Thursday, 2/26

6:05 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road reports that a male on a bike just came to his house asking for money. Caller did not give him any, and party left in direction of Farren Care Center. Caller believes that the same male came to a neighbor's door yesterday. Area search negative.

9:22 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant complaining of an idling train. Had already called railroad dispatch, who advised that train would be there until about 11:00 p.m. Officer advised.

9:31 p.m. Report of suspicious vehicle in Center Street area recently; newer looking red pickup truck with dark tinted windows and what appear to be temporary plates. Advised of options.

Friday, 2/27

12:24 a.m. Loud noise complaint on Montague City Road. Parties spoken to and advised of consequences should MPD need to return to night.

6:19 a.m. Caller reports hypodermic needle on sidewalk on Third Street; requests officer to remove same. Services rendered.

8:56 a.m. Report of malfunctioning lights at four-way stop by the police/fire station. Light on Turnpike Road when coming from high school is not working. Stop signs still in place at all four corners of intersection. DPW advised; responded that this would be addressed during business hours on Monday unless it was deemed an immediate hazard.

9:25 a.m. Caller from Millers Falls requests assistance regarding unwanted/harassing phone calls. Officer clear; all parties involved denied any involvement.

10:56 a.m. Report of hit and run accident in Food City Plaza parking lot. Officer advises that vehicle has little to no damage. Caller's information will be kept on file; officers will be on lookout for vehicle described by witness.

11:37 a.m. MPD Chief Dodge advises that a vehicle backed into his unmarked cruiser in Greenfield. No visible damage; no further action needed at this time.

1:48 p.m. Two vehicle accident at Turners Falls Road and Swamp Road. No injuries; one vehicle's airbag deployed, and it is leaking fluids. Verbal warning issued for failure to use care in entering traffic; however, snowbanks are quite high at this location.

5:06 p.m. Caller from Taylor Hill Road reports a raccoon nestled into their wood pile on the front porch. Raccoon has been there for approximately one hour and is not causing any problems at this time; caller is mostly concerned about her dog. Advised caller to leave animal be if it is not causing a problem; checked to make sure that there was no dog/cat food on porch enticing animal to stay. It may either leave on its own or pass away. Copy of call left for animal control officer.

8:35 p.m. Caller from Unity Street reports hearing neighbors across way fighting and throwing things, and a little girl screaming. Officer advises quiet upon arrival; two female parties and little girl were getting haircuts. No argument; all parties were fine.

9:39 p.m. Suspicious auto in caller's driveway on Park Street when caller returned home. Referred to an officer.

9:48 p.m. Caller advises that three white women are fighting outside of the Millers Falls library on King Avenue. Caller believes them to be intoxicated and said that this

happens often. Responding officers advise quiet upon arrival.

10:30 p.m. Caller from Avenue A complains of loud music coming from the downstairs apartment; unable to sleep. Officer spoke with neighbors, who will turn down music.

11:13 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports loud party with music and yelling in a neighboring apartment. Officer advises that all was quiet upon arrival.

Saturday, 2/28

11:37 a.m. Caller from N Street reports that a neighbor's dog was loose and acting aggressively toward her husband. This is reportedly an ongoing issue. Area search negative. Copy of call left for animal control officer; caller advised of options.

2:09 p.m. Northfield Mountain control room reports that their surveillance cameras are showing a man in the middle of the ice between the buoys and the dam. Party appears to be scuffing out letters in the ice. Officers and TFFD responding. Subject refusing to come back in from the ice and is walking further away, toward the dam. Additional assistance requested. Gill PD en route. Subject remains non-compliant and is holding what appears to be an ice pick. Subject apprehended.

[Redacted] was arrested and charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct.

5:14 p.m. Complaint regarding unshoveled sidewalk at Turners Falls Road and Millers Falls Road. Responding officer reports that area appears passable; hard to tell in the dark. Will leave for day shift to possibly check again tomorrow.

11:07 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports loud noises (music, people hollering and banging on floor) coming from upstairs apartment; same as last night. Officer advised.

Sunday, 3/1

12:07 a.m. Assisted Erving PD with motor vehicle stop.

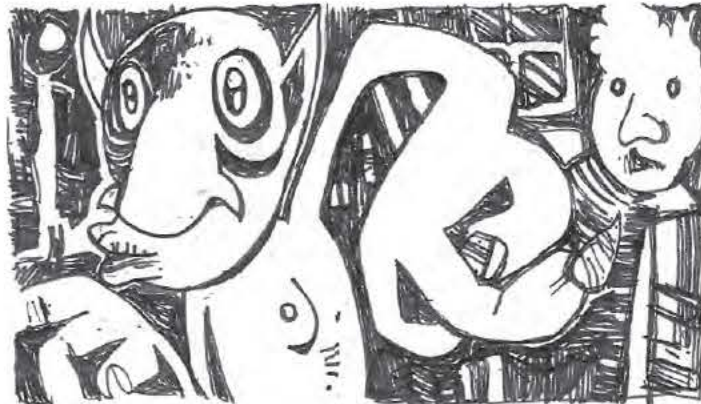
1:17 a.m. Report of shoplifting at Cumberland Farms. Area search negative.

12:03 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant reports that neighbor's horses are loose again. Officer advises that upon arrival neighbors were tending to horses at their residence.

12:53 p.m. Two vehicle accident at Seventh Street and Park Street; caller struck a vehicle that was backing out of a driveway. No injuries. One operator given verbal warning for failure to use care in backing. Officer notes that height of snowbanks was factor in accident.

