



The Montague Reporter

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

YEAR 12 – NO. 21

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 13, 2014

GMRSD

School Committee Majority Votes for Affordable Budget

By PATRICIA PRUITT

Just one week ago, on March 5, at the joint Gill-Montague finance committee and selectboard meeting in town hall, Montague learned it would have to find another \$41,258 above the town's designated "affordable assessment" of \$8,104,381 for its share of school costs.

During the past week, however, the numbers shifted again for the school. This time it was due to a pleasant surprise, as the state health care (GIC) costs came in at a 1% increase, rather than the 4.5% increase budgeted for originally.

This amounted to a \$93,000 savings which, coupled with a judicious decrease of \$54,057 in utilities costs, allowed the school budget to absorb the Montague shortfall.

It also made it possible for the schools to take the Adjustment Counselor position off the list of proposed staffing reductions. The final proposal includes 10 layoffs and adds 3 new positions.

At the March 5 meeting, Gill had indicated it can pay a 3% increase this year in its assessment, but is only assessed in the budget for \$1,440,676, an increase over last year of \$21,168, or 1.5%.

This is good news for the towns on at least two levels: the continuation

see GMRSD page A5

Fresh Local Grocery Planned for Avenue A

By DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS – Chris Menegoni and Bridgette Chaffee are hoping to expand Great Falls Harvest, their eclectic local foods restaurant, to the next level this summer, by opening Great Falls Market, a local foods CSA pickup, deli, and whole foods coop.

Harvest is located in the rear of the former VFW building on Third Street in Turners, and the market would be in the same building, in the 1,000-square-foot storefront off Avenue A.

Menegoni and Chaffee have teamed up with Kyra Kristof, cofounder of the online local food marketplace Provender, to host an open house and community discussion on Wednesday, March 19, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Great Falls

Harvest.

They invite the wider Franklin County community to discuss the possibilities such a center for locally sourced fresh and prepared foods could provide.

As Menegoni and Chaffee envision it, Great Falls Market would allow local farmers, already heading into town to make deliveries to their restaurant, to make better use of their time and resources by dropping off extra fresh produce in season at the connecting storefront market.

There, it would be available for same-day pickup by members or shoppers, in the closest thing to a seven day a week farm-to-table indoor market downtown.

Turners has not seen such a market since 1987, when the

see MARKET pg A3



LINDY WHITON PHOTO

Harvest's Menegoni (left) has teamed up with Kyra Kristof of Provender to develop the market.

No Bids for Powers Block: Montague Seeks "Blight" Designation To Encourage Investment in Millers Falls



SAWYER-LAUCANNO PHOTO

The town found no takers for its most recent offer of the Powers Block.

By JEFF SINGLETON and CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

Being designated a "slum and blight area" actually increases property values.

That was one rather surprising message conveyed to about a dozen Millers Falls residents at a sometimes contentious public hearing on March 5 in the local library.

The hearing was a public information/public input session, a prelude to a study designed to document the condition of the commercial area of Millers. It will be conducted by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

The meeting was attended by about ten local residents, along with Montague town planner Walter

Ramsey, M.J. Adams of the Franklin Regional Housing Authority, and Megan Rhodes, a planner from FRCOG.

The government representatives walked the group through what was involved in the study due in September of this year. The FRCOG will be taking the lead.

Ramsey noted that the zone is limited to a few blocks in the heart of the downtown, because a grant request for all of downtown Millers Falls was rejected in 2010.

Initially, FRCOG will be photographing the focus area in the center of the village – East Main Street, West Main Street, and contiguous properties.

Engineers will next assess the infrastructure, including water, sewer

see MILLERS page A3

Seed-Saving Library Opens in Wendell

By SHARON WACHSLER

Last week saw the official opening of the Wendell Seed-Saving Library. Gail Mason, Wendell resident and founder of the project, assisted by Nina Renshaw of Granby, gave presentations on Tuesday and Saturday at the Wendell Free Library, where the new seed bank is based.

The seed library is intended as a bulwark against homogenization and commodification of seeds at the national and international levels.

Organizers hope that by growing and saving organic and heirloom seeds in Franklin County, "pure" seeds will be saved for generations to come, supporting local food security, sustainability, and

autonomy.

The presentations focused on instructing participants on how the seed bank works and how to take out seeds now and return them in the fall.

Following the presentation, Wendell and New Salem residents chose the seeds they will "borrow" from the bank over the coming growing season.

Mason said that she and Renshaw, who run Moonlight Turtle Lodge of Cooleyville Road in Wendell, had been "eating, sleeping, breathing, and dreaming" the Seed Saving Library for the past several months, and were very excited to get it off the ground.

"This is something [we] can leave as a legacy for future generations," she said.

Mason began her pre-

sentations by thanking the community institutions and individuals who have helped bring it to fruition. Started with funds from the Wendell Food Security Project, the Seed Saving Library has also been supported by the Wendell Free Library.

Mason particularly praised head librarian Rosie Heidkamp, who "put in the work to make this a reality inside the library," including purchasing additional organic and heirloom seeds for patrons to buy to supplement the seed library's offerings.

The Wendell Cultural Council funded the colorful display celebrating, and alerting library visitors to, the seed library.

Em Jollie designed the whimsical packets – featuring a turtle reclining in the moonlight – which seed savers will return their seeds in after harvest.

Forty people have signed up to participate in the seed library. While only about half that number attended the orientations, they were eager and engaged.

When Mason delivered the news that Groton started a seed library last year, making Wendell's the fourth seed bank in Massachusetts, many participants nodded with appreciation, while one piped up, "Athol's starting one,

see SEEDS page A4

Gill Elementary Takes First Place in Regional "Imagination" Tourney

By CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

Gill Elementary School took first place at the regional Destination Imagination tournament this past Saturday, March 8.

Sixth graders Maia Castro-Santos, Nadya Baum, Elsie Almeida, Alexis Dimitriou, Maeve Beck and Althea Tierney took first place out of seven middle school teams.

Gill will now advance to the state tournament in Worcester on March 29. If successful in Worcester, the team will have the opportunity to compete in May at the global finals in Tennessee.

Gill principal Kathleen Adams said, "We are all proud of their accomplishment as well as the other three teams that competed."

Adams noted that over the past five months, 32 Gill students in five teams have been working to solve scientific and structural challenges in an international program called Destination Imagination.

According to fifth-grade teacher, David Grout, who introduced Destination Imagination to Gill Elementary, the competition is a creative problem solving challenge that involves students from elementary school through college in 46 states and 30



Gill Elementary's Destination Imagination team. From left to right: Maeve Beck, Nadya Baum, Maia Castro-Santos, Alexis Dimitriou, Althea Tierney, manager Rebecca Beck, and Elsie Almeida.

countries.

The challenge presented the Gill students was to demonstrate through a performance, with props and sets, how humans could survive in an extreme environment.

Competitions for different age groups are held at the regional, state and global levels.

On Saturday, four Gill teams brought their creations and presented their solutions to appraisers.

They also responded to on-the-spot-challenges that needed to be solved in under 10 minutes.

Adams said, "All of these teams did a phenomenal job and we are so proud of what they accomplished."

Grout couldn't have been more pleased: "This was the first year for the program. Just to compete was success. But these kids are going to

the state tournament."

One more Gill team will be competing at another regional competition on March 22nd.

Destination Imagination has been led by Grout and parent volunteers. The students, parents and Grout have been preparing for this competition every Friday afternoon and as the tournament approached, weekends and school vacation as well.

Grout, however, noted that the students are completely responsible for answering the challenge, and concocting the performances, sets and props.

"They actually take a pledge to do their own work," he said.

Grout, himself, participated in Destination Imagination while a student in New

see GILL page A4



WACHSLER PHOTO

Nina Renshaw (l) and Gail Mason (r) with the seed library.

The Montague Reporter

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What’s Wrong With The Conclusion?

For the past several years, sexual assault in the U.S. Military has been a cause for alarm.

According to the Department of Defense, about 19,000 sexual assaults occur each year in the military. But according to the Pentagon, only 1,108 troops filed for an investigation in 2013.

Of those, only 575 cases were processed, and only 96 were deemed worthy of action (court-martial).

The problem was long overlooked. The 1991 Tailhook scandal in Las Vegas, in which more than 100 Navy and Marine Corps aviation officers allegedly sexually assaulted at least 83 women and seven men, did get some heads wagging.

But nothing much really happened: some lower-level officers were formally disciplined, or refused advancement in rank, but their commanders got off.

In 1996 the sordid Aberdeen, Maryland scandal broke, in which one officer and several sergeants were charged and convicted of a variety of offenses, including sodomy, adultery, communicating a threat, obstructing justice and disobeying orders.

Perhaps because the soldiers were mainly non-commissioned officers, justice prevailed, to some degree.

But what was evident, even in the 1990s was that there was a culture within the military which gave tacit approval to sexual assault.

In 2004, the Department of Defense created the Care for Victims of Sexual Assault Task Force, whose findings indicated the need for a more powerful and centralized organization to address the issue.

This led to the formation of the Joint Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, which eventually transitioned into the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO).

And while it seemed that the military was beginning to recognize they had a problem, assaults continued and continue.

A Pentagon anonymous survey cites an estimated 35 percent increase over the past two years in military personnel victimized by sexual assault and related offenses. One estimate puts the number of sexual assaults in the military at 70 per day.

This is an epidemic, and it’s not just a few horny enlisted men

causing a problem. Most recently, a number of high-ranking officers have been accused of a variety of assaults.

