



Wendell's Citizen of the Year Ted Lewis

Page 8



Solar Contracts Signed in Montague

Page 11

LAKE PLEASANT

MILLERS FALLS

MONTAGUE CENTER

MONTAGUE CITY

TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 10 – NO. 43

also serving Irving, Gill, Everett and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

AUGUST 23, 2012

Growth Pangs at Former School Building



Trying to Find a Water Line Leak on Station Road

BY LEE WICKS
MONTAGUE CENTER – There are 980 feet of new waterlines beneath Station Street in Montague Center. Somewhere along the new line there is a leak. Just 1½ ounces of water at a time, a total of a gallon a minute under pressure, so small the leak is hard to detect. And so far it has been impossible to find.

When asked how the months long project has been going, department of public works superintendent Tom Bergeron offered a wry smile and said, “Oh, it’s been a dream. Or actually more like a —ing nightmare.”

Certainly this summer has not been fun for the residents of School Street and Station Street. The ongoing sewer replacement project is noisy; it creates clouds of dust, and the sidewalks are torn up. The presence of big trucks digging week after week, and men pondering the deep holes that result, has not been reassuring for village residents.

“It’s over budget and they are out of money,” more than one neighbor has commented, and this rumor has echoed around town.

Peg Bridges, who has lived on Center Street for 36 years, stopped to talk to the crew one morning. She said, “You’re like my sons when they were little. You can’t stop digging in the sand.”

People shake their heads and list other projects that must certainly be getting neglected while this one is never done. (But if you buy that line, folks in Turners have a bridge they can sell you.)

According to Bergeron, the town has saved a great deal of money by having the DPW do the work. He maintains the project is still on-budget, and all the department’s scheduled summer projects have been done.

“The crew on site at Station Road comes by when there’s a lull in their other work,” he said. “Town meeting appropriated \$25,000 for this job. It would have cost a hundred thousand or more for an independent contractor to do it,” he added.

Except for the fugitive leak, the job has gone well, and Bergeron is grateful for the help he’s received

see GROWTH page 12

Dems in 2nd Franklin will Narrow Field of Candidates – September 6th

BY DAVID DETMOLD – After the last census, the political boundaries of Massachusetts were redrawn to reflect shifts in population. Locally, one of the biggest changes took place in the 2nd Franklin District, which had been anchored along Route 2 and the Millers River by the population centers of Greenfield on the west and Orange/Athol to the east. With redistricting, Greenfield was dropped from the 2nd Franklin, and the towns of New Salem,

Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Templeton, and Wendell, along with Precinct A of Belchertown, were added, shifting the center of political gravity in the district decidedly eastward.

Five candidates have entered the fray to challenge the incumbent, Denise Andrews (D – Orange) for that legislative seat. Besides Republican Susannah Whipps-Lee of Athol and independent Richard Shober of Templeton, the other three challengers are all

running as Democrats: Rebecca Bialecki and Genevieve Fraser of Orange, and Jim White of Phillipston.

On Thursday, September 6th, Democrats and unenrolled voters in Gill, Irving and Wendell will have the opportunity to join voters in the rest of the 2nd Franklin District to winnow the field of candidates. On page 5, candidate profiles for the four Democrats (pictured below) are offered to help voters make their choice that day.



Denise Andrews



Genevieve Fraser



Rebecca Bialecki



Jim White

Another Glorious Old Home Day in Wendell



Here, some children took over a ride for kids, and nobody minded.

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE – The light is different in Wendell. Musicians seem to be drawn to the town common; they show up year after year to celebrate Old Home Day. Children run and play, babies coo in their mothers arms or lie cozy in their strollers. The common is bedecked with art, music fills the air, food is bought

and sold or shared freely, there is plenty of garden produce and plants to take home, clothing and jewelry on sale, massages on offer, and dancing on the green. It’s a party for the entertainers as well as the entertained.

This year the skies were blue and the sunshine bright all day on Old Home Day, August 18th. People gath-

ered to greet old friends and hear their favorite musicians, or appreciate new ones. Like the unlikely combination of Garret and Zoe, he on electric bass and she on violin.

It was all good, and people danced with great joy. Old favorites Annie Hassett, Moonlight and Morning Star, Mixed Nuts with

see HOME DAY pg 8

Montague Celebrates Old Home Day



On the Common

BY LEE WICKS – **MONTAGUE** celebrated its 53 annual Old Home Days on Saturday, August 18th with races and raffles, art shows, performances, a parade, home baked pies, fried dough, and everything else the community has come to expect from this much loved event.

Between 25 and 30 volunteers from the First Congregationalist Church in Montague made the day possible, with work starting two weeks before the big day.

On Thursday, the church kitchen was busy from early morning to dusk while volunteers sliced fruit and rolled pie crust for pies that looked too pretty to eat, although that didn’t stop anyone from picking up a fork and digging in. As always the fried dough booth had lines of people waiting. I have heard that family reunions have been planned around Old Home Days, and family vacations scheduled so as not to miss it!

This was the second year for Penny’s Second Hand

Boutique, and people browsed all day under the yellow striped tent. The church auction is no longer held on the same day, but will take place later in the fall, giving the community yet another opportunity to visit and share opinions on the weather, politics both local and national, and the state of the world in general.

All proceeds benefit the church and its programs, and annually the event raises between six and eight thousand dollars.

PET OF THE WEEK Pretty Mouth and Green My Eyes



Katie

My name is Katie. I'm an 8-year-old, female, shorthair cat in need of a home. Things don't always go as you plan: I had a GREAT home with a loving owner, and he passed away.