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on March 3, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Downtown Neighbors Have Noise Complaints

Years ago, when there were 28 places to get a drink in downtown Turners Falls, brawling in front of the bars was not uncommon. At the noise policy hearing before the selectboard on February 28, Police chief Ray Zukowski recalled the days the Renaissance Community brought in a private security detail from Boston to maintain a semblance of order downtown, and when the selectboard ordered the most troublesome bars to hire detail officers to keep unruly patrons in line.

Times have changed, but still the mixed-use neighborhood of bars and residences in the blocks around Avenue A and Third Street is the scene of loud bands, motorcycles, and some carousing on the sidewalks and parking lots as the bars let out.

The recent statewide ban on smoking in bars has created an

added dimension to the street scene as patrons gather on the walks and patios outside to smoke, occasionally bringing the party out with them.

Yesterday's bar, at 78 Third Street, was the particular source of a number of noise complaints from loud music as well as people congregating outside. Selectboard member Pat Allen recommended that the board require bar owner Linda Morrow to hire a detail officer to ensure noise levels are kept reasonable inside and outside of the bar.

Allen turned to Zukowski for his recommendation, and he suggested that he would speak with officers working the night shift and have them pay stricter attention to noise around the Third Street bar. "We don't want to stifle business, but we certainly want people to be able to live their lives," he said.

RFP for Landfill Prepared

On March 2 members of the Montague Selectboard met with the landfill advisory committee and with consulting engineers assisting

the town to prepare a request for proposals (RFP) for development of the town-owned DEP assigned landfill site off Turnpike Road.

The purpose of the meeting was to refine criteria for the RFP on a range of topics including expected revenue, avoided costs, neighborhood impact, and other concerns associated with the proposed 34-acre landfill development.

The town would seek to have the RFP require a developer to cap the existing burn dump, prior to receiving approval to develop the adjoining landfill. This would save Montague hundreds of thousands of dollars the town would otherwise be required to spend on capping the burn dump.

Williston Appointed to Board of Health

By a three to one roll call vote, the Wendell selectboard and board of health voted Harry Williston into the position on the board of health vacated by Kanin Graton's resignation. The appointment lasts until the election on May 2, when two members will be chosen.

CHRISTIE from page B1



Director Nicole LaRoche

young actress, she played the role of Vera Claythorne, one of the major characters. The choice of this play is an homage to Georgia Beaty, Nicole's former drama teacher, and is dedicated to all drama coaches and teachers.

Since 2012, The Country Players have staged their offerings at Frontier Regional.

"Our affiliation with the Shea remains open," said LaRoche, "but, as it undergoes its own rebuilding, we have chosen to work as part of the Frontier community. We're a small, non-profit community theater troupe and we will go where our budget demands."

Meanwhile, LaRoche is quite pleased with the efforts of the cast. Frontier senior Jake Terreden plays the role of Anthony Marston, a rich, athletic young man who appears to be devoid of a conscience. One of Marston's pursuits is an enjoyment of driving recklessly.

"Jake has been in several school productions," said Nicole. "He's fabulously talented, eager, and a good student of theater."

Megan Healey is cast as Vera Claythorne. A former governess, she is naive, hopeful, and trusting while plagued by guilt and, at times, hysteria.

Mark Hildreth appears in the role of Phillip Lombard, a very cold and perceptive gent. His past is shrouded in mystery.

Joshua Mason plays William Blore, a onetime crooked police inspector who's clever but prone to blunder. Andy Price is General Mackenzie, the oldest guest and a man plagued by guilt. Louise Krieger portrays Emily Brent, an elderly religious zealot incapable of self-examination. Ted Trobaugh depicts Sir Lawrence Wargrave, a

highly intelligent elderly man recently retired as a judge.

Su Hoyle plays Dr. Edwina Armstrong, a nervous person who is seeking a calm life.

Patrick Healey, Megan's husband, is cast as Narracot, a delivery boy who is on stage in the early portion of the play.

The other two members of the cast, Bob Hartwright and David Cole, play the Rogers brothers, members of "the servant class." Hartwright portrays Thomas Rogers, smart but domineering, while Cole is Ethan Rogers, a bit timid and always complaining about his station in life.

"You never know where the story is going," said LaRoche. "Agatha Christie is known for keeping you on the edge of your seat."

Nicole is grateful that three other members of The Country Players' board of directors, along with her, make up the production team. Sue Dresser is the producer, Terry Adams house manager, and Kristen Rosinski is the costumer.

"Without my team," said LaRoche, "I couldn't do this. It takes everyone on the Board, pooling their resources and talents to make the show a success."

LaRoche thinks her responsibility as director is to bring its many elements together. "You are taking care of multiple duties," she said, "and ultimately your job is to have a vision and find a way to make it come alive. My role is to get a group of people who are new to each other to feel like a family and work as a team."

The Country Players' first production dates back to 1979 when the new association presented "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown."



Jake Terreden plays Anthony Marston.

GARDENER from page B1

than at least twenty m.p.h. over the speed limit.

That night we learn that we have, amazingly enough, threaded the weather needle – escaping the ice storm to our south and the snowstorm in Pennsylvania and New York to our north.

After yet another short night of rest, we are back on the road early on Monday, knowing that we will be able to rest at home tonight. It has felt like an especially long haul what with weather worries and poor sleep at night.

At Blandford, Massachusetts, the second highest point of Interstate 90, we are treated to the fiercest wind and cold of the entire trip. We reach home by five o'clock, having promised each other we will research the auto train, flying and car rentals before making this three-day run again.