Air Force Lt. Col. James Wilkerson was convicted in November 2012 of aggravated sexual assault of a physician’s assistant who was spending the night at his home in Aviano, Italy, where he was based at the time as inspector general for the 31st Fighter Wing.

He spent three months in jail before Lt. Gen. Craig Franklin, commander of the Third Air Force, dismissed the jury verdict and reinstated the pilot.

Wilkerson retired this last January with full pension, although with only the rank of a major.

Last May, Air Force Lt. Col. Jeffrey Krusinski, who once led the branch’s sexual assault response team, was arrested in Arlington, Virginia and accused of grabbing a woman’s breasts and buttocks. She responded by hitting him several times.

In November, he was acquitted.

In January, Lt. Col. Brian Lofton, an Army officer assigned to U.S. Special Operations Command Africa, was convicted of sexually assaulting a woman at his home in late 2012, but the jury’s sentence allowed the 18-year veteran to remain in the service.

At his court-martial, Lofton was found guilty of violating Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, in connection with a charge he held the woman down and forcibly kissed her breasts against her will.

The jury sentenced Lofton to a reprimand, a \$1,500 monthly pay forfeiture for one year, and a two-month restriction that limits the officer’s movements to his home and his duty station. It did not, however, sentence Lofton to dismissal from the service.

Last week, the Army began investigating Lt. Col. Joseph Morse regarding sexual abuse allegations against an officer who trains military prosecutors who handle sexual and physical abuse cases.

According to the Army’s Criminal Investigation Command, Morse allegedly groped a female Army lawyer while both were attending a legal conference in Northern Virginia in 2011.

Also last week, Army Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair pleaded guilty at his court martial to having improper relationships with three women, but continued to challenge charges



LOCAL BRIEFS

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

Compiled by DON CLEGG

The Turners Falls Branch of Greenfield Savings Bank is **hosting 3 events** over the next few days. First is a celebration of a new free checking gift with local DJ Bobby C on Friday, March 14, from 2:45 to 4:30 p.m. Bobby C will be spinning the tunes.

Next is an Introduction to to Basic Tai Chi for healthy adults on Saturday, March 15, from 10 to 11 a.m. with Lisa Enzer and Deborah Yafee.

Finally, on St. Patrick’s Day, Monday March 17, enjoy the Irish Music of Ray and Rob from 10 a.m. to noon.

Share your music, poetry or art in a supportive atmosphere on Thursday, March 20, and the third Thursday of every month. The Brick House Community Resource Center, at 24 Third Sreet in Turners Falls, will be hosting a community open mic called The Bridge.

All ages are welcome. No drugs/ alcohol. Light refreshments provid-

ed. Signup starts at 6 p.m. and the show starts at 6:30 p.m.

Join Big Brothers Big Sisters of Franklin County for a **fun night of trivia**, Friday March 21. Come alone or bring some friends; the cost is just \$10 per player. Ten rounds of 10 trivia questions.

Bring your own snacks with a cash bar available all night. There is a cash prize for the winning team. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the trivia starts promptly at 7 p.m. Held at St Kazimierz Society in Turners Falls. For further info or to register a team call (413) 772-0915.

The Relay for Life team of the YMCA in Greenfield is planning a **bus trip to Mohegan Sun** on Saturday, March 22. This is a big fundraiser and a lot of fun.

Buses will leave the parking lot of the courthouse in Greenfield at 8 a.m. sharp and the Red Roof Inn in South Deerfield at 8:15.a.m. sharp. They will depart from Mohegan Sun at 5 p.m. the same day.

Organizers will serve refreshments and some snacks, and there

will be raffles for some great prizes. Tickets are \$40 and you will receive \$10 in tokens and \$10 food credit.

If you are interested, please contact Pam at (413)773-3646 ext 427, or Mariellen at (413)773-3646 ext 440. The event is not sponsored by the YMCA in Greenfield.

The Country Players Theater Group is **hosting a Trivia Night** on Saturday, March 22, from 6:30 to 11 p.m. at French King Entertainment Center, 55 French King Highway, to help raise money to start a Youth Theater Group. Entry fee is \$10 per person, and you can have 10 people max per team. Winning team prize is \$100 cash. Cash bar available. Basket drawings. Dessert trays available for purchase. Costumes are welcome. For reservations call Dave Peck at (413) 992-7194.

The Keep Smiling “Relay for Life” team is hosting a **fundraising trip to Atlantic City** on the week-end of May 9 to 12. The tour will stay at the AR Resorts Hotel & Casino on the Boardwalk.

For more information, contact teamkeepsmling@yahoo.com or (413) 824-9356. Early sign-up is recommended. The Relay for Life is a major fundraising event of the American Cancer Society.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.



Letter to the Editors

How embarrassing!

There I was in the express lane at Food City in Turners, taking money out of my wallet to pay my bill, only to discover I was short of cash.

Before I could decide which items to put back, the gentleman behind me asked how much I was short and handed the cashier enough to cover –\$2.41.

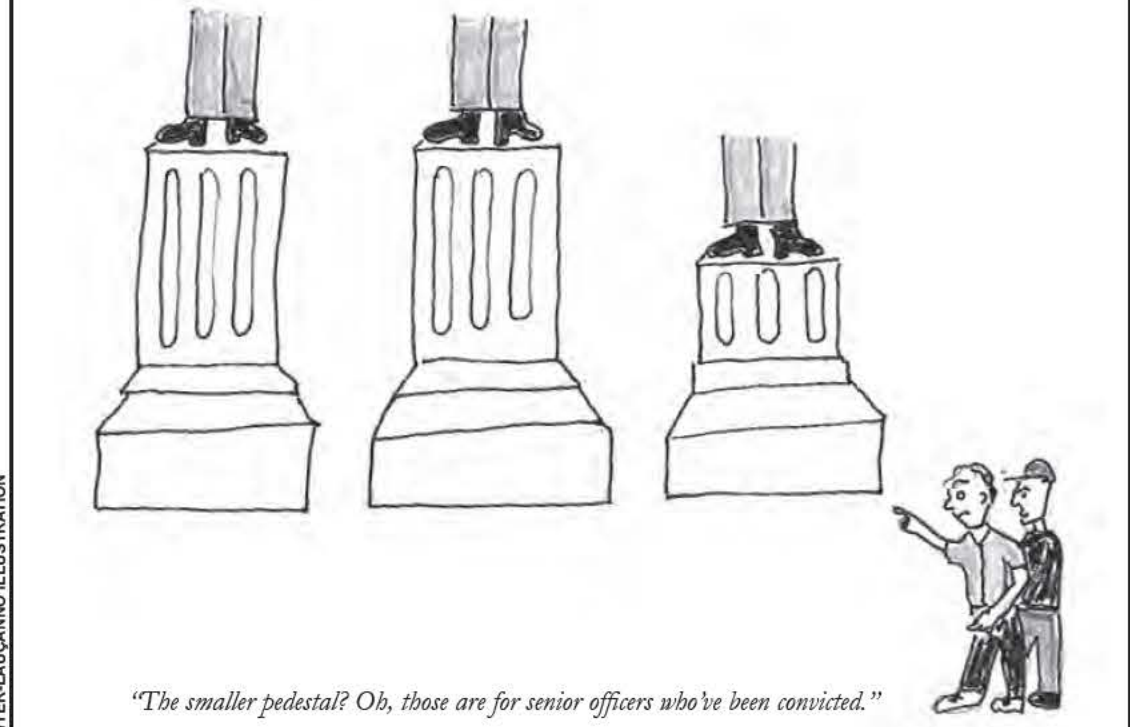
I thanked him and asked him

for his name so I could pay him back, but he insisted that it was not necessary.

I was most appreciative, as were the others lined up behind him waiting to pay and be off!

I plan to pass on his generosity whenever I can.

**Barbara Alfange
Leverett**



"The smaller pedestal? Oh, those are for senior officers who've been convicted."

including sexual assault.

Following the guilty pleas, prosecutors dropped two lesser counts: accusing him of pressuring a female major to send him nude photos, and of engaging in an improper relationship with a civilian woman who was a longtime friend.

At press time, the other charges were still pending.

And then, last Thursday, New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand came up short in her yearlong cam-

paign to overhaul military sexual-assault policies, falling five votes short of the 60 needed to overcome a filibuster.

Her bill, which would have removed the chain of command from prosecuting sexual assaults and other major military crimes, was derailed in the Senate on a 55-45 vote.

To their credit, ten Republicans, including Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and

Senators Ted Cruz of Texas and Rand Paul of Kentucky, backed Gillibrand’s controversial chain-of-command bill.

But 10 Democrats voted against her, including Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin of Michigan and Senator Claire McCaskill of Missouri.

It seems not much is going to change in the U.S. military any time soon.

And we are all the poorer for it.

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JOB POSTING: YOUTH PROGRAMS MANAGER

The Brick House is seeking a Youth Programs Manager to oversee programs for youth, primarily the Teen Drop-in Resource Center.

The manager will work within the vibrant and busy (and sometimes loud) teen center, providing support and guidance to the Programs Assistant and the Youth Programs Coordinator (RISE AmeriCorps Member), and ensuring smooth day-to-day operations and administrative practices. The job is for 20 hrs/wk, at \$15/hr plus benefits.

Applications accepted until position is filled. To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to: The Brick House Community Resource Center, P.O. Box 135, Turners Falls, MA 01376, or director@brickhousecommunity.org. No phone calls, please.