I'm a little turned around being out of a home where I can play with things like pens. I love to push them around on the floor. I'm good with people and especially men. I'm a sweet, balanced compact girl with beautiful green eyes who wants to go back into a loving home soon. Come meet me – to know me is to love me!

For more information on adopting me, please contact Valley Vet in Hadley at (413)584-1223.

WENDELL FREE LIBRARY

Monthly Horror/Monster Movie Series

On Saturday, August 25th, the Wendell Free Library will present *House On Haunted Hill* at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free.

Eccentric millionaire Fredrick Loren and his 4th wife, Annabelle, have invited five guests to the house on Haunted Hill for a "Haunted House" party. Whoever stays in the house for one night will earn ten thousand dollars each. As the night progresses, the guests are trapped inside the house with ghosts, murderers, and other terrors.

The original *The House On Haunted Hill* is one of the most entertaining and enjoyable chillers of all time. William Castle's over the top camp style is a wild, fun ride. The legendary Vincent Price is in his element as the cynical millionaire trapped in a loveless sham of a marriage. Supremely silly but still scary at the same time.

For more Information, visit www.wendellfreelibrary.org or call (978)544-3559.

Enrichment Give-aways at the Block Party

For the second year, the Gill-Montague Education Fund (GMEF) participated in the Annual Block Party on Saturday, August 11th. As part of their enrichment program for students and the community, the GMEF gave all visitors to the booth a 'free ticket' to register for the three Enrichment Give-aways.

Two backpacks (for a girl and a boy) were each filled with school supplies, a hand-made winter hat, and a gift certificate to the Wagon

Wheel. The backpack winners were Hannah Bogusz, a student at Great Falls Middle School, and Bryce Hammond, a kindergartener at the Montague Elementary School Hillcrest Building.

Riley Howe won the third give-away, a gift certificate for two tickets to the 9th Annual Gala, "Union Jack." The April 27th concert will include songs and memories from the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Dave Clark 5, Searchers, and many others.



The umbrella cockatoo came back out to visit after the very crowded Australian Live Animal program at the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls on Wednesday, August 15th. Summer Reading Program parties were held at all three Montague Public Libraries.



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Q. What causes a heart attack?

A blood clot in a narrowed coronary artery is the usual cause of a heart attack. The clogged artery prevents oxygenated blood from nourishing the heart. This can lead to pain, the death of heart cells, scar tissue and fatal arrhythmias.

A variety of causes lead to the narrowing of arteries, which is called atherosclerosis. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of a heart attack.

Some risk factors leading to heart attacks are: genetics, high cholesterol and triglycerides, smoking, high blood pressure, a sedentary lifestyle, obesity, diabetes, stress, excessive alcohol, diet high in saturated fat, age, gender and race.

Over 80% of people who die of coronary heart disease are 65 or

older. Men are at greater risk than women of having a heart attack. African-Americans, Mexican-Americans and Native Americans are at higher risk of heart disease.

Q. What drugs are used to treat a heart attack?

Drugs that help dissolve clots blocking blood to the heart are lifesavers. These drugs are known as thrombolytics or "clot-busters." The earlier a clot-buster is administered, the better.

A superaspirin is given with a clot-buster to prevent new clots from forming.

Nitroglycerin is used to open arteries, improving blood flow to and from the heart.

Regular aspirin keeps blood moving through constricted arteries. Therefore, paramedics may give aspirin when treating an emergency heart-attack victim. Aspirin reduces mortality from heart attacks.

Beta blockers, which lower your pulse rate and blood pressure, can reduce damage to the heart.

Q. Can your ears predict a heart attack?



STEVE DAMON PHOTO

The Romeos performed at the closing of the Common People Concert Series in Gill on Tuesday, August 22nd.

Swift River School Registration

BY CHRISTINE HEARD

WENDELL – Swift River School, the public elementary school serving the children of New Salem and Wendell, will open on Wednesday, August 29th. In addition to grades kindergarten through 6th, there is also a preschool program for children who are age three or four years old by September 1st, 2012. Registration for new students will be held on Friday, August 24th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To learn more about registration or to schedule an appointment, call (978) 544-6926 or come to Swift River School, 201 Wendell Road, New Salem on registration day. You must provide a copy of your child's immunization record and birth certificate, before s/he may start school.

The Benefits of Benefit Counseling

BY ANNA VIADERO

MONTAGUE CITY – People age 60 and older, especially those retired and on fixed income, face many challenges. What many of them don't know is that money they paid, and pay, into the system in taxes and fees is now available to help them stretch their dollars and stay in their own homes. The problem is finding those funds.

Here's where volunteer benefits counselors from Franklin County Home Care enter the picture.

Benefits counselor volunteers know which agencies offer funding, and the various kinds of funds available. They know where and how to apply for those funds, and they will help older people apply and follow up. All for free.

Nancy Graton of Wendell

see BENEFIT page 14

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: What Causes a Heart Attack?

older. Men are at greater risk than women of having a heart attack. African-Americans, Mexican-Americans and Native Americans are at higher risk of heart disease.

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Q. Can your ears predict a heart attack?

Kay Tee Khaw, professor of clinical gerontology at Cambridge University in England, said it may be that "big ears predict survival. Men with smaller ears may die selectively at younger ages. Ear size or pattern, or both, may be a marker of some biological process related to health."

While this may sound far-fetched, many studies have shown that men with a diagonal crease in both ear lobes may have an increased risk of heart attacks.

Ears grow larger with age. Older people have bigger ears than they had as young adults. It might sound like a myth, but it's been proven by many scientific studies.