The next day and the next are welcome for their milder temperatures but we are still exhausted and have not enjoyed the rigors of restarting a cold woodstove with a downward wind which poured smoke into the cellar, set off all of the smoke alarms and sent an unhappy cat a-howling long after the alarms have quieted.

At last the stove reverses, we have vented the space downstairs and up with windows and exhaust fans and the cat has stopped her wails of distress. Welcome home, indeed!

In a few short days, we have begun to feel like ourselves again. I open the seed packages which arrived while we were away and read about the glorious tomatoes to come. I clean and fill the mini greenhouse with new seed starter and enjoy the pleasure of planting these tiny seeds.

We start eight varieties: Celebrity and Jet Star for heartiness and flavor, Brandywine and Box Car Willie for beefsteak size, Rose for her beauty and taste, Umberto and Sungold for tangy cherry size and Cloudy Day, reputed to be resistant to Late Blight. In a week or so, the seeds will sprout and the summer's garden will be begun.

Happy homecoming, and good gardening to all!



WENDELL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Sunday, March 15 at 4 p.m. "Out of Bounds: Adventures In Transformation"

Sandra Boston creates a whirlwind of activity and inspiration that sweeps you up in its gust as she tells the story of her travels around the world and into the depths of the human heart. Be prepared to ask the question somewhere along the ride: 'What am I doing with my life that will create positive change in the world?' - for, indeed, that is what Sandra's life is all about.

- Gaella Elwell, business owner, Waldorf teacher, friend of Sandra Boston.

There is a clan of women - Vandana Shiva, Eve Ensler, Joanna Macy - warriors who have long refused to accept the life-destroying paradigm of our culture. Through their work, through their living, they have continually pushed the boundaries - creating images and visions for a life-sustaining world. Sandra Boston is a part of that clan. Read these pages. Every breath she takes is for all of us.

- Rev. Georganne Greene, Unitarian Universalist minister, Pilgrim Warrior graduate.

On March 15 at the Library, Sandra Boston will offer brief

readings from her memoir, with time for responses and questions. Every chapter tells of an adventure that changed her life. We will enjoy refreshments, book signings, and exploring a wondrous process that everyone should undertake sometime in their life to contribute to the stories that will be told about our times.

This is the saga of a woman who realizes early in her life that if she follows her own drumbeat she is going to encounter resistance from those closest to her who want her to be more "normal."

As she listens to her inner leadings and says "Yes," her life journey takes her first to Jordan and Lebanon, then on to Ghana, Malawi, Nicaragua, China, Bali, Uganda, Russia, Palestine and beyond - into the homes and hearts of people of consciousness the world around.

This is the story of what she learned, how she was changed, and what she has to teach about transforming painful family relationships, religious traditions, political struggles for justice, and cultural scripts that hold women back from the lives they want to be living.

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Snow Off the Avenue Contest



By LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – When do you think the very large pile of plowed up snow in the Food City parking lot will be gone?

The Carnegie Library runs a free annual raffle to determine who can

guess the closest date.

One entry per person, and entries close March 14. The winner will receive a Second Street Bakery gift certificate.

For more information, contact the Carnegie Library, 201 Avenue A, Turners Falls, 863-3214.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Found To Be Snow Melt...

Wednesday, 2/18
4 p.m. Report of construction barrel in Route 2 roadway in the Factory Hollow area. Greenfield PD advised.

Thursday, 2/19
9:56 p.m. Motor vehicle crash on East Main Street. State police investigated.

Friday, 2/20
10:07 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on High Street.

11 a.m. Took report of motor vehicle crash at West Main Street.

Saturday, 2/21
1:15 a.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating under the influence of alcohol and marked lanes violations.

12:50 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] of operating with a suspended license.

9:24 p.m. Alarm on French King Highway. Same secure.

Sunday, 2/22
8:30 a.m. Alarm at Erving Elementary. Same secure.

9:30 a.m. Took report of plow hitting garage on West High Street.

1:30 p.m. Report of lines down on North Street. Power company advised.

Wednesday, 2/25
1:05 p.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Lester Street.

3:20 p.m. Report of water main break on Northfield Road. Unable to locate. Found to be snow melt.

8:07 p.m. Criminal complaint issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating on a suspended license and failed suspension.

Thursday, 2/26
3:40 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Wells Street.

7:50 p.m. Suspicious vehicle at rest area on State Road. Found to be using phone.

Friday, 2/27
11:30 p.m. Assisted Northfield PD with suspicious motor vehicle on Pine Meadow Road. Assisted on scene of motor vehicle into snow bank.

NORTHERN ELEMENTS

By ANN MCLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – I am too close to the issue of the pipeline compressor station being proposed for Northfield to write a news article about it.

Instead I'm going to write blatantly from my personal viewpoint to tell you why a pipeline and compressor station in Northfield are not compatible with, and would ruin, our way of life.

In my front yard I have built a stone circle. All the stones come from the forested land I live in the middle of.

There are special stones to mark the cardinal directions. Each of these directions has traditional meaning, and taken together they describe the world.

North is associated with **Earth**. In Northfield, our earth is well-used. We are a farming community, a forested community. We are hunters, snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, hikers, and naturalists. As a town, as individuals, we are deeply connected to the earth; we actively manage our space.

The pipeline, however, is being created to carry gas extracted from the earth by fracking. Fracking is a process that breaks up the earth and its aquifers deep underground. It is violent, and inherently dangerous because the full consequences are unknown.