Tentative Agreement Reached on Erving-Montague Wastewater Contract

By CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

On Tuesday, March 11, the selectboards of Montague and Erving came to a “nearly-final” agreement on a new contract regarding Montague’s use of the town of Erving’s wastewater treatment plant in Erving’side.

No votes were taken, as the agreement still needs to be reviewed by counsel for both towns. But according to town administrator, Frank Abbondanzio, the meeting was amicable and real progress was made on the new terms.

As in the past, the contract requires Montague to pay a share of

capital expenses for maintaining the Erving’side sewer plant – which processes sewage pumped beneath the Millers River from the village of Millers Falls in Montague along with sewage from the Erving side of the river – in proportion to the amount of flow Montague contributes.

Although Abbondanzio declined to give figures until the agreement is finalized, he did say that the new contract took into consideration a base amount of payment as well as a price for excess flow from Millers. He also noted that Montague is working to reduce excess infiltration and inflow to the Erving plant.

Contractor Sentenced for Bilking Turners Falls Homeowner

A New Bedford man will serve two to three years in state prison after he was found guilty by Judge Mary-Lou Rup of larceny in connection with his failure to do house renovations he had contracted to perform in Turners Falls in 2013.

Kevin Fisher, 38, was found guilty in Franklin Superior Court on a charge of Larceny over \$250, on Monday, March 3.

According to the Northwestern District Attorney’s office, Fisher

was paid \$3,000 by the homeowner, but did not perform the work nor did he refund the money.

The property owner hired Fisher’s company, XStream Renovations, to do siding work after finding Fisher through Craigslist.

The Northwestern District Attorney’s Consumer Protection Unit can provide information to aid consumers doing home improvement projects.

MILLERS from page A1 and drainage.

A report, prepared according to federal guidelines, will then be prepared with aim of designating the area to warrant the moniker “slum and blight.”

Although Ramsey noted that this is an unfortunate designation, it is still the required terminology for the town to receive federal funds for improving the area.

A good deal of attention at the hearing focused on the definition of the area to be studied. Jeanne Golrick, a Millers Falls property owner and frequent critic of local development proposals, seemed to question why the area of study was limited.

At a selectboard meeting the previous Monday, she and Montague Center resident John Reynolds argued that the study area should be broader, including buildings on Franklin Street and a walkway behind Golrick’s residence that goes up a hill to Grand Avenue.

The town has added 5 Franklin Street, a residence that used to be a shop, to the study area.

At the same time Golrick seemed to oppose the entire concept of a slum and blight study, forcefully demanding that her property not be included.

She recommended that the selectboard vote against it at its Monday meeting. Her requests were declined.

Other residents at the Monday hearing seemed eager for funds to renovate or eliminate abandoned buildings.

“I am a taxpayer and I have to look at this across the street,” said Tammy Bernard, owner of the Millers Pub, referring to the Powers Block on East Main Street. “It looks like a flophouse.”

RFP Comes Up Empty

Ramsey expressed dismay this week that no bidders had come forth in response to the town’s Request for Proposals (RFP) to acquire and redevelop those three buildings.

The properties were being offered for a nominal fee under the Commercial Homesteading Program, an economic development effort designed to bring these buildings and the adjacent land back onto the tax rolls.

The three building lots advertised in the RFP included two commer-

cial block buildings (26-28 and 30 East Main Street), and one old style house (34), currently in residential use, but easily convertible to commercial use. The accessory building is listed as lot (34R).

The town had proposed to offer the property to the builders or developers who offered the most creative approach to the rehabilitation and reuse of the structures, who committed to the most attractive investment plan, and who submitted a proposal that promised to contribute most significantly to the economic development of the town.

The successful bidder also had the option of demolishing the buildings and creating new commercial/mixed use units in their places.

Ramsey said this was the second time the RFP had been issued. Element Brewery had applied during the first round, but had wanted to demolish the buildings. As this had not been an option then, the new RFP did allow for this possibility.

Element Brewery, however, has decided to remain where they are, diagonally across the street from the buildings in question.

Making It Official

But why would being declared a “slum and blight area” actually increase property values?

According to Ramsey, this designation leads to significant increases in public investment for the area over a period of ten years.

Federal funds can be used for building façade improvements, better handicapped access and expanded parking.

Public funds, along with the commitment to implementing the Millers Falls component of the town Master Plan, could attract private investment.

One of the key goals will be to attract investment in the Powers Block, where “economics of reinvestment just don’t work at the moment.”

Ramsey points to the streetscape and other improvements in downtown Turners as an example of how being designated “blighted” can increase property values.

The study, or “inventory,” will be conducted by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, with a completion date set for September.





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MARKET from page A1

Montague Food Coop changed its name and moved from Avenue A to Greenfield.

That’s where Kristof comes in.

As she moves to expand her Montreal-based online startup, Provender (provender.com), which Menegoni humorously describes as “an organic Amazon for local farms,” into the Valley this year, Kristof envisions an immediate future where consumers can cut out the middleman to develop a more direct, wholesome and sustainable relationship with local growers.

“It’s clear there is a really strong current trending toward local, sustainable agriculture,” said Kristof, who regards Provender as one tool to help “cut through all the phone

calls and crazy invoice purchase relationships” that frustrate an executive chef’s time in a restaurant like Great Falls Harvest.

With Menegoni’s blessing, Kristof hopes to extend the crop-saving, time-saving features of her website to the community at large, and help strengthen consumers’ relationships with local farms through Great Falls Market.

Menegoni walked through the unfinished storefront last week, pointing to where the deli counter would stand, with its fresh soups, salads and deli cheeses, with ingredients sourced from local farms whenever possible.

Produce bins filled with open-air vegetables would occupy the front of the store, where Menegoni hopes

to install new windows to bring in sunlight and the attention of passersby, who would be welcome to shop whether they join as Market CSA members or not.

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture, which is the guiding ethos of the founders’ plan.

In contrast to the dominant American food system of mono-cropped factory farms and pre-processed food, Kristof said the Great Falls Market could be one more example of a community working together to support a healthy diversity of local farms and a growing diversity in local organic agriculture.

At the same time, she said, it could help to answer the question, “How do we reshape food trends to meet the growing conditions where

we live?”

Among the other components of the Market, Menegoni foresees local meat, dairy products, tinctures, apothecary items, maple and honey products, and cellared vegetables, grown under lights or stored in the cool cement galleries of the old VFW building’s extensive basement level.

He hopes to have the market up and running in time for this year’s summer solstice.

But in order to accomplish that, the owners of Harvest will need the active support and involvement of local food advocates from across the community.

They invite all who are interested in the project to their open house on March 19.

2014 MONTAGUE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 121C, the Montague Planning Board and Montague Economic Development Industrial Corporation will host a joint public hearing to present and solicit feedback on a 2014 Economic Development Plan update.

The hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m. at Montague Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA, in the second floor meeting room.

The updated plan involves a strategy for four target areas: the Airport Industrial Park; a proposed industrial area off Sandy Lane; the Turners Falls historic mill district; and the Great Falls Discovery Center area.

The plan is available for review at montague.net or at the Montague Planning Department.

TURNERS FALLS HISTORIC-INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT AND BLIGHT DESIGNATION INVENTORY NOTICE OF INFORMATION SESSION

The Town of Montague Planning Department will be conducting a Slum and Blight Inventory of the Turners Falls Historic-Industrial District. The study area which encompasses at least 5 former or current mills is bisected by the Turner Falls Power Canal. There are approximately 21 parcels with an estimated 4,026 linear feet of roads and 900 linear feet of sidewalks, and 6 bridges spanning the canal. The completion of the Slum & Blight Inventory and designation by the Town and DHCD will allow the Town to proceed with infrastructure improvements, selective removal of blight, and other activities that support revitalization of the area. Interested parties are encouraged to attend to learn more about the plans and process. Questions can be directed to Montague Planning Department at (413) 863-3200 x 207.

WHERE: Montague Town Hall Upstairs Meeting Room, 1 Avenue A

WHEN: Wednesday, March 19, 2014, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

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SEEDS from page A1

too."

Mason said she's gotten many emails "from libraries wanting to know how to start their own" seed libraries. Participants hope that other seed banks in the region will share seeds with each other since all local growing conditions are similar.

The seed packets are arranged in a wooden card catalog in front of the circulation desk, with drawers sporting yellow, pink, and orange tags with labels like "Herbs," "Flowers," or "A - Beans."

Mason explained that plants that are easiest to save seeds from - flowers, herbs, and self-pollinating plants - were in drawers with yellow tags.

Pink tags include seeds that are more challenging to save, such as squash, where gardeners have to mate the male flower with the female flower, and put a bag over the blossoms to prevent cross-pollination by insects.

Orange tags house biennials, the most challenging plants - including cabbage, beets, and carrots - because they must be wintered over and the seeds collected the following spring.

Mason encouraged those with root cellars or cold basements to take these.

Project participants were invited to take up to five seed packets each to grow, saving seeds from just a small proportion of their harvest.

Participants also received a 16-

page handout on how to prevent cross pollination, how to pollinate each variety of plant, and how to save and clean each type of seed.

The handout includes Mason's email address, which she encouraged people to use, saying, "I am more than happy to do whatever it takes" to help participants pollinate, collect, and save seeds.

"It can be challenging to prevent cross-pollination your first time," Mason said, "but I'm more than happy to come to your garden."

Mason is providing over 260 seed packets to Wendell and New Salem growers. Of these, 185 were donated by seed companies, with another 70 packets from Mason's own garden.