For example, researchers at the VA Medical Center at Texas Tech University found that ear circumference increases an average of 0.51 millimeters per year. Physicians at the Royal College of General Practitioners in England measured their patients' ears too. They found that, as we get older, our ears grow about 0.22 millimeters per year.

Send your questions to fred@healthygeezers.com.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – August 27th - September 7th

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. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. The Meal Site Manager is Kerry Togneri. Fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call (413)863-9357. Voice message may be left when the center is not open.

Monday, August 27th

10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday, August 28th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
Wednesday, August 29th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Monthly Health Screening
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, August 30th
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, August 31st
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

Monday, September 3rd

Senior Center CLOSED
LABOR DAY
Tuesday, September 4th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
12:45 p.m. COA meeting
Wednesday, September 5th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, September 6th
Senior Center CLOSED
State Primary ELECTION DAY
Friday, September 7th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:30 a.m. Pizza Party

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

pressure clinic will be held.

Monday, August 27th
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
10:00 a.m. Osteo-Exercise
12:30 Bowling
Tuesday, August 28th
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, August 29th
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
12:00 Bingo
Thursday, August 30th
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10:00 a.m. Posture Perfect
Friday, August 31st
9:00 a.m. Bowling

LEVERETT Senior Activities

- Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga – Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$4.00 (first class free).
- Senior Lunch – Fridays, 12 p.m. Call (413)367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation. For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413)548-1022, ext. 5, or at coa@leverett.ma.us.

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.

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Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG – The New Salem General Store will present the 5th annual “**Hilltown Brewfest**” from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday, September 8th, at Cooleyville Junction, 837 Daniel Shays Highway (Route 202) in New Salem. This annual event has quickly become the fastest growing brewfest in the area. The net proceeds of the event will be donated to the fire departments of New Salem and Wendell.

This afternoon tasting will feature over 30 mostly regional brands, offering many styles of beer along with select offerings of wine, cider and mead. Many are made by fine micro/craft brewers and winemakers in the Quabbin and Pioneer Valley region. In addition, there will be food, raffles and live music. Advance tickets are available at the New Salem General Store, The Blind Pig Pub and Stan's Liquor Mart in Athol, Amherst Glass or online at: www.hilltownbrewfest.com.

Yoga at the Leverett Library is being offered on Thursday evenings for 11 weeks from September 6th through November 15th. Please pre-register with instructor Lisa Enzer, at (413) 367-2658 or at www.livinggroommyoga.net. The program is sponsored by the Leverett recreation commission.

Start Smart fall soccer and football registrations are available at the Montague Parks and Recreation, Unity Park, in Turners Falls for both residents and non-residents of Montague. For more info, (413) 863-3216 or visit www.Montague.net.

RiverCulture will host a series of talks on four **immigrant groups that settled in Turners Falls** during the period of industrialization (German, French Canadian, Irish, and Polish/other Eastern European). The talks include panel discussions, music, exhibits with story boards, photos, and recordings of oral history. Held in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, in Turners Falls from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on Fridays, September 7th, 13th and 28th and Thursday September 13th. Check www.greatfallsma.org or www.turnersfalls-riverculture.org for more details.

The Pioneer Valley Transition Towns Film Festival scheduled for October 19th at the Greenfield Community College's Sloan Theater is requesting **submissions of locally made films** about building community resilience in an uncertain future. Any Pioneer Valley resident or group of residents of any age can submit a film for the festival. There will be competitive and non-competitive

categories with prizes awarded in the competitive category. All of the films submitted will be aired on public access television. The submission deadline is September 28th. Two DVDs should be mailed to PVTTF, c/o GCTV, P.O. Box 807, Greenfield, MA 01302. For submission form and guidelines go to www.transition-northfieldma.org.

“**Artisans on Avenue A**” will be held at the Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A, in Turners Falls on Saturday, Aug 25th, from 1 to 4 p.m. The lobby of the Turners Falls branch office will be turned into a treasure trove of custom-made creations from jewelry to paintings, stained glass, magical emu lotions, pillows, sweaters, whimsical decorations, seasonal flags and all-natural soaps. Bring your gift list and enjoy some light refreshments.

Send local briefs to: reporter-local@montaguema.net.

Correction & More B&Es in Turners

Terrance Carter, a Turners Falls man arrested on July 29th for breaking and entering in the nighttime at the Inkwell News on Federal Street in Greenfield, was not bailed out of jail as of August 9th, as incorrectly reported in MR 10#41. According to Montague police staff sergeant Chris Williams, Carter was still in custody this week.

An associate of Carter's, Lance Rice, 23, of 63 4th Street in Turners, arrested after being caught on store surveillance video for attempting to break and enter Basically Bicycles on 3rd Street in Turners Falls in the early morning hours of July 31st, has been bailed out, according to Williams.

Williams said Rice and Carter are among the suspects in a string of B&Es in downtown Turners over the last few weeks. Ristorante DiPaolo, Shady Glen, Bob's Auto Body, Crestview Liquors, and the Housing Authority had all been broken into, often with cash or other valuables stolen, in July prior to the arrests of Rice and Carter. Most of these breaks featured marks of forced entry from a large screw driver or similar prybar.

Williams said that pattern picked up again as of this past Sunday, August 12th, when Bob's Auto was broken into through a side window. That same evening, Loot, on Avenue A, was also broken into through a boarded-up side window on the alleyway side of the building. Both breaks featured the same pry marks as earlier incidents. A BMX bicycle was recovered from the woods behind Bob's Auto, and nothing appeared to have been taken from either business, Williams said.