In the process of fracking, water is mixed with noxious chemicals which are forced underground to bring the gas to the surface. This is not only deeply disrespectful to the earth, but it pollutes the aquifers that contain our cleanest water, and creates about a million gallons of contaminated water per fracking well.

The earth in fracked areas is responding, creating earthquakes, shivering as we change the structure of the underlying rock too quickly.

East is associated with **Air**. Our air here is the quintessential "country air."

When we go outside, surrounded by trees or fields, most of us do not smell diesel fumes or garbage. Besides the seasonal manure scents, themselves a product of our closeness to the land, our air here is

healthy and clean.

A compressor station releases methane and the chemicals that are put into gas in the fracking process in "blowdowns," forcibly venting this toxic mix into the air.

This is not a process that is good for air quality or the people who will breathe it – us first, and then everyone as they spread across this region and beyond.

Air is threatened in another way too, via sound. The air in Northfield carries many sounds depending upon where you live in our sometimes flat, sometimes steep topography. You may hear Route 63, or the river; trains, or the wind; planes, or a rushing stream.

Now imagine under it all, all day and all night, constantly, the rumble of a compressor station. Compressor stations are so loud that if one was placed anywhere along the proposed strip of land in Northfield, you could still hear it all the way to the river, and beyond.

People in Erving would hear it; or people in Warwick. Imagine each summer having to choose between sleeping with earplugs or sleeping with the windows closed, cut off from the flowing air and the sounds it usually brings.

I believe my neighbors, writ large, and the historic residents of this land if they were here would, like me, prefer the air to carry natural sounds, the sounds we are used to, originating in the land, rivers, and streams.

South is associated with **Fire**. I heat with wood, and so I think about fire a lot. Wood creates one kind of fire when it burns.

Gas creates another. The sun is a fire on another scale, and if the sun that falls on New England were harvested, we could supply our energy needs without gas. I am doing it right now.

At the end of February, in the midst of this cold and these clouds, my solar array has in the past few days produced more energy than I need. And I live surrounded by trees with a clearing only large enough for a septic field.

Sun fire, here in New England, could be much more our friend.

Gas fire, not so much. When gas

burns, it releases fracking toxins into the air, along with the pollutants that cause global climate change and these record-breaking prolonged cold snaps.

When we think of what we want for Northfield, for our region, for the earth, is it more reliance on fossil fuels that are running out and that damage the planet as we use them, or is it moving toward the future?

Renewable energies provide free, clean electricity, as well as the bonus of more jobs for our neighbors.

West is associated with **Water**. When we think of water in Northfield, the beautiful and hard-working river comes to mind. The river is the reason this town, and many of us, are here. It gives us our fertile fields, our rural character, and even the capacity to create and store power.

Our watersheds are of paramount concern for many Northfield residents: farmers who count on them for irrigation, and our many environmental coalitions who clean and protect them for our use, for animal habitat, and for the future.

The construction of the pipeline

through this area (including crossing under the river itself) would go through many protected watershed areas, destroying their natural balance.

But there's more. Creating this tunnel would link the underground aquifers we depend upon for well water, and then run a pipe carrying pollutants and toxins through them all. Leaking, spilling, the act of construction itself has the potential to pollute, through these connected corridors, all our waters at once.

How much more does the water of our region have to take? Our ancestors acceded to the building of the Quabbin reservoir because they believed that their fellow citizens in Boston needed the water to survive. Towns were destroyed, land taken.

This pipeline proposal comes from the same mindset. Once again, those of us in the West are being asked to bear the brunt of "development." This time, let's take a stand for our water, and leave it where it belongs.

Which brings us back to Earth, our own earth, which would be

reamed open through blasting and digging, and threaded through with a pipeline which would remain in place forever, past its useful life, a buried legacy of blight in all land it crosses.

Mornings, before dawn, this is what I think about as I sit out in my circle and contemplate life, the universe, and everything.

I try, consciously, to move my thoughts beyond myself, beyond my land, out beyond the boundaries of what I can see in Northfield and of what I can feel at the moment. I try to connect with what's out there. And whatever part of the proposed pipeline I connect with is not good – for me, for Northfield, or for the larger world.

It is not shortsighted or selfish to say that there is a better way to move forward than fracking and hacking through the countryside. We have a duty to the earth, air, fire, and water that we depend upon.

We must do everything we can to protect them from this destructive project.



MCLOUGHLIN PHOTO

"Earth, water, fire and air / met together in a garden fair..."

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OBITUARY

Joan Penelope (Luey) Coburn "Penny"

April 6, 1943 – February 24, 2015

Penny Coburn was born Joan Penelope Luey in Montague on April 6, 1943, and passed away on February 24, 2015 in California at the age of 71.

Penny is survived by her husband John Coburn and five children: David Coburn (Nina Coburn) of Wisconsin; Debbie Shaw (Dennis Shaw) of Escalon, CA; Susan Biggs (Dan Biggs) of Waterford, CA; Shawn Coburn Dietzel, of Escalon, California; and Daniel Coburn (Audra Coburn) of Manteca, CA. Additionally she has 17 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. She also has two sisters, Martha Stiles of Greenfield, MA, and Marion De Paula of San Pedro, CA.

Penny was the daughter of William D. Luey II and Barbara Helen (Cota) Luey. She was raised Montague and attended the Montague public school system, graduating from Turners Falls High School in 1960. She spent many years in the Millers Falls Drum and Bugle Corp.