Additional seeds came from local gardeners, such as Luc Bodin, who provided several packets of leek seeds, and Sarah Kohler, whose offering of 100 Karakuru seeds - a squash from a tribe in Bhutan in the Himalayas which lasts up to three years if stored properly - was greeted with particular amazement and enthusiasm.

The Wendell seed-saving library is one of only four in Massachusetts.

Seed Saving Library hours at the Wendell library are Tuesdays from 4 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays from 5 to 7 p.m., and Saturdays 1 to 3 p.m.

For more information, readers can contact Gail Mason at rushing-waters01@gmail.com.



NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Gold Cane: Out of the Closet

By JEFF SINGLETON

One of the many little known facts about Montague town government is that there has been a golden cane sitting in a closet at town hall since the late 1990s. This is not an example of corruption or incompetence, but simply the product of a legitimate quandary.

The Montague selectboard, with the initiative and assistance of Montague town meeting member John Reynolds, made great strides in resolving that quandary on the night of March 10. This one appeared to be "doable."

The cane is an object intended to be given to the oldest citizen in town. It then passes on to another citizen. Often there is some sort of presentation ceremony attended by town officials, and the family of the oldest citizen that gets in the newspaper.

Reynolds passed out some interesting information about the history of the award. Apparently a Mr. Edwin A Grozier, publisher of the old Boston Post, sent out canes to boards of selectman "in 700 towns." These were to be presented to the oldest citizen in town.

Montague's cane was last presented to Bertha Farnsworth in 1996. Reynolds copied a newspaper clipping about Farnsworth, who re-

ceived the cane at the tender age of 98.

She was not originally from Turners Falls but moved here in 1921. When she was a girl, she was apparently not allowed to go to Turners "to a basketball game," because it was considered a "real tough town."

But she lived here for seventy years, and became active in local politics, serving on the finance committee and the Republican State Committee.

Another golden cane recipient in one of Reynolds' clippings was Ed Fugere, who worked at the Esleek Paper Mills for 50 years. Fugere attended parochial school at St Anne's and then attended Montague public schools. He quit at the age of 14 to work full time.

In the clipping he reminisces about riding a farm wagon from Montague Center "loaded with vegetables and apples" and fishing in a pond in what is now Unity Park.

Here is the quandary. If the town gives out the actual cane, then there is a strong possibility that the town will not get it back. Reynolds noted that "many towns have lost the cane because it did not always come back on the passing of the recipient. In some cases it was lost or stolen."

So if the cane tradition should be revived, someone or some organiza-

Wendell's Board of Health Approves Innovative "Simple Living" Variance

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday, the Wendell board of health approved a conservation-oriented housing variance process that allows for alternative water, heating, and waste disposal systems.

Under the variance process, the board of health plans to sign off on the building or occupancy permit for an owner-occupied home that meets the standards of the state sanitary code, but lacks electricity or running water.

The board, stimulated by the "simple living" proposal presented by Jonathan and Susan von Ranson of Lockes Village Road, held a public hearing on the new variance

process on February 25.

The variance process allows the board to sign the building permit for a property owner who either meets Title V septic system regulations, or demonstrates water conservation and an alternative system designed to safely handle the reduced flow in a conservation-oriented household.

According to BOH chair Amy Simmons and member Nina Keller, the board met Monday night with building inspector Phil Delorey, who made suggested revisions.

The BOH members said that definitions and clarifications were added to the variance process originally presented.

GILL from page A1

Hampshire. In college, he advanced to the global tournament. He then became an appraiser at regional, state and global levels.

He said that Massachusetts fields a number of teams but with the exception of a couple of groups in Springfield, all the rest were east of Worcester. "This a creative part of the state. And after I got to Gill I decided it was time we began to

participate in the competition."

He said he was thrilled that so many students at Gill Elementary were so enthused about taking on the challenge. "These kids worked so hard and learned a lot about working together as teams."

Adams said she "would like to thank Dave [Grout] for his leadership, creativity and dedication to this program."



tion would need to closely monitor it. The other option would be to give out a "substitute symbol."

Reynolds had done some homework on this option as well. He had even gotten a quote from Tanguay Jewelers of Templeton, MA to fabricate five medallion pins. These would be copper with an engraving that would "match the original engraving on the Boston Post Cane." There was also a price to "refurbish and 'spruce up'" the original cane.

After some discussion of who would monitor the original cane if it was in the possession of the recipient - neither the Historical Society nor the Historical Commission seemed to want the job - the selectboard endorsed the concept of the "substitute symbol" such as the proposed medallion.

A plan will be developed by Town Administrator Frank Abbondanzio, in consultation with Reynolds.

Jeanne Golrick suggested that the cane be moved from the Selectboard Secretary's closet to a safe in the Town Clerk's office. That issue was not resolved.

Sunday Drinking

In other news, Charles Garbiel, owner of the Shady Glen Restaurant, requested that the board add an article to the May Annual Town Meeting warrant that the town adopt Massachusetts General Law Chapter 138, Section 33B.

This would permit establishments to serve alcohol between 10

a.m. and 11 a.m. on Sundays.

The board put the item on the agenda.

Unity Park Bid Awarded

Bruce Hunter of the Franklin County Redevelopment Authority returned with a proposal to accept and award a bid for Unity Park improvements from Taylor Davis landscaping Co., Inc. for \$46,132.

There had been some confusion over the amount at the previous week's meeting. The board voted to award the bid.

Electric Consumption

Frank Abbondanzio requested that the board sign a letter of authorization to request information about electric consumption in town.

The information will be sent to the Hampshire Regional Council of Governments for their program that gives residents discounts on their electric bills.

Buses

There was a suggestion that the Board request that the Franklin Regional Transit Authority place the recent letter by Montague and four other local towns on their next agenda.

The letter calls for a more open process to evaluate potential bus route changes. The next FRTA board meeting is on March 20.

The task was given to Town Administrator Frank Abbondanzio.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Semb Again Seeking Approval for Gas Station

By KATIE NOLAN

Ralph Semb provided a petition signed by 17 people to the selectboard, asking for an article on the annual town meeting warrant "for approval from the town of Erving to allow for the development and construction of a gas station and car wash located on land in the town of Erving."

In a cover letter attached to the petition, Semb wrote that he would like to "proceed with planning and construction of a gas station and car wash on our property located at 63-65 French King Highway and Semb Drive."

At the 2009 annual town meeting, a citizens' petition article presented by Erik and Ralph Semb asked for zoning bylaw changes that would allow construction of a gas station at this property, which is located in the Zone 2 drinking water protection area for the town's water supply well.

However, at that meeting, the voters overwhelmingly approved an amended article asking the selectboard and planning board to work together to develop the zoning bylaw changes.

The revised zoning bylaws did not receive the necessary approval from 2/3 of the voters at a subsequent special town meeting. A convenience store and Dunkin Donuts franchise were constructed at the site.

Semb's cover letter stated that the well at their property "is no longer in use for any of our businesses."

Selectboard member Margaret Sullivan remarked, "The Zone 2 has not changed."

Planning board member Jacqueline Boyden, noting that the petition didn't have a parcel identification, commented, "When you craft a bylaw, it has to be complete, not just one sentence."

She added that, under current zoning bylaws, "You can have a gas station in parts of Erving, just not there."

Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin said he had suggested to Semb that he rewrite the petition and re-submit it. "I think it would be awesome to have a gas station in Erving," Goodwin said.

Town counsel Donna MacNicol, writing in response to an inquiry from administrative coordinator Tom Sharp, recommended that town meeting members amend the petitioned warrant article at the annual town meeting, changing it to a request for the selectboard and planning board to investigate zoning changes that would allow construction of a gas station at the Semb property.

The selectboard plans to close the annual town meeting warrant at its March 17 meeting. The annual town meeting will be held May 7.

ERSECO and POTW #2

Sharp reported that the finance committee voted on March 4 to propose new terms for a 3-year contract with ERSECO for operation of POTW #2.

The town-owned treatment plant, which treats a portion of the town's residential and commercial wastes while it treats Erving Paper Mill wastewater, is operated by Erving Industries subsidiary ERSECO.

Currently, the town pays \$1 per year for the wastewater treatment, and receives \$50,000 per year as a share of the tipping fees paid by outside waste producers.

The change approved by the finance committee sets the payment at \$50,000 or 10% of ERSECO's annual tipping fees, whichever is greater.

In 2013, the tipping fees were \$583,735. The town's contract with ERSECO expires in June 2014.

The selectboard will vote on the contract terms at its March 17 meeting. Erving Industries will be invited to the meeting.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection approved the permit modifications for ERSECO's sludge landfill on March 3. The landfill receives sludge from POTW#2. ERSECO plans to produce biosolids at the landfill.

Biosolids are treated and processed sludge that may be applied to soil as fertilizer.

FY 2015 Budget Preparation

Sharp reported that the finance committee and selectboard will meet jointly on March 17 to review the fiscal year 2015 budget.

Sharp said that the fincom had met with department heads and committees and had no major issues with the proposed budget. However, Sharp reported that the fincom felt "out of the loop" regarding the selectboard's vote to increase the selectboard member stipend.

Goodwin remarked, "We had to vote to give the recommendation to the finance committee for review. How do you tell them without telling them?"

Presented with requests for step raises for water and wastewater department employees, selectboard members felt that the requests came very late in the budget process. Goodwin said that the requests should go to the fincom first. Sullivan said that the job descriptions for the positions needed to be reviewed and "the job description has to warrant it [a step raise]."