Disaster Recovery Template Readied for Franklin County

BY TRACY ROGERS

GREENFIELD – In the wake of four federally declared disasters in 2011, including tropical storm Irene, whose anniversary is approaching on August 27th, the Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC), a program of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), has created a disaster recovery plan template for Franklin County communities to customize for their own use. The plan assists communities in deciding, before a disaster happens, what financial, organizational, and human resources issues will need to be addressed both short-term and long-term as they recover from a disaster.

Recovery could take several years, as seen in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. A disaster recovery plan asks and answers questions such as:

What key facilities need to be repaired or restored for short-term

functioning of the community (perhaps the sewage treatment plant, for example)?

What long-term mitigation strategies should be considered (such as whether it would make sense to rebuild in a vulnerable area should anything happen to the structures there)?

What historically significant structures need to be repaired or restored no matter what the cost?

How will communities provide temporary and long-term housing for displaced residents?

How will communities help local businesses get back up and running, so residents continue to have jobs while they try to put their lives back together, and so those businesses will survive the impact of the disaster and remain in business?

What state and federal assistance is available under different scenarios, both for the community and its residents?

Schools Awarded Recycling Carts

BY AMY DONOVAN

GREENFIELD – The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District was recently awarded a \$2,000 MassDEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) grant to fund the purchase of 29 recycling carts for schools within the 22-town solid waste district.

The solid waste district distributed the blue recycling carts for bottles, cans, and containers to Mohawk, Pioneer, Turners Falls High School, Great Falls Middle School, Butterfield Elementary, Deerfield Elementary, Hawlemont Elementary, Pearl Rhodes Elementary, and Swift River Elementary.

The 35-gallon carts, or toters, feature wheels, labels that read “Bottles and Cans” and a hole in the lid to allow for easy recycling.

The office of the Selectboard Administrative Assistant for the Town of Gill will be closed for vacation from August 28th through September 4th. For questions, call (413)863-9347.

The National Spiritual Alliance is sponsoring a Psychic Fair on Saturday, August 25th, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Thompson Temple across from the Lake Pleasant post office. For more information, contact the TNSA website www.thenationalspiritualallianceinc.org.

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Source to Sea Cleanup

Come get your hands dirty for clean rivers!

The 16th Annual Source to Sea Cleanup will take place on Saturday, September 29th.

The Connecticut River Watershed Council needs volunteers to help between 9 a.m. to noon. Volunteers with trucks are needed between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

School groups can volunteer the week before.

How will communities help those who don't qualify for any assistance and may fall between the cracks?

How can the community attract investment capital needed to reconstruct buildings and restore business activities and housing?

The towns of Gill and Buckland worked closely to draft recovery plans specifically for their respective towns. For those towns that did not receive a customized plan, the template may be downloaded from the Western Region Homeland Security Council's website (www.wrhsac.org) and adapted to their needs.

The project was sponsored by a the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council. For more information, please contact Tracy Rogers of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments at (413)774-3167 x118 or regional-prep@frcog.org.

waste district recycle paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass, and 15 of those schools engage in comprehensive food and paper waste composting.

Cart recipients had to sign an agreement to use the cart only for collecting recyclables, to empty the cart on a regular basis, and to transfer recyclables to a local recycling facility, from which they will be sent to the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility for processing, or to have a licensed hauler collect the materials for recycling.

Towns that receive SMRP funding must certify they have “beyond recycled” by-laws.

MONTAGUE SOAP BOX Races

Sunday, September 16th
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montaguesoapboxraces.com

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"The Voice of the Villages"

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August, 2002

Raise the Minimum Wage

Americans who work hard should be able to make a living.

BY ELIZABETH ROSE

WASHINGTON, DC – In most states, working full-time in a minimum-wage job pays \$7.25 per hour. That's just \$15,000 a year for full-time work. It's not enough to live on. In fact, a breadwinner for a family of four earning the minimum wage would be a full \$7,000 below the federal poverty line.

It's been three years since Congress last took action to nudge the minimum wage closer to covering the cost of living. Meanwhile, our politicians in Congress get an automatic raise every year, and CEO pay is skyrocketing.

Increasing the federal minimum wage even just to \$9.80 an hour would lift the wages for more than 28 million Americans – boosting the economy by more than \$25 billion and generating more than 100,000 jobs.

Raising the minimum wage would help the economy because people who work paycheck to paycheck spend what they earn. And it's the right thing to do, too – no one who works hard in a full-time job should be forced to live in poverty.

Most minimum-wage earners work for big corporations. These corporations keep giving their CEOs bigger bonuses every year, but then claim they can't afford to give their employees a raise. The 50 largest employers of workers in low-wage jobs paid their top executives an average of \$9.4 million last year – that's \$4,500 an hour for someone working 40 hours a week, or almost \$800,000 each month. As the minimum wage has declined in real terms, CEO pay has risen 725 percent over the last 30 years, and 80 percent of all real income growth has gone to the richest 1 percent of Americans. That's just not fair.

Most Americans working in minimum wage jobs aren't

teenagers. In fact, people in low-wage jobs are older and better educated than ever.

Both the House and Senate are considering bills to raise the minimum wage to \$9.80 per hour by 2014. If those bills are enacted, millions of hard-working Americans will finally earn enough to live off their wages and not be forced to live in poverty.

Most Americans think that raising the minimum wage is a good first step to help the economy and restore fairness in America. But House Republicans, at the behest of big business, are working to stop legislation to raise the minimum wage. They're putting their campaign contributors ahead of their constituents, many of whom would benefit from a higher minimum wage.