At the age of 18, she joined the military and became a "Specialist 4" in the Women's Army Corp. She met John, the love of her life, who was to become her husband of 52 years, and soon married and found her way to California.

She worked as a nurse's aide in the military and at the Doctor's Hospital of Manteca, California, as well

as at the Behavioral Health Center in Stockton. Most recently she was co-owner of Coburn Real Estate Investments in Escalon, CA.

She had a deep love for her family, and above all will be remembered most for being a devoted wife, mother, sister, and grandmother. She greatly enjoyed caring for people, especially those in need.



She created and led a ministry for several years for people who suffered in multiple ways known as "The Love Chapter". She found great delight in gardening, being in nature, family campouts, photography, writing, cooking, and arts and crafts.

She had an adventurous spirit full of curiosity and fun. She was best known for her gentle, quiet spirit and listening ears. She was a woman of few words, but they were always powerful, loving, and compassionate.

As much as we will miss her, we are confident that because of her great faith in the Lord, that she

was enthusiastically received into Heaven's gates and is with Him now.

A graveside service and Celebration of Life were held in Escalon, CA on Tuesday.

Introducing...

OYSTERGIRL'S GUIDE TO REAL LIVING

By VANESSA QUERY

"We were not born critical of existing society. There was a moment in our lives (or a month, or a year) when certain facts appeared before us, startled us, and then caused us to question beliefs that were strongly fixed in our consciousness – embedded there by years of family prejudices, orthodox schooling, imbibing of newspapers, radio, and television." – Howard Zinn

Greetings, Montague! Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Vanessa, aka Oystergirl. I currently live in Providence, Rhode Island, but am a frequent visitor to the Montague area. I look forward to connecting with you all through this monthly column.

I am called Oystergirl because I love real, fresh, local, nutrient-dense food that includes, but is not limited to, oysters. My love for natural, simple food extends into a love for a natural, simple life in general.

I was born and bred in Rhode Island, and am living there again after getting a bit of wanderlust out of my system. I come across a lot of things on my travels: new ways to think about food, home, politics, living life itself, and new ways to engage in the acts of eating, living, and politicking.

Over the years, a lot of these things began to overlap with each other. And a whole lot of them ended up being about trying to be healthy and happy in ways that may go against the grain of our culture's conventional wisdom, but that are actually more in harmony with our-

selves, with others, with the rest of the earth.

The movement with which I identify the most, the lens through which I critique conventional wisdom, is the ancestral or paleo community. Paleo, or some interpretation of paleo, has become a bit trendy lately, so I'd like to explain what I mean by I use that term, so we're on the same page.



Oystergirl, a.k.a. Vanessa Query, with her son Desmond.

The idea, essentially, is to eat real food and live a life that treats your body nicely. How do we do that? Look at what humanoids thrived on for the millions of years our recorded history ignores, and continue to thrive on in non-industrialized areas. Be critical of modern food science and processed foods with adamant health claims. Learn how you can do right by your body and the earth, and not just one or the other as though they are mutually exclusive.

My version of paleo goes beyond

food, beyond exercise, beyond every-day life. It's part of a larger narrative that connects these things with the rest of life, culture, and thought. It's connected to how I exercise and the shoes I wear, and also to how I think about things and make decisions about where and how to spend my time (and money). It's all connected.

For me, identifying as paleo means having a wider view of human history. It's about looking to the past, to our ancestors, for clues as to how to move forward and live in a society that is in many ways really out of whack.

It's not about fetishizing the past and being some kind of neo-Luddite. It's about considering that early human history wasn't as bad as modern-civilization-lovers claim it was, just because there wasn't indoor plumbing or canned yams; that a lot of things worked then that maybe don't anymore.

Living in the modern world, we have many tools at our disposal to teach us how to live and (hopefully) thrive: science, religion, Google. But beyond "authority" and/or strangers, we also have our friends, family, and community. We have ourselves: our ability to think critically and to run our own experiments on ourselves, to find what works for us.

In this column, I hope to share with you some of the conclusions I've come up, the things that work for me, as well as my ever-progressing research and self-experimentation. The first thing I will tackle is hygiene!

To contact Vanessa, email oystergirl@montaguereporter.org.

Call For Artists

Turners Falls RiverCulture is looking for art that addresses the change of seasons, transformation, re-birth and hope. The exhibition will be in the Avenue A Storefront Galleries from March 14 to April 12. All media will be considered—painting, photography and sculpture.

Artists may submit up to 6 works.

Email jpegs of your work along with a short description to riverculture@gmail.com. Please note, the galleries are not heated and art should not react to cold temperatures.

Contact Suzanne LoManto at (413) 835-1390 or visit www.turnersfallsriverculture.org for more information.

Agricultural Plastics Recycling Program Now Up and Running

The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District has been awarded a Massachusetts Community Innovation Challenge Grant and a grant from MassDEP to implement a FREE recycling program for agricultural plastics.

Four Franklin County transfer stations are now accepting agricultural plastics for free. Any Franklin County farmer may drop off at any of the four collection sites, at the transfer stations in Greenfield, Charlemont/Shelburne, Deerfield, and Wendell. Hours vary. Before dropping off items, participants must sign in with transfer station attendant.

This program accepts hay bale wrap, greenhouse film, silage cover, maple tubing, and drip tape. Shake off loose dirt, stones, hay. Keep dry.

The following items will not be accepted: plastic mulch, garden pots, netting, row cover, or twine.

Agricultural plastics will be baled and shipped to Delta Plastics in Arkansas to be recycled into 100% recycled content trash bags.