Other Business

Boyden told the board that the town's new hosted email system was up and running and that many town employees had attended training sessions. More training sessions are planned for elected officials and

Three To Run For Seat On Selectboard

By KATIE NOLAN

ERVING – According to town clerk Richard Newton, three people have taken out nomination papers for the town's open selectboard seat.

The potential candidates are: William Bembury of Church Street, Gary Betters of French King Highway, and William Pease of North Street.

Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin is not running for re-election.

Christopher Dodge of High Street took out nomination papers for the treasurer position.

The incumbent treasurer is Margaret Sullivan of Old State Road.

Signed nomination papers must be returned to the town clerk by March 17.

The election will be held Monday May 5.

Wendell Dog License Deadline is April 1

Dog licenses are available at the Town Clerk Office. All dogs 6 months and older must be licensed and tagged every year.

Proof of rabies vaccination and the appropriate fee are required. Fee for a neutered or spayed dog is \$4 and for an unaltered dog is \$8. There is a late fee of \$20 for dogs licensed after Wednesday evening, April 2, 2014.

Dog licenses may be purchased on Wednesday evenings 6:30-8:30 p.m. or Saturday mornings 9:30-Noon.

Call (978) 544-3395 x 102 with any questions.

town committee members.

The board conducted an annual performance review for Sharp, giving him an above average rating.

In subsequent negotiations for the 1-year contract, Sharp presented salary data for coordinators in comparable towns, and suggested raising his salary to \$68,904 per year.

The board agreed to raise the coordinator salary to \$63,726, on the condition that Sharp demonstrates his ability to act as administrator for the new town email system.

The board signed a letter thanking recently resigned recreation commission member Shawn Johnson of Forest Street for his service to the town.



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Wendell: No Contested Elections, So Far

The annual town election will be held on Monday, May 5. The polls will be open from noon to 8 p.m. The deadline to register to vote is Tuesday, April 15.

The last day to submit nomination papers to the Board of Registrars for certification is Monday, March 17, by noon at the Town Clerk's office. They should have been picked up by 4 p.m. Thursday.

As of press time, there were no contested races.

Nomination papers had been taken out for the following positions: Nina Keller, Board of Health (to fill a vacancy); Shay Cooper, Board of Health; Katie Nolan, Town Moderator; and Joel Sears, Cemetery Com-

missioner.

The following candidates for re-election have signed papers: Daniel Keller, Selectboard; Chris Wings, Assessor; Gretchen Smith, Town Clerk; Penny Delorey, Tax Collector; Carolyn Manley, Treasurer; Nan Riebschlaeger, Planning Board; Peter S. Zera, Tree Warden; Geoffrey Richardson, Road Commissioner; Johanna Bartlett, School Committee; Jessalyn Zaykoski, School Committee; Judith Putnam, Library Trustee; Sylvia Wetherby, Library Trustee.

The deadline to obtain an absentee voter application for any election is noon the day prior to the election date. For more information, call (978) 544-3395 x 102.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

A Snowy Hazard

Tuesday, 1/28

9:40 a.m. Past breaking & entering discovered at construction trailer on Jennison Road. Nothing reported missing, as trailer was empty to begin with.

11:20 a.m. Theft discovered of copper buss plates from cell tower on Mormon Hollow Road, sometime in the last week.

Thursday, 1/30

1:20 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on New Salem Road. No injuries.

Tuesday, 2/11

11 a.m. Report of parked car struck by truck on Cooleyville Road. No injuries.

Wednesday, 2/19

8:30 p.m. Stone Cut-off Road resident reported that the railroad tracks were not properly plowed,

causing him to become stuck on them.

Thursday, 2/27

6:50 a.m. Dead deer reported on Depot Road. Removed by Highway Department.

Monday, 3/3

11:05 p.m. Medical emergency on Depot Road. Party transported to Athol Hospital by Orange ambulance.

GMRSD from page A1

of a working relationship between the district and towns, and the mutual recognition of financial limitations for all parties.

The budget was accepted by a majority vote of 7, with Shelly Clark voting no.

New Director of Pupil Services

In another piece of good news for the district, Superintendent Sul-

livan presented his and the search committee's choice for Director of Pupil Services, chosen from a field of 30 applicants.

With the school committees' vote of unanimous approval, Dr. Sandra Donah was hired. She will leave her current position as director of special education in Hartford, Connecticut within 30 days to take up her duties at GMRSD.

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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 available. Call Community Action at (413) 475-1405 for further information.

Montague Democrats to Hold Town Election Caucus April 10

Montague Democrats will hold their caucus to select candidates for Town Office elections on Thursday, April 10, 2014 from 6:30 to 7 p.m. in the 1st Floor Meeting Room of the Town Offices, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

Successful candidates receive the party nomination to appear on the Monday, May 19 town election ballot. Voting is by paper ballot.

Only registered Democrats may run in this, what amounts to a primary election for local offices. Democrats who wish to run in the caucus must deliver their intention in writing to Democratic Town Committee Chair Jay DiPucchio by 5 p.m., Monday, March 31.

Notice may be by mail, email or in hand. Verbal declaration is not acceptable.

Individuals choosing to run without Democratic party nomination should check rules with the Town Clerk. Occasionally, candidates for

the caucus nomination also gather signatures for nomination through the Town Clerk process so that they can still appear on the May ballot if they are defeated at the caucus.

By the Democratic Town Committee's vote following the 2003 caucus, registered un-enrolled voters also may vote in the Democratic caucus. No absentee balloting is allowed.

All caucus candidates must be present at the end of balloting (or make other arrangements with the Chair) or their election may not be certified.

The first floor meeting room of the Town Office is wheelchair accessible by elevator entrance at the rear of the building, or by the front door.

Questions or letters of intent can be directed to Democratic Town Committee chair Jay DiPucchio at 863-8656 or at here.now@verizon.net.

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Week ending February 28: Week ending March 7:

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Hailey Bogusz

Grade 6

Emily Williams

Grade 7

Samantha Bocon

Grade 7

Summer Rain
Rodney Duteau

Grade 8

Branden Chapin

Grade 8

Destiny Dowland

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Services of Amherst for an Anniversary

Reception and Fundraiser celebrating Nancy's 25 years promoting health and fitness in the community through outstanding Yoga, Massage and Wellness classes.

We invite the public to this festive evening of hors d'oeuvres, live music by Masala Jazz, a Silent Auction and a Raffle to benefit the LSSE's Youth Camps and the Fischer Home Hospice Program in Amherst.

The event will be held on Friday, March 21, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at the NACUL Center at 592 Main Street in Amherst.

Supporting Fathers

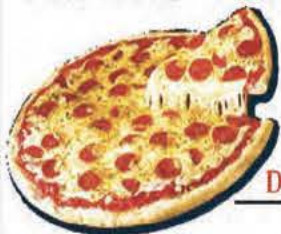
A workshop for parents and caregivers, *Supporting a Father's Role in a Child's Life*, will be held at the Erving Elementary School, 28 Northfield Road, Erving on Saturday, March 29, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Bill Corbett, the author of "Love, Limits, & Lessons," will speak about the important role fathers and male role models play in the life of a young child. Come join us as we discuss and share.

Pre-register by calling Gillian or Joie at (978) 544-5157, or email budine@erving.com or cnc@erving.com.

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YEAR 12 – NO.21

B1

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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

MARCH 13, 2014

TFHS: A Stupendous “Blonde”

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

The students of Turners Falls High School did an outstanding job performing this weekend in “Legally Blonde,” this year’s annual musical. Students sang and danced their way through this complex, funny, upbeat musical theater piece with great enthusiasm and attention to detail, timing and musical skill.

Directors Brittany and Christopher Nailos clearly created an environment where collaboration led the way.

Performers worked well together. Their timing was perfect and everyone seemed to be immersed in the play while they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Sophie Letcher as Elle Woods was lovely and sophisticated in her portrayal of this bright, charming, but seemingly vapid girl whose only interest was in fashion and having fun with her Delta Nu sorority sisters.

Letcher did a wonderful job of capturing the essential heart of the girl. When Elle chases her ex-boyfriend to Harvard (“How hard could it be?”) to prove to him she’s serious, she hardly seems serious about the classwork.

Ex-boyfriend Warner makes fun of her, the other students laugh at her, and she considers going home.

Then a young teaching assistant – Emmett Forrest played by Owen Ortiz – encourages her to consider studying, which she does, proving to be a good law student, while not entirely giving up on pink.

The boyfriend, Warner Huntington III, played by Nevan Shattuck, turns out to be the one who is shallow. He is dating Vivienne Kensington because she is from a rich and well-connected family.

Maggie Sroka, as Vivienne,

seems plain and boring but she is smart if a little up-tight.

Feeling both jealous and superior to Elle, in the beginning she treats Elle badly, but, in the end, stands up for her, and they work together.

Sroka did an outstanding job playing both the plain, mean Vivienne and the strong, outspoken

the world.

Throughout this lively show, with great upbeat songs, with lots of dancing that includes high kicks and pompoms, the theme of girls coming into their own is strong.

Changing oneself to please a man gradually comes to seem like a mistake to them, and the strong sister-



Sophie Letcher (l) as Elle Woods, listens as Alyson Kilanski playing the beautician Paulette Buonafonte, talks about herself in the musical “Legally Blonde” at Turners Falls High School last weekend.

young woman she becomes.

Both Elle and Vivienne, fighting over the same man, in their own way come to see how insulting his treatment of them has been.