These lawmakers think Americans don't care about the frontline worker who pumps gas or works behind the counter. But these workers are the backbone of America. Minimum-wage workers are putting in long hours and trying to better themselves. They just need a fair chance to make enough to survive. We can give it to them by raising the minimum wage to a livable amount.

Despite their differences, both the House and the Senate have already defied the Budget Control Act by passing massive defense bills for fiscal 2013 that pierce this ceiling.

It's time for Congress to get real. Lawmakers must extend the deadline to phase in spending reductions and reduce the coming shock to the vulnerable U.S. economy. It's well past time for Congress to cooperate, at least to this extent.

Elizabeth Rose is the communications director for the Campaign for America's Future, which promotes raising the minimum wage and other progressive policies. www.ourfuture.org Distributed via OtherWords (OtherWords.org).



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GUEST EDITORIAL

Ongoing Bridge Construction Takes its Toll on Local Businesses

As one of the co-owners of the Wagon Wheel Restaurant, I've been directly hit by the ongoing construction rebuilding the bridge between Turners Falls and Gill. Although I recognize that this is a very important project, it's hurting not just our business, but many of the other businesses on both sides of the bridge. It won't do much for our towns if by the time the construction is finished, many of us have been forced to go out of business or relocate.

I spoke with state representative Denise Andrews about this problem, and she decided to organize a meeting. So, on the morning of Wednesday, August 15th, several local business owners from Turners Falls and Gill and three members of the Department of Transportation sat down with her to talk about the issue.

The reports at the meeting were bleak. All businesses reported major drops in sales since the construction began three years ago. One business will be closing in the next few months. Another business is looking

to relocate. And while winter in the area is generally hard on all of us, two businesses reported they may have to close by spring.

The Department of Transportation didn't offer any possible solutions. Though the business owners made suggestions of adding workers on the bridge construction project or increasing working hours, none of our suggestions seemed to be taken seriously.

Although there was criticism from the DOT that we were complaining in hindsight, these same concerns from local business owners were expressed before the construction project got underway. At that time, many of us spoke up about the negative impact the four-year bridge reconstruction would have on our businesses, with the hope that our concerns would be taken into consideration. The over-budget, problematic Big Dig spent a reported billion dollars in mitigation money to minimize the impacts of that project on the businesses and communities

in Boston, even as the rest of the state's roads suffered from state funds being focused on the Hub. So why does it seem that no thought would have on our local businesses, even when these points were raised ahead of time? Wouldn't it have been smarter to simply close the bridge completely for a year and get it done, rather than force us to live with a protracted four-year project that doesn't seem to work for anyone?

Further, the DOT did not have an answer when asked why local construction companies and crew were not hired for the project.

Our towns have already been struggling, and are now suffering from even fewer jobs as businesses are forced to reduce their workforce or close entirely, and the revenue that would be coming here is now going elsewhere as people decide it's too much trouble to navigate the

see LOCAL pg 14

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Usher Mill Cleanup Funded to the Tune of \$1 Million

BY KATIE NOLAN – The August 13th Erving special town meeting voted unanimously to take \$500,000 from the town's stabilization fund to pay for demolition and cleanup at the former Usher Mill on Arch Street. With the \$500,000 previously approved for this project in at the annual town meeting of May 2010, the price tag for cleaning up the arson-damaged mill complex increased to \$1 million.

The scope of work includes demolishing all remaining mill buildings except the boiler building, removal and disposal of asbestos and other hazardous materials, and removal and disposal of non-hazardous demolition debris.

Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin told the meeting the lowest bid for the Usher Mill work was \$822,782, and the town also needed money for engineering costs and a contingency fund. He said that the town will look into applying for a

\$50,000 Brownfields grant to help defray the cost of the project.

Asked why costs had increased since the 2010 vote, Goodwin said the original estimate of \$500,000 had been made before polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) had been detected in one mill building. He emphasized the current costs were for site cleanup only and that developing the site for future uses could cost more.

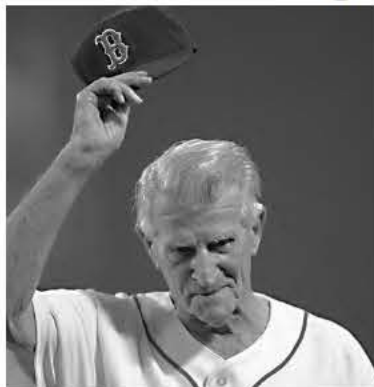
In answer to a question about pursuing former owner Patriots Environmental to recoup some of the costs, Goodwin said the town "has no legal recourse at this point." The town acquired the property from the Worcester-based salvage firm Patriots Environmental for back taxes earlier this year.

Usher Plant re-use committee member Jeff Dubay commented, "The real cost is the delay," in getting started on the work. Continuing this

see USHER MILL page 14

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Doing the Dishes for Red Sox Greats



Johnny Peske is the only non-Hall of Fame player to have his number retired...

Watch Out What You Wish For

What exactly is Israel's "atrocious record on human rights" [referencing an editorial in MR 10#41]?

Watch out what you wish for in Syria.

– Lewis Skolnick
Leverett

Seeing a write-up recently about Johnny Peske, former Red Sox player, dying at the age of 92 brought back memories.

Peske and Ted Williams learned to fly at the Turners Falls airport during the Second World War. They and other servicemen in training were housed in downtown Turners.