For more information, including preparation instructions and photos of acceptable items, see: www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.

Hours for each site are as follows:

Charlemont/Shelburne Transfer Station (just outside Shelburne Falls on North River Road, Charlemont): Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Wednesdays 3 to 7 p.m., and Saturdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (413) 625-8231.

Greenfield Transfer Station (at the intersection of Cumberland Road and Wisdom Way): Tuesdays and Wednesdays 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to noon (until 2:30 p.m. after March 15). Call (413) 772-1528, x6106.

Deerfield Transfer Station (42 Lee Road): Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call (413) 665-4645.

Wendell Transfer Station at (341 New Salem Road) Tuesdays noon to 6 p.m., Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Call (978) 544-7287.

All questions about the program should be directed to Franklin County Solid Waste Management District at (413) 772-2438, or info@franklincountywastedistrict.org. See www.franklincountywastedistrict.org for more information.

MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1 (800) 439-2370 (TTY/TDD). The District is an equal opportunity provider.

Montague Needs You

Did you know that you had the power to approve town budgets and town bylaws? Did you know that Montague is looking for Town Meeting Members? Some towns have Open Town Meetings, where any registered voter of that particular town may show up to a town meeting and vote. But Montague has a Representative Town Meeting, meaning an elected legislative body called Town Meeting Members to do the voting. We need you to become an elected Town Meeting Member.

Montague currently needs town meeting members from every precinct. Currently we only have 113 town meeting members. We need a body of 126 members. There should

be 21 members from each of the six precincts.

There is an Annual Town Meeting every first Saturday in May. Additionally, there are one to three Special Town Meetings, held in evenings throughout the year as needed.

Please come into Town Hall and ask for nomination papers to get your name on the May 18 ballot. You only need to obtain 10 signatures of registered voters from your home precinct, and your own signature counts.

Nomination papers can be picked up at the Town Clerk's office until Thursday, March 26. If you would like more information call the Town Clerk's office at 863-3200, ext. 203.

Free Preschool and Home Visiting: Now Enrolling for Fall

The Parent-Child Development Center has openings in our FREE Head Start half-day preschool programs and FREE Early Head Start and Head Start home-visiting programs in Franklin, Hampshire and Western Hampden Counties for Fall 2015. We are now enrolling infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

We also offer state-subsidized, sliding scale options for your full-day childcare needs. PCDC's high

quality educational environments are designed according to best practice and follow EEC, NAEYC, and Head Start guidelines.

Limited transportation is available.

To enroll in Franklin County, please call (413) 475-1405. In Hampshire County, call (413) 387-1250. Visit www.communityaction.us for more information.

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ONGOING:

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 MONDAY

Montague Center Library: *Evening Story Time*. Young children and their families are invited to wind down at the end of the day with stories. 6:30-7 p.m.

EVERY TUESDAY

Slate Memorial Library, Gill: *Story Hour*, stories, popcorn, and a hands-on craft project. We welcome new families, 10 a.m.

Leverett Library *Spanish Conversation Group*. Brush up on or improve your Spanish in a casual and friendly environment, 4 to 5 p.m.

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

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls-Story Time: Thematic stories, projects, and snacks for young children with Ruth, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

EVERY THURSDAY

Millers Falls 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.

EXHIBITS:

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *An exhibit of historic photographs of villages, hamlets and hollows, reproduced from the collection of the Swift River Valley Historical Society* on display in the Great Hall. On display through March 28.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *The Fourth Annual Erotic Art Show*. Art of more than two dozen local and regional artists working in a wide array of materials along the erotic spectrum from *mild* to WILD. Through March 14. Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton: *Mary Bauermeister: The New York Decade* This exhibition is the first to concentrate on the work of German artist Mary Bauermeister (b. 1934) during the decade she lived and worked in the United States from 1962 to 1972. Featuring her signature optical lens boxes, assemblages, stone reliefs, drawings, and other works. Free admission 2nd Friday of each month, 4 to 8 p.m. On view through May 24.

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Roosters*, classic rock dance music by Bruce Scofield & Mark Feller, 8 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Falltown String Band*, 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

Greenfield Community College, Main Campus, Sloan Theater: GCC Chorus opens its spring semester concert series with a free preview concert: "Bach and Handel." The GCC Chorus is under the direction of Margery Heins, with soloists from the group, and with Marilyn Berthelette, accompanist. 12:15 to 12:45 p.m.

Frontier Regional High School, South Deerfield: *The Country Players Present: Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None"*, \$, 7 p.m.

tie's "And Then There Were None", \$, 7 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Linear Downfall* (Nashville), *Flaming Dragons of Middle Earth*, *Wicked Rot*, *Ratatoing*. All ages/substance free. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*, reggae, 9:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Drew Patton's 1940's Hit Parade*, 7 p.m.

Academy of Charlemont, Charlemont: *The Crucible*

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Erving Public Library, *Machines and Mechanisms*, *Lego Duplo*



Acoustic, finger-style guitarist/singer Caleb Wetherbee performs at the Great Falls Discovery Center Coffee House on Friday, March 13th at 7 p.m.

with Library *Lego Lady*, 11 a.m.

Frontier Regional High School, South Deerfield: *The Country Players Present: Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None"*, \$, 7 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Kristin Hoffmann with special guest Alan Williams*, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Jukin*, Rock/Reggae/Funk, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Sawmill Arts Gallery, Montague: *Photography of Collin Chmielowiec and Josh Allen*, reception 2 to 4 p.m. Collin, originally from Arizona and Josh, a native of Ohio are both technically trained at the Hallmark Institute of Photography.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Ray Mason*, 2:30 p.m.