Owen Ortiz did a wonderful job portraying a kind young man who respects women. He stands by Elle and encourages her and her fashion sense, and allows her to help him dress the part of a lawyer when they go to court.

This theme of helping each other, supporting and working together shows itself in many ways throughout the play, creating a great example of how to live ethically in

hood of Delta Nu gives Elle support throughout.

Lauren Grimard was wonderful as Serena, contributing so much to every scene she was in, with her high-energy dancing, strong singing voice, big smile and enthusiasm that spread the joy to everyone around her.

She and the other young women who were both the sorority sisters and Greek chorus were the musical heart of the show.

Naturally, when Elle begins to doubt herself, her instinct is to go to

see TFHS PLAY page B4

A Unique Education At Gill’s Four Winds School

By LEE WICKS

GILL – The Four Winds School in Gill is located in an old school building, and if you are old enough to remember blackboards and chalk and hissing steam radiators, then a visit will put you right back to your own school days, minus any fear or tension.

Cozy, nurturing, serious and dedicated are the words that come to mind when eleven students and two teachers (Steve Hussey and Eloise Michael) curl into sofas for morning writing.

Some are working on large ongoing projects, and some just record poem-like sketches.

At the end of forty minutes, they read aloud to one another, and students and teachers comment on images or description that felt memorable.

It’s not a critique. It’s not a series of suggestions that “might make the piece better.” The comments give the writer a clear sense of what worked, something to build upon. It’s helpful if you are thirteen years old and working on a novel.

Four Winds is a middle school serving boys and girls grades 5-8, in a setting part one-room schoolhouse and part Hampshire College. After their morning writing, the students move into a large classroom where they work independently on their individual learning plans.

There are expectations and text-

books, but students break down these requirements into two-week learning plans of their own design, which they complete with the help of their teachers and various research materials.

That means Alex might choose to do his entire math for this two week-period in just a few days, while Sage applies herself to Latin.



Steve Hussey and Eloise Michael watch as Orion demonstrates a newfound function on his calculator.

Steve Hussey, the school’s founder and one of the teachers, says, “At first I worried that a student who did all his math or all her Latin in three days would not remember it and be able to build on it in the next two-week plan, but that has not been a problem at all.”

Mr. Hussey has taught at Linden Hill in Northfield, a school for dyslexic boys, and the Bement School in Deerfield. On the school’s website he writes, his experiences at these two diverse schools were

integral to the development of the program now offered at Four Winds School.

This unique curriculum has an emphasis on rigorous, individualized training in basic skills that is balanced by the need to “cultivate the native curiosity of each child as the engine for their learning about the world.”

Middle schoolers can be easily distracted. In a lecture-based classroom, they’d be squirming, possibly passing notes, and some, if not all, would have an eye on the clock. But

none of this is happening at Four Winds.

Mr. Hussey and Ms. Michael respond constantly to questions, grade completed work sheets, and send students back to work to correct what needs correcting.

There are no lectures. Each student is quietly working his or her way through the textbooks and educating themselves, with considerable support and one-on-one help

see FOUR WINDS page B4

WEST ALONG THE RIVER: ALONG THE FROZEN PATH

By DAVID BRULE

MILLERS RIVER – We are finally getting our January thaw just now in March, only a week before St. Paddy’s Day. It will be short-lived however, with another winter storm predicted by the time you read this, with bitter temperatures plunging us to the single-digits again.

Mornings take me along my snowshoe path that follows a favorite route with landmarks that only I and the foxes know. So come on along.

Down through the patch of wild blackberry brambles that are still standing above the foot and a half

ritory.

Strolling along on this path as on a fine avenue through the woods, I side-step fresh scat and various droppings.

Seems like every mammal in the woods likes to poop on my path. Either it’s convenient, or it’s a question of letting everyone know that Reddy Fox, or Sammy Skunk is in town, marking out more turf.

There’s the cute little question mark scats of the red fox, lots of mouse fur and little bones sticking out here and there.

Further on, the more ominous droppings of the fierce fisher cat who’s been on the prowl in our woods and yard over this harsh



Hooded merganser. Illustration by Louis Agassiz Fuertes.

of snow, which is now crusted and aggravating to walk on. I ate my way through this patch over the summer, the season producing a bounty of every wild fruit imaginable.

The blackberries were particularly sweet, but I needed to get them before the catbirds and thrushes.

But in this season, my path through here is a hardened base of compacted snow after many mornings of snowshoeing. Now the surface is rock-hard and easy. I no longer need the raquettes.

But just one step off the trail and you crash through the crust at every step, making it impossible to move forward in spite of your ill-tempered cursing and swearing at the fickle snow and this un-ending winter. So I stay on the path, hardened by a month’s worth of 0 degree nights.

Woodpeckers hammer in the background, not the hammer-rhythm when they’re looking for grubs, but rather the drum-beat of a red-cockaded male already staking out his spring and summer ter-

winter.

There may be the remains of a house cat or two in there, no porcupine quills however. The fishers are among the only known predators of porcupines, other than automobiles.

Sauntering along, savoring an icy navel orange, I hang a left in the middle of the woods at the edge of the spring’s sunken basin. There’s not much flow yet, it’s slowed down under a foot of ice.

A favorite ironwood tree at the fork of the path serves as a sign post. I’d take a right on Sundays, to go further down stream to the edge of the property, but this is a weekday so to the left I go, heading for my post card hemlock grove.

This part of the trail runs parallel through the woods along the river. I’m far enough into cover so that whatever’s on the river won’t be alarmed.

Sometimes, if need be, I hunch down to round out my shoulders and lower my head to break the human silhouette, saunter and swing like an old bear.

see WEST ALONG page B6

Nina’s Nook presents “Look At Me!”

Featuring playful wooden sculptures by William Accorsi. Created over the last 7 years, some of the 65 sculptures presented here serve as children’s banks, others as mirrors or curious puzzles.

Other art works include original scenes from the pages of Accorsi’s many children’s books, created in felt, fabric and thread and decorated with wire, buttons, and wood. Accorsi has culled illustrations from hundred-year-old children’s magazines to col-

lage many of these new items.

The artist has produced nine children’s books, two adult art books of his work, and has been featured by elite galleries around the world.



The exhibit opens March 19 through April 26. Nina’s Nook is at 125A Avenue A, Turners Falls.

Nina’s is open Wednesdays and

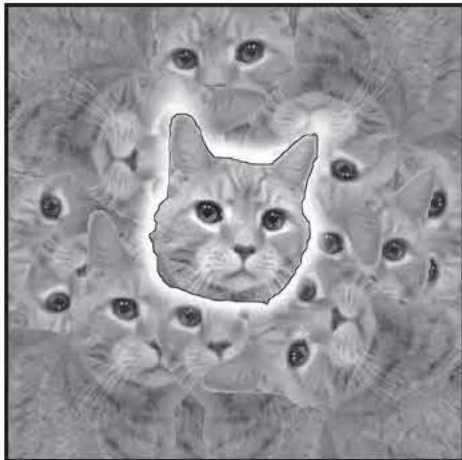
Thursdays from 4 to 6 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 1 to 6 p.m., and by appointment, (413) 834-8800.

Pet of the Week

Hello there! I'm Bailey, and I can already tell that I'll be the purr-fect match for your home! I'm a big orange purr machine and can't wait to curl up and cuddle with you on a cold winter's evening.

Did I mention that I get along with other cats too? Please come to visit me! You will not want to miss out on all the love I can give!

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



“BAILEY”

Senior Center Activities March 17 through 21

GILL and MONTAGUE

Gill / Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.

Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

Due to weather, we had to base this week's Gill/Montague Senior Center schedule on a typical week, so it may be inaccurate. Please contact the above number to confirm.

Monday 3/17

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise
Noon Pot Luck and Bingo
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday 3/18

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

Wednesday 3/19

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise
Noon Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 3/20

9 a.m. Tai Chi
11 a.m. Sing Along
Noon Lunch
1 p.m. Pitch

Friday 3/21

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Writing Group

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 congregate meals. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at (413) 423-3308, for meal information and reservations.

For information, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call the Center to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out when is the next blood pressure clinic.

Monday 3/17

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

Tuesday 3/18

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10 a.m. Steve Damon
10:45 a.m. Senior Business
12:30 Painting

Wednesday 3/19

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

Thursday 3/20

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

Friday 3/21

9 a.m. Bowling

LEVERETT

For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga – Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$5 (first class free).

Senior Lunch – Fridays at noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

FACES

& PLACES

Saturday evening March 8, St. Kazimierz' Society in Turners Falls hosted a retirement party for Everett Ricketts, who at age 77 retired from being chief of the Wendell fire department 57 years after he joined the department, and 38 years after he became fire chief. Firefighters past and present, and fire chiefs past and present from around Franklin County and surrounding towns came and filled the hall for dinner, some dancing, some testimonial.

Here state senator Stan Rosenberg is presenting an acknowledgement from the state Senate. Rosenberg also presented the acknowledgement from the United States Congress, because Congressman Jim McGovern had another commitment. Behind Rosenberg is representative Denise Andrews who had already presented the House award.

Firefighters from Wendell presented him with the old bell from Wendell's original Engine one, polished and mounted in a frame made from Wendell red oak. Family members came from as far away as Arizona (Everett Jr.), and as close as Greenfield and Wendell (Penny and Lonny).



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

By FRED CICETTI

Q. Is a TIA dangerous?

TIA stands for “transient ischemic attack.” A TIA is an interruption in the flow of blood to a part of your brain. Its symptoms are the same as for a stroke. A TIA lasts anywhere from minutes to many hours. It goes away and leaves no apparent permanent effects.