There was small building at the airport close to where the airport office building is now. That was a

private restaurant just for those men. My mother, Ruby Shirtcliff, did the cooking. I can remember going to work with her on a Saturday morning and doing dishes. I didn't know that years later I could brag about washing dishes for Johnny Pesky and Ted Williams!

– Jean Thurber
Turners Falls

Praise for the Reporter

I sincerely believe the *Montague Reporter* is the best little paper in the U.S. of A.

The *Montague Reporter* has been successfully expanding its coverage in recent years to include Leverett, where I live. There is a lot of local news, not so much national except for very exceptional situations of great interest nationwide. School board meetings, selectboard meetings are covered in depth in each of the villages. Local athletics and detailed calendars of events can be

found. In addition, there are wonderful columns like the Gardeners Companion and the Healthy Geezer.

One new thing the paper has been doing is carrying photos of people reading the *Reporter* while travelling to other parts of the world: Paris, Rome, and one was taken in Fargo, ND recently! There is a poetry page, too, which appears monthly.

– Barbara Alfange
Leverett

(excerpted from a letter of advice to the *Capital Journal*, in Pierre, SD)

U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan as of 8/22/12

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Wounded: | Deaths: |
| 15,332 | 2,102 |



Note to Readers: Summer Print Schedule

As a small town weekly, the *Montague Reporter* follows the news of local boards, many of which switch to summer schedules this time of year.

We follow suit, and print every other week in the months of July and August. There will be no paper on August 30th.

We wish everyone a peaceful and relaxing summer.

Wanted: Editor

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Must be willing to work hard for modest pay, with a great team of experienced local newshounds, graphic artists, and support staff.

Send resume and writing sample by Sept 14th to:

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2nd FRANKLIN DISTRICT DEMOCRAT CANDIDATE PROFILES

Denise Andrews, the incumbent in this race, is running in a reconfigured district where she will have to introduce herself to the citizens of six new towns to the east of her home base of Orange; and she will have to run on her record. Andrews took criticism earlier this year for taking an executive position with pharmaceutical giant Novartis while she served in the legislature, a job she left shortly after unfavorable reporting in the Greenfield *Recorder* focused attention on the issue.

Andrews, an Orange native, said her top priorities if reelected will be “jobs and economic development,” along with “strong, competitive affordable public education from pre-K through lifelong learning.”

Expanding on her legislative goals, Andrews said, “Next is the environment – how to preserve and protect it so that our quality of life is maintained, and within that, very important are energy philosophy and approach, which for me is to reduce consumption. The work that is going in with the Transition Town movement is leading work, and we need to foster that. We need to accelerate investment in solar, wind, hydro and geothermal; we need to responsibly close Vermont Yankee, and for those workers not employed in cleanup, get them good retirement packages and retraining skills so they can land on their feet. We need to work for vibrant communities, with farmers markets and vibrant village centers.

“Those are my original priorities and that is what I will continue to work on,” said Andrews, who added, “Another key priority is excellent constituent services. When people call our office, we connect them with resources and paths to resolve the issues that they want to get resolved. I am proud of the job my staff does to go the distance with constituent services.”

Andrews, who worked for 17 years in manufacturing with Proctor and Gamble, and eight years in human resources with the same corporation before branching off to form her own consulting firm in “global leadership and diversity,” said, “I am running for reelection because I know I have a good heart, strong leadership, and care about the issues that are important for the people of this district. I am willing to be a champion to get the progress that we need for all families.

“The citizens of the 2nd Franklin District have an investment in me in

the experience I’ve built as an incumbent. It’s not an easy job to learn; I’m effective at it. I bring 30 years of experience in how to build high-performance teams and get results and make systematic improvement and do complex problem solving. I am very fiscally responsible and I want to bring some of the best practices of the private sector to the public system in terms of accountability and return on the investment of taxpayers’ money.”

Rebecca Bialecki, for the past 11 years executive director of the North Quabbin Community Coalition, is in the running for state rep from the 2nd Franklin District because she wants to organize political power to further the economic development and tourism potential of the newly-expanded district.

With the elimination of Greenfield and the expansion of the district eastward, Bialecki said, “This is the first time in a couple of decades we have a district that finally encompasses the entire nine-town North Quabbin region, and a few towns to the east and west. It’s a more homogenous district, where no town can overshadow the needs of other towns. For me, it makes a lot of sense that we can have a unified voice for this district in terms of the needs and challenges and assets of this region.”

Originally from Orange, Bialecki attended Orange schools and Mahar, before getting a nursing degree in Springfield. She moved to Boston to start a family, worked in a respite center with children and their families, and “realized that was a natural calling for me. I had the chance to get hired back in Central Mass at the Deveraux Foundation in Rutland,” working again with children and families in need, before going back to school for social work, and a doctorate in psychology at Harvard.

Traveling the country for Deveraux, Bialecki said she came to realize, “Even though we could do wonderful work with kids [in need], once we sent them back to their families, if nothing else had changed, then a lot of that work came undone. So it really prompted me to work in community settings and look at community change.”

After working for three years as sales manager with her brothers’ radio station, WJDF in Orange, where she got a chance to become better acquainted with the local business community, Bialecki said she took a job with Community Action and served on the board of the North Quabbin Community Coalition.

She became executive director of that organization in 2001, and has been there ever since.

If elected, Bialecki said, “Right out of the gate, for this region we have to look at economic development. Although we have seen some small glimmers of hope since the recent recession, we certainly don’t have the capacity for bouncing back in this district.” But in a unified district, no longer divided between the interests of Greenfield to the west or Worcester county to the east, Bialecki believes she would be well-positioned to help interest investors in the North Quabbin area, where underutilized manufacturing buildings near town centers could easily lend their historic charms to mixed-used and commercial development.