UMass Fine Arts Center, Amherst: *Paddy Moloney The Chieftains* and special guests, FAC Concert Hall, \$, 7 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Food For Change* film showing. This locally-made documentary

about the history of food co-ops in the U.S. Filmmaker Steve Alves in attendance for discussion following the film. Fundraiser for the Grange, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Crow's Rebellion*, Warped Americana, 8 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*, 9 p.m.

MONDAY, MARCH 9

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Nora's Stellar Open Mic Cabaret*, 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

Greenfield Community College, Downtown Greenfield: *Bill Benner*, previews the impending turn toward spring with his symposium entitled *Climate Change in Our Own Back Yards*, \$, 2 to 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Shout Lulu*, Southern string band, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

UMass Fine Arts Center, Amherst: *Song of the Jasmine by Ragamala Dance Company*, with saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa, guitarist Rez Abbasi and the Carnatic ensemble. FAC Concert Hall, \$, 7:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Scott Pomeroy Fear No 80s*, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Surly Temple & Friends*, Jim Henry, Doug Plavin and Friends, 8 p.m.

Doug Plavin and Friends, 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

Frontier Regional School: *The Country Players Present Agatha Christie's And Then There Were None*, \$, 7 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Caleb Wetherbee* performs at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Barrett Anderson*, Hypno Boogie Blues! 9 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Dana Osterling & Sara Rachelle - AngryGal Records Showcase*, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Frontier Regional School: *The Country Players Present Agatha Christie's And Then There Were None*, \$, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Free Range*, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

Frontier Regional School: *The Country Players Present Agatha*

Christie's *And Then There Were None*, \$, 2 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*, 9 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Lexi Weege*, sassy, jazzy blues, 8 p.m.

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BRIDGE from page B1

wooden picket of the proposed bridge side-walls.

In addition, the Western Massachusetts Electric Company (now Eversource Energy) had been successfully induced to donate 48 utility poles for bridge trestle support, and the late-longtime U.S. Congressman Silvio O. Conte of Pittsfield, whose Western Massachusetts district included Montague, honored a promise to grease the federal money skids and obtained a Comprehensive Employment & Training Act grant, which enabled the LPVA to hire contract construction workers to supplement the free-will labor of villagers.

As the calendar flipped to 1975, bridge specifications were drafted and blueprints produced. Seedlings which had grown to adulthood during the bridge-less era were cut and removed from the footbridge's projected path.

Brush and remnants of decaying debris from the Rutter bridge were cleared and hauled away.

Survey work was completed. Cement bases were poured. Support poles were hoisted. Bridge decking was laid. Hundreds of name-bearing pickets were nailed to sidewall supports ... and ... presto-abracadabra ... after four months of grueling dawn-to-dusk sweat-equity work, from spring to deep into summer, the Bridge of Names was completed on time, and on budget, too.

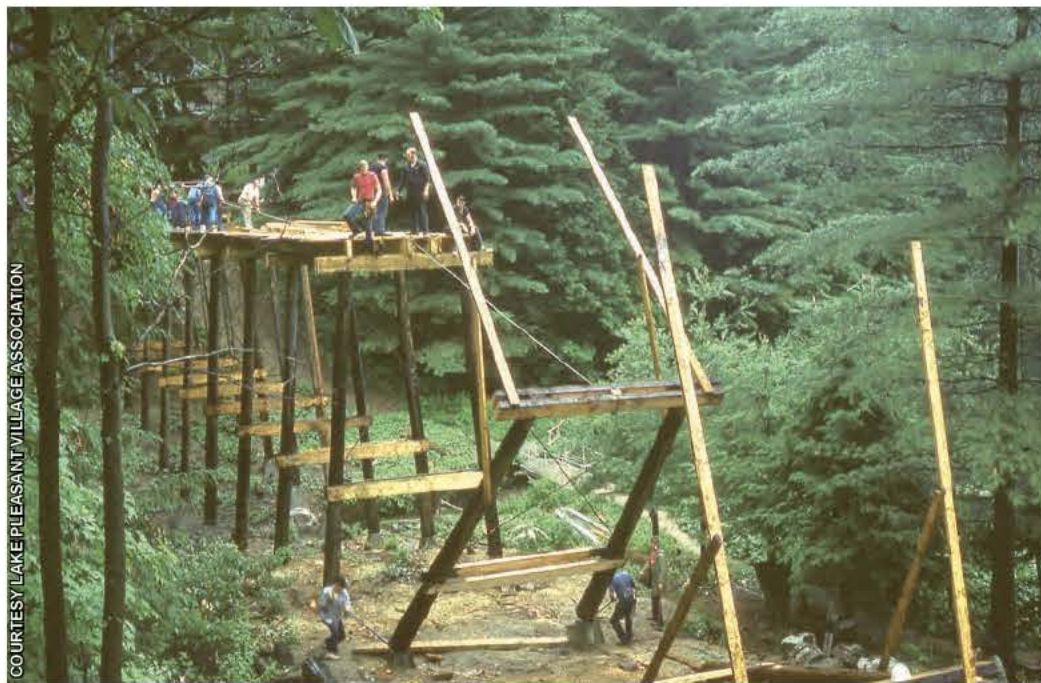
"Just about everybody worked on building the bridge," Beck said. Retired villagers came out of retirement and volunteered seven days a week, a full shift, plus all the overtime Bob Begg could coax out of them.