If you have a TIA, your chances of having a stroke are increased nine times. Treat a TIA like an early warning and get to your doctor immediately for a check-up.

A stroke, which is also called a “brain attack,” is caused by a blood problem in the brain. An “isch-

emic stroke” is caused by too little blood in the brain. An “hemorrhagic stroke” is caused by too much blood.

About 80 percent of strokes are ischemic strokes; they occur when blood clots or other particles block arteries to your brain. Hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel in your brain leaks or ruptures.

During a stroke, brain cells are deprived of oxygen and nutrients and begin to die. The earlier a stroke is treated, the better the results.

In the USA, stroke is the third-leading cause of death behind heart disease and cancer. It is the leading cause of adult disability.

The most common stroke symptoms include: sudden numbness, weakness, or paralysis of the face, arm or leg – usually on one side of the body; trouble talking or understanding; sudden blurred, double or decreased vision; dizziness, loss of balance or coordination; a sudden headache with a stiff neck, facial pain, pain between the eyes, vomiting or altered consciousness; con-

fusion, or problems with memory, spatial orientation or perception.

The following can increase your risk of a stroke: a family history of stroke or TIA, aging, race (blacks are at greater risk), high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, cigarette smoking, diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, previous stroke or TIA, heavy alcohol drinking and uncontrolled stress.

Your doctor has many diagnostic tools for stroke.

Among these are: physical exam, blood tests, carotid ultrasonography to check the carotid arteries in your neck, arteriography to view arteries in your brain, a computerized tomography (CT) scan of the neck and brain, a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain, among others.

Treatments are varied and include drugs to fight clots, and medical procedures to keep blood vessels open.

Questions? Send them to fred@healthygeezer.org.

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TFHS PLAY from page B1

the beauty parlor and change her hair color. There she finds Paulette Buonufonte who talks her out of becoming a brunette and makes a friend as well.

Alyson Kilanski portrayed Paulette as sweet and sincere, and the scenes between her and Sophie Letchter were very touching.

These two young women from different lives connect not just because they are dedicated to hair, makeup and fashion, but because they find emotional support in each other.

Paulette gets Elle to stay at Harvard and prove herself, and Elle convinces Paulette to stand up for herself and gets her dog back from her ex-boyfriend, who took it when he broke up with her.

And Elle uses the law to get the dog back for Paulette!

This entire ensemble cast was extraordinary. The show ran smoothly throughout. The musical performances were outstanding, the acting was excellent.

The audience laughed and cheered a lot. It was also very touching and emotional at times. The children in the audience were completely entertained.

Other cast members included the following: Korey Bousquet, Spencer Blair, Chase Blair, Ian Cecchi, Elias Collins (who played Professor Callahan), Keara Deery, Cailyn Gobeil, Rebecca Harrell, Emma Johnson (as Pilar), Lilia Kocsis (as Enid Hoopes), Danielle Lively, Mireya Ortiz, Kai Pabon – who did a great job playing the fitness queen on trial for her life – Rachel Savinski (as Margot), Erin Simmons, Emily Sisson, Serena Smith, Madison St. Marie, Sarah Studlien, Alyah Sutton (as Winthrop), and Paul Vinton (as Kyle

B. O’Boyle).

No show goes on without lots of support. The magnificent sets were created by the carpentry class, with Jeff Jobst at the helm and Brandon Camara, Nolan Courtemanche, Jack Darling, Dominic Garland, Amilee Jarvis, Auston Thornton, John Grace, Bill Sweeney, and the maintenance personnel of Turners Falls High School.

The tech supervisor was Jayne Finn, with lighting by James Dolan, and sound by Liam Theis.

The show’s stage crew included Chris Cecchi, Steve Palso, Tyler Richardson, and Ira Simmons. Nancy Weld was in charge of curtains. Stage management and music provided by Rachel Tucker.

Costumes were made by Emily Monosson, Amy Johnson, Pam Grimard. Hair and make-up done by Jodi Kocsis. In charge of props was Heidi Shattuck, and food by Laura Moore. Photography and printing were done by Theresa Burke and Laura Thome. Acting consultant was Elise Arsenault.

Two dogs took an active part in the show; they were handled by: Kathy Sisson for Gizmo aka Bruiser and Kathleen Savinski for Avery aka Rufus.

It must be said that this enterprise, which took months of hard work on the part of students and staff, could not have been done without the help and support of the parents.

Whether it was working on the show itself or helping their own children prepare for their parts, and driving them back and forth to school for rehearsals, the support and involvement of parents in this school district are extraordinary and invaluable to student success.

It is noted and appreciated!



LOOKING BACK 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on March 11, 2004: News from The Montague Reporter’s archive.

Herbicide Resistance

Dale C. Moss, a G Street resident, founded People Against Toxic Herbicides (P.A.T.H.) in response to concerns regarding Northeast Utilities spraying of herbicides along the canal.

The group first decided to approach the Montague board of health, but in a public hearing on the issue, Montague health agent Gina McNeely said “we have no authority over the application of pesticides and herbicides in Montague.”

Moss next wrote a letter to Brad Mitchell, director of consumer and regulatory services for the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, the governing body McNeely had said was responsible for such matters.

Among the concerns detailed in Moss’ letter was the lack of well-publicized public forums to discuss the matter; the wide-range

of potential dates given for spraying activities; questions concerning the objectivity and quality of safety tests for glyphosate and metsulfuron methyl, the two herbicides used; and questions of the application of such herbicides within 100 feet of a public water supply.

Mitchell responded, addressing Moss’ concerns point by point, presenting a list of reasons why “the Bureau does not believe you have presented sufficient information to warrant a moratorium on the use of herbicides either along the canal or in populated areas”.

Creative Ideas for “Cumby’s” Building!

At the Montague selectboard meeting town planner Robin Sherman asked the board to support an economic development grant to work with UMass students and faculty to promote arts and arts-based projects in Turners Falls by focusing on the creative reuse of the former Cumberland Farms building on Avenue A.

Considering the controversy nearby communities have faced in recent years over “big box” development projects, this example of what might be called “small box” development brought nothing but praise from the board.

Additionally, Sherman said the canalside bike trail has received all necessary clearances for right of way: with funding in place, construction is ready to commence for the section of the trail that will run along the canal to Depot Street in Montague City.

Cafe Reopens

After closing in December, Blue Skies owner Patty McClelland has announced the Turners Falls cafe will reopen at 104 Fourth Street.

Although customers had been asking when McClelland would reopen, it was her children who finally convinced her: they will take over most of the responsibility of operating the cafe and kitchen, with McClelland continuing to work her magic in the bakery.

FOUR WINDS from B1

from their teachers.

The curriculum covers literature, Latin, vocabulary, geography (which is linked to history), the humanities, science and art.

Each year there’s an over-arching theme in the humanities, and this year it’s the development of civilization. This theme brings the students outdoors to learn about fire making without matches, and indoors to local museums and learning centers.

I sent an email around to some former Four Winds students asking about their time at the school and their experiences since.

Jasmine Serrano of Greenfield had this to say: “I loved the time I spent at Four Winds. It became my second home, and Steve and Eloise made sure that it always felt like a safe open environment.”

Serrano went from Four Winds to Pioneer Valley Regional School in Northfield, and then to Paul Smith’s College in upstate New York to study culinary arts.

Lia Ashe-Simmer wrote, “My decision to choose Four Winds came from a desire to learn in a small and supportive community. I felt very well prepared for high school and college. I learned so much in those two years. I developed a love of learning, and I found that for the first time in my life I woke up wanting to go to school each day.”

She says she attended Northampton High School for 9th and 10th grade, Greenfield Community College in lieu of her last two years of high school, and then transferred to Earlham College in Indiana, where she is now a sophomore.

Olivia Smiaroski of Northfield wrote: “I am a self-motivated learn-

er and Four Winds fostered that learning by allowing students to assign work to themselves.

“At the collegiate level I use the skills I learned at Four Winds: budgeting time, seeking available resources, taking advantage of the learning opportunities in the community, as well as pushing myself to get ahead in my course work.”

Smiaroski is now a biology major at Simmons College in Boston and says she plans to “pursue a career in genetic research.”

Though there are more boys than girls in the school, it was girls not boys who responded to questions from an unknown reporter. However, Tamara Barbash had much to say about her son’s experience at the school.

She wrote, “I have a son who attended Four Winds between 5th and 8th grades, and graduated three years ago. He had a wonderful experience at the school which supported him in growing and developing through what can often be a rough period of time for young people.”

Since the beginning of this academic year, Barbash joined the school’s Board of Trustees, and expresses her “great respect and deep appreciation for the tremendous dedication and hard work of Steve Hussey and Eloise Michaels.”

“A community spirit of acceptance and tolerance dominates the social milieu,” she wrote. “Steve and Eloise offer an ideal balance between providing warmth and understanding along with encouragement and challenge toward student growth and expansion.

“Students thrive there because they are embraced for who they are, whatever their strengths and weaknesses, as well as pushed to move

beyond their own expectations in terms of both learning and behavior.”

After these accolades, one might ask: What’s not to like? Why can’t all education be structured in this way?

Perhaps it could, but there are trade-offs. Four Winds costs less than other area independent day schools, but its facilities are modest – no computer labs, dedicated science labs, theater, radio station, photography lab, or much in the way of athletic facilities.