“We’ve been at the outmost edges of Franklin and Worcester County; we’ve never been at the center of anyone’s attention,” she said.

Bialecki credits the North Quabbin Community Coalition with creating 150 jobs in the past year, and bringing a total of \$3.2 million in private and public resources into the North Quabbin region.

Bialecki said ecotourism to an area of the state blessed with the Quabbin and a rich agricultural base could be bolstered by one “low hanging fruit” that could be easily plucked: the creation of a regional tourism council in the district. “For some reason, when that statewide network got set up,” by the Massachusetts Council of Travel and Tourism, the North Quabbin region “got skipped. I would seek to correct that immediately.”

Genevieve Fraser describes herself as “a professional and aspirational environmental advocate,” who has lived and worked in the North Quabbin region for three decades. A resident of Orange for the last decade, Fraser served for four years as an aide to former state senator Robert Wetmore, and before that worked as an editor of a weekly paper in Lawrence, an economic development planner, an environmental technical writer, and a staff associate and writer for Mount Wachusett Community College. Recently she served on the board of the Massachusetts Wood Producers Association, and resigned from its successor organization last month to avoid any conflict of interest as she pursues her run for the redistricted 2nd Franklin District.

Fraser faced off against Denise Andrews and Republican Steven Adam in a run for the legislature in 2010, when the district included Greenfield. She ran as an independent in that race, and is back now running as a Democrat against Andrews, Rebecca Bialecki and Jim White in the upcoming September

6th Democratic primary. In 2010, she pulled in 669 votes across the district, coming in third behind Andrews, with 6,890, and Adam with 5,554.

Fraser said, “I am running as a liberal Democrat who believes in all the core Democratic values, such as support for seniors and the handicapped, and strong education. However, because of the unstable economic climate throughout the world, which is also reflected in our own economy, as a state rep, along with constituent services I would dedicate myself to absolutely altering the economic climate within the 2nd Franklin District. I want to change how we live. I would dedicate myself to creating a new economy for the region based on utilization of our natural resources. In terms of agriculture, we need to become the breadbasket of Massachusetts, in coordination with the Pioneer Valley. This is particularly critical in terms of climate change and the catastrophic effects of drought in the MidWest. We need to use this tragedy as an opportunity to build a new agrarian society where we can have food security. I would suggest we do this by utilizing the whole permaculture model, as organically as possible.”

Fraser continued, “In addition, the 2nd Franklin District offers 200,000 forested acres, and unfortunately the impact of climate change and invasive species and diseases are beginning to wreak havoc on our forests. We need to deal with this. I would like to introduce the most sophisticated biomass facility into the region, to not only allow for the appropriate disposal of dead or dying woody biomass, but also to power a new economy, with combined heat and power to create heat districts, inviting industry to utilize the cheapest power.”

Jim White, twice-elected selectman from Athol, now lives on a farm in Phillipston. Having built up an internet business and sold it to a company from Seattle, White is now employed at Verizon, where he has worked for the last six years.

White says he already represents the 2nd Franklin District better than the other candidates in the running: “I’m a hard worker, a farmer, a student, and a former small business owner. In my opinion there is no candidate that better represents the cross-section of the population of this district better than I do.”

So why is he running for state rep?

“I didn’t want to do this,” admitted White. “I have a good job and benefits, better pay and benefits than I’d get if I’m elected. I had a great

state rep, Anne Gobi; she has done a great job. But with redistricting, I looked at the current state rep who will now represent Phillipston [Denise Andrews]. I’ve known her family for a long time, but looking at her votes, I was able to see Anne Gobi and Denise Andrews side by side and look at their records. And I was so disappointed. Ann Gobi filed 65 bills in the last session. Denise Andrews filed one, and it had nothing to do with anything that would benefit our communities. It helped one state police employee get extra sick time.”

White said Athol and Orange have recently experienced the largest declines in property values of any communities in the state, and the spark that prompted him to run for state legislature was what he considered to be inaction on the part of freshman legislator Andrews to address the erosion of these core communities’ fiscal position.

White said if elected, the first thing he would do is file a bill to amend the state’s Gateway Cities Act, to lower the population limit (currently fixed at 35,000) by which Gateway Cities, defined as cities with an average household income and an average educational attainment rate below the state average, become eligible to qualify for tax benefits to market themselves to business and industry. White said he would try to achieve the same goal by filing a bill to create rural enterprise zones for rural communities.

“The largest towns in our district are under 15,000. If larger communities have this incentive that we don’t have, we’ll never draw business here. I would file a bill to change that, similar to the bill that was filed last year in the state Senate, which died in committee. Without it, this state has a double standard against rural communities.”

White said he would also file a bill to limit the state’s ability to short-change rural communities on Payments in Lieu of Taxes on state-owned land, which makes up a good percentage of the land in the 2nd Franklin District. Currently, White said, the state puts PILOT payments toward the bottom of budget priority, funding the program only to the level money is left over in the state budget. “I want 100% PILOT payments,” said White. “Remove the clause about only funding it if there is money in the budget. I’d move it from one of the last things they fund to one of the first things they fund, because they’ll have to. That would reduce the amount of stress in rural communities on the property taxpayers and senior citizens, many of whom are having a hard time staying in their homes.”

Candidate



Do you support the state’s casino gambling legislation, and would you support changes to the state’s Happy Hour ban to even the playing field between restaurants, bars and casinos, which will be allowed to give away free drinks in Massachusetts? Alternatively, would you support a ban on Happy Hours in casinos?