Others, including Beck, had bread-and-butter employment obligations which restricted them to off-daily-duty and weekend wood-sawing, hammer wielding membership in the bridge-warrior volunteer brigade.

One week after the Bridge of Names was born, the LPVA incorporated as a non-profit organization. Begg was elected its first president, thus becoming in village lore the LPVA's equivalent to our new nation's George Washington.

The organization's constitution established the loftiest of numerous lofty goals, vowing "maintenance of... the Lake Pleasant Bridge of Names... in perpetuity."

Formal dedication of the footbridge occurred in August 1976, in ceremonies marked with much pomp and lots of circumstance, including parade floats, marching bands and majorettes, as part of Montague's Bicentennial



COURTESY LAKE PLEASANT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Heave, ho: The crew raises sections staged on the ravine floor.

Year celebration of the birth of the USA.

Beginning with the Great Depression years of the 1930s, like the last leg of the fiery journey of a shooting star, Lake Pleasant had seen a steady steep decline from its former "golden years."

Spiritualist influence in the village waned, as did Spiritualism itself on the canvas of American religious life. Cottages fell into disrepair and were repossessed by banks for loan delinquencies and the town for unpaid taxes.

According to an editorial in the then-Greenfield Recorder on the eve of the village's 100th anniversary in August, 1974, "Happy birthday wishes to Lake Pleasant can be said loudly and proudly.

The Lake may have overcome more than any other area community in surviving all these years... The smallest of the five villages in the Town of Montague, it was founded as a summer resort community... As the older persons active in the Spiritualist societies died, few younger persons came along with their vitality and interest ...

"The community was not considered a garden spot for year-round residence. In fact, only a half-dozen years ago the SPCC, Montague Welfare Department, Board of Health, selectmen and other agencies undertook to demolish several buildings not fit for living.

There was a strong fear that the Lake was building up as a stop for gypsy welfare recipients from other states."

Citing that agency action helped "clean up

the village," the editorial also stated, "More important, it helped spur the residents to help themselves ... Other villages in Franklin County should be watching closely.

The pride that is Lake Pleasant's is the force that keeps communities from dying and, in fact, makes them such wonderful places to live."

Following a three-year term as LPVA president, and believing that his village revitalization visions were more than well on the way to full-blown realization, Begg left the home he had modernized on Denton Street and lived for a year in England.

When he returned to the country in 1981, Begg and his family settled in Ashfield and operated Highland Sugarbush Farm. One year later, according to his obituary, the architect of the Village of Lake Pleasant's up-by-its-own-bootstraps turnabout died at the Veterans Medical Center in Northampton.

Two commemorative brass plates are anchored to a crossbeam in the blockhouse on the Bluffs side of the footbridge. Wording on one plate lauds Frank Bickford and construction of the first bridge in 1888, and also credits Robert Begg whose dream built the 1975 Bridge of Names.

The wording on the other plate says "Without the cooperation and labor so unselfishly given, this dream could never have become a reality."

"Bob Begg was the chief, as far as I'm concerned," Beck said. "It was completely his dream to put a new bridge up. There's no doubt in my mind that without him nobody else could

have done it.

"He's the only one who ever seriously talked about actually doing it. Building the bridge got the village headed in a better direction. The Bridge of Names is the best thing that has ever happened to the Village of Lake Pleasant."

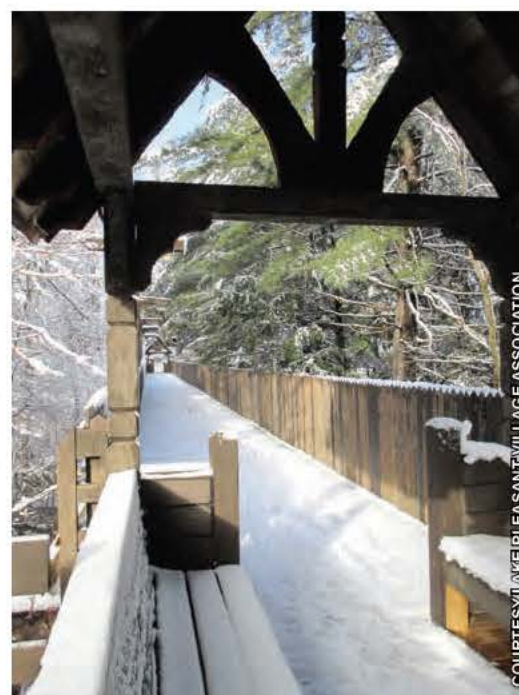
In the proverbial final analysis, the legacy of the saga of the Bridge of Names, in essence, is this: it is the Village of Lake Pleasant's tribute to itself, its gift of self-grace.

It was village leadership that conceived the dream, village spirit that fueled transformation of dream to reality, and village muscle that built the landmark footbridge now celebrating its 40th year of existence.

The footbridge was the catalyst for Lake Pleasant's emergence from community comatosity, and, as did Lazarus, rising up from the dead.

The Bridge of Names is a symbol, and a fact, of the unity of a village which once upon a time had been cleaved asunder... initially by design of nature, and twice thereafter as verifying victim of the universal truth of the Law of Organic Certitude: that through the inviolable terms of time, and without exception, life is in reality a one-way ride with a non-refundable ticket from origin of birth to destiny of death.

But heart can always be taken, and Lake Pleasant-ers have certainly done so, that the state of death is followed by rebirth, the phoenix can rise from its own ashes ... and so the cycle goes forever on.



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