There is a large field where kids shoot hoops and play foursquare, and a supply of balls and bats and stuff, but no organized sports program. Students seeking this can, of course, play team sports through local clubs after school.

Four Winds is small. There are eleven students now, and enrollment can’t exceed fourteen (so that the school will only need to rent one van for outings).

For some families, the size is a gift. For those who have been homeschooling, the size is a nice change, but there are families seeking a wider pool of potential friendships and more diversity for their children.

That said, Four Winds has inspired its middle school students, and served them well. It fills a missing niche in our area’s educational offerings.

In an age of core testing, packaged curriculums and computer-based learning, it proves that dedicated teachers have the largest influence on a child’s education, and modest surroundings make no difference at all.



COOP Concerts at the Discovery Center

COOP Concerts celebrates its tenth anniversary with All COOPed Up!, its annual springtime musical celebration, at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, on Saturday, April 5, at 7 p m.

The COOP is the Franklin County Musicians’ Cooperative, featuring solo artists, established duos, small groups, and frequent impromptu combinations of area favorites,

COOP members perform an unpredictable mix of folk, rock, country, Celtic, new-age, jazz, and swing, with original compositions and selected gems from various traditions.

Appearing will be Pat & Tex, Joe Graveline, Fritz and Gail, Sue Kranz, Orlen & Gabriel, Small Change, Roland LaPierre, Russ Thomas, Jennie McAvoy, Charlie & Des, with possibly other members and guests.

Suggested donations are \$5-10, but no one will be turned away.

MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS

Animals With Mobile Homes

Animals with Mobile Homes, a fun children’s program, will be held on Saturday, March 22nd at 10:30 a.m. at the Carnegie Library.

Join naturalist/educator Dawn Marvin Ward for a hands-on science program about animals with

“houses” on their backs. This program is designed for families with young children up to third grade, but all are welcome. Co-sponsored by the CFCE grant.

For more information, call 863-3214.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

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 TUESDAY

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

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

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

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

EVERY THURSDAY

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

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

The Brick House, Turners Falls: The Bridge, a community open

art. All ages are welcome. Light refreshments. Signups start at 6 p.m., show at 6:30 p.m.

EVERY FRIDAY

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

ART SHOWS:

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

Gallery A3, Cinema Complex, Amherst: *Gloria Kegeles - Un Voyage Au Dollarama*. Photos on display through March 29. Thursday through Sunday, 1 to 7 p.m.

CALL FOR POETRY:

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

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, MARCH 13

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

FRIDAY, MARCH 14

Great Falls Coffeehouse, Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *David Fersh*, guitar and song in a wide variety of styles from folk and blues, to country and oldies rock, jazzy standards, Broadway and movie tunes. Refreshments, \$, 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Four

Rivers Public Charter School *Variety Show*, 7 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Fancy Trash*, indie folk, 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Uncle Hal's Crab Grass Band*, Americana-ana! 8 p.m.

Arts Block Cafe, Greenfield: *Marco Benevento*. Rich, catchy melodies and straight-ahead grooves, \$, 8 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Great Falls Discovery Center,



Viva Quetzal! Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse on Saturday, March 15th. 8 p.m. open mic at 7:30 p.m. Benefit for Community Network for Children.

Turners Falls: *Winter and Spring Pre-School Series: Animal Babies!* Join Janel Nockleby to learn about the lives of young animals through stories, crafts, and activities. For ages 3 to 6 with a parent or guardian. Siblings and friends welcome. 10:30 a.m.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Werther*, live performance at the Met in HD. Massenet's sublime adaptation of Goethe's revolutionary and tragic romance, directed and designed by Richard Eyre and Rob Howell. Approx. running 195 min. \$, 12:55 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: FCTS Players perform *The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*, written by Don Zolidis. A modern, humorous twist on Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales under the direction of Franklin County Technical School instructor and Drama Club advisor Daniel Prasol. \$, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Montague Community Hall, Montague Center: *Gender Role Free Contra Dance*, \$, 7 p.m.

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

Full Moon Coffee House, Wendell: *Viva Quetzal!*, A sampling of all the diverse musical traditions that exist in the Americas and beyond. \$, 8 p.m. with open mic at 7:30 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Mark Nomad*, blues, 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Bunny's Swine*, a trio of drums, electric guitar, and three-string guitar, \$, 8 p.m.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Carrie Ferguson & Friends*, soaring folk-pop with catchy melodies and smart, beautiful lyrics, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 16

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Zoe Sundra*, folk, 2:30 p.m.

Leverett Crafts and Arts, Leverett: *Dance Café*. French & Breton Dance, dancing, instruction, live music, French Café ambience, \$, 3 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Sean Callaghan & Gene Christy*, an Irish sing-a-long, 8 p.m.

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

MONDAY, MARCH 17

Greenfield Savings Bank, Turners Falls: *Irish Music by Ray and Rob*. In the lobby, 10 to noon.

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 18

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: TEDxShelburneFallsLive Simulcasts TED Conference. *The Next Chapter* theme, two sessions: 11:30-1:15 a.m. "Retrospect" and 2-3:45 p.m. "Reshape".

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Look At Me!* playful wooden sculptures by William Accorsi. Created over the last 7 years, some of the 65 sculptures presented serve as children's banks, others as mirrors or curious puzzles. Other art works include original scenes from the pages of Accorsi's many children's books, created in felt,

fabric and thread and decorated with wire, buttons, and wood. On display through April 26.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20

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

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



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STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

Jesus Himself said this: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6).

In spite of the truth, man has devised many ways to heaven. Some of the most common are that my good works will get me there. Some might say belonging to a certain church will do it. Yet others may say baptism or taking communion will get me there.

The truth of the matter is man's handprint is not on salvation. Man cannot build his own stairway to heaven. It was Jesus Christ who died on the cross to make it possible for us to go to heaven.

The Bible says:

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
(Acts 4:12)

Salvation is found only by asking Jesus Christ to be your personal Savior.

This is as written.
We are Calvary Baptist Church in Turners Falls.
God's blessings are yours.

Classics in The Woods Concert in Wendell

Classics in The Woods will present their third concert of the 2013-2014 season on Sunday, March 23 at 3 p.m. at 99 West Street, in Wendell.

The concert, entitled "Out of The Shadows," features music by Bach, Poulenc, and Rachmaninoff with Rebecca Hartka on cello and Alys Terrien-Queen on piano.

Light refreshments (fruit punch, munchies & BYOB) will be served following the concert.

All are welcome, but space is limited and reservations are needed.

To reserve seats, please email classicsinthewoods@crocker.com. Be sure to include your name and contact information so that we can confirm.

Donations of any amount will be gratefully received.

SEEKING CRAFT ARTISANS

The Sawmill River Arts Gallery, located at the Montague Bookmill, is looking for new artisan members.

There will be an informational meeting at the gallery on Monday, March 24, from 6 to 7 p.m.

For more information and to register contact Louise Minks at (413) 367-2800 or Kerry Stone (978) 544-5463, or at sawmillriverarts@gmail.com.

MONTAGUE REPORTER



PHOTO COURTESY NANCY HOLMES

ON THE ROAD

Nancy Holmes writes: "A few of the Ladies of Turners Falls High Class of 1969 share their awesome hometown newspaper, the Reporter, with their awesome guide Gary Travassos, while visiting the Azores." Left to right: Joanne Blair; Mr. Travassos; Jane Devino; Kathy Webber, and Nancy Holmes.

WEST ALONG from page B1

When I'm no longer looking like the human being predator, otter and duck go about their business, though sometimes curious to learn what manner of mammal I really am.

I don't want to disturb any creatures who have taken refuge here, the peace of wild things is the priority.

This morning, I have the rare privilege of watching a handsome hooded merganser diving in the swift-flowing current, catching his breakfast.

This male is likely one of the earliest true migrants, moving up the valley in a 12,000 year old pattern of following the retreating winter. Seeing him keeps me going all day.

Remembering his image, I sometimes catch myself smiling even during really boring meetings.

Six or seven black ducks fly by, nonchalant, secure and unhurried in spite of the massive bald eagle powering upriver, following them.

These ducks do not seem overly concerned. They're in perfect

health, too quick for the eagle, and he sees no sense in stooping to be frustrated by these waterfowl, capable of great acrobatic feats of evasion when need be.

Eagle wings on by, looking for carrion or some sickly or injured prey, requiring less expenditure of energy.

Wintering robins by the score are moving through the bittersweet vines along the shore. The vines are much maligned as an invasive species, but they do provide nourishment over the winter for many species.

So many scores of robins have spent the winter here that they can no longer be called the harbingers of spring. The cardinal however, has already begun his cheerup!cheerup! song, and can claim to be the true first voice of the new season.

High up overhead, a red-tailed hawk soars, carrying a long branch. He spends time swinging in wide circles before folding his wings in a power dive, still clutching his branch, either to impress his mate or

to actually bring it to her to put on the new nest.

These predators, our hawks and owls will need to begin incubating soon, timing it so that when the young are hatched and hungry, there will be abundant fresh meat with the arrival of songbirds and furry little creatures.

The trail leads over hillock and down water course, frozen now, but soon to be flowing with the spring freshet.

Past the birch and alder copse, and under the pitchpine grove where more fox sign and squirrel litter clutter the frozen path.

Sigh. This has been a long winter, and March is a tease. A writer friend, Henry David Thoreau, reminds us that March is only one sixth of the way to the warmest weather we can hope for!

Just the same, the signs are there. There is reason for optimism. We have faced a true New England winter, and though battered, we are unbowed, and we are still here!



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