Denise Andrews:

“No, I don’t support the state’s casino gambling legislation. I don’t believe casinos are the way to build our economy in Massachusetts; they come with significant social impacts. I took a vote not to support casinos. Once Massachusetts voted to allow three casinos in, I have worked in compromise to vote for the compact with Native Americans, because I do think the Native Americans have a right to have a fair share of that business. Although I still think it is not a business that supports our long term prosperity, I respect people’s choice to spend money as they choose.

“As to free drinks at the casinos, I think it should be the same standard for casinos as for restaurants and bars: I don’t think it’s right.”

Rebecca Bialecki:

“Casino gambling is water under the bridge. Now it’s a matter of making sure casinos that do arrive in our state have the support and enforcement that they need so communities do not get run over. Casinos bring jobs, that’s a positive, but with those jobs come other problems.

“I think it would be completely

unfair that casinos would play by one set of rules and bars and restaurants another. I know about the reason for the Happy Hour ban. If we don’t have them here, then we shouldn’t have them in casinos either.”

Genevieve Fraser

“I would even the playing field by not allowing [free drinks] in casinos. I believe that casino gambling is extremely exploitive and does not contribute ultimately to creating healthy societies.”

Jim White

“Casino gambling and building casinos I support 100%, because I believe they create jobs. The negative impacts that have been trumpeted already exist. You’ve got people jumping in their cars and buses and going down to the casinos. Now we’ll be keeping their money in the state and creating jobs. I thought that was a no brainer.

“It is time for the ban on Happy Hour,” in Massachusetts restaurants and bars “to go away,” added White. “People are becoming more and more responsible, and there are fewer and fewer incidents of deaths on the highway from drunk drivers. Police are not tolerant of drunk driving any longer, and people are starting to get it. After they stopped smoking in the bars, the bars are struggling to stay in business. Anything you can do to help restaurant and bar owners to survive, the better off you are.” White said the state imposes specific taxes on restaurant and bar sales, “really sticking it to these people who work and sweat hard for their money.”

Do you believe local governments should have the authority to determine whether a large wind turbine or biomass plant is sited within their borders?

Denise Andrews:

“Yes. What is built and how people live is the people’s choice, and the people’s choice has to be a consensus process that establishes what they want in their community. I am of the position that biomass technology is not a competitive technology, because of the low efficiency and conversion rate and the air quality impact. There are better technologies. I am a fan of wind, and I think wind is important. Oil consumption and foreign wars – those costs have to be factored in when considering our energy alternatives. The people should get to decide; the impact of the wealthy and special interests need to be put in check.”

Rebecca Bialecki

“I am a firm believer in all forms of renewable energy, wind being just one. I do also believe very firmly in local control, especially where the 2nd Franklin is made up of 12 unique local towns. Just their geographical characteristics may not be conducive to wind turbins. But I think the state could create some frameworks that would make it easier for small communities to follow, so they wouldn’t have to reinvent the wheel every time a wind turbine project gets proposed. The state has the resources to create a framework and still allow for local control.”

Genevieve Fraser

“I am in support of Cape Wind, and I think that will be a great help to the coastal communities that are being significantly impacted by coal. It’s a chance for them to reduce the negative impacts of coal and have a cleaner environment. Wind and solar have to be carefully sited. If we are going to destroy our pristine areas, we have to look at it closely. I believe in local control. I do support solar,

but it is counterproductive to cut down forests to site solar farms.”

Jim White

“I don’t believe they should have the authority to say yes or no. They should maintain the traditional time, place and manner [regulatory ability] that are usually reserved for local government. It’s like with freedom of speech: they can’t ban freedom of speech but they can restrict time, place or manner, like with a strip club. The same three elements should be in place for wind turbines or a biomass plant.”

What strategies or revenue sources would you pursue to fund K-12 and higher education, and what would you do to make a public college or university education in Massachusetts, now costing more than \$20,000, affordable for working families?

Denise Andrews:

“One is to address current spending in health care costs and some of the expensive operations like the MBTA, so the state isn’t putting so many taxpayer dollars into those. And the tax expenditure credits that we give, we need to reel those in and hold accountable that they really are doing what they are supposed to do. With those gains we could fund higher education.

“Massachusetts needs to set a priority that it will lead in quality, affordable education for working families. Long-term borrowing, regionalization, tax incentives, partnerships with the private sector: these are the strategies we need to pursue, and clearly we need to put more investment into education, because we’re spending too much in other areas.”

Rebecca Bialecki

“For our region, we have to look

at funding formulas for smaller regional school districts. Transportation costs are huge because of rural geography. We have consistently faced challenges in funding for our rural region, and we need to do a better job at the state level of making sure there is equity in those funding formulas that effect rural communities.

“I think there’s an assumption about rural communities because there is more of a sparse population that it somehow should cost less to educate people here; but in fact it is almost the reverse, because people are more spread out.

“On higher education we continue to pile debt on top of debt on our next generation, making it less and less possible for them to get a good four-year or Masters-level education and go into the work force, because their debt burden is just skyrocketing. We have to look at our student loans and how those rates work, and other kinds of incentives for our best and brightest to come back and work in our communities, in terms of loan forgiveness, no matter what your major. We have those programs for doctors and dentists. We need to make sure all of our best and brightest have a chance to come back home.”

Genevieve Fraser

“Once again looking at renewables – you can draw down the cost [of higher education] by reducing the heat and electrical costs. Mount Wachusett converted to thermal biomass, and also has a wind turbine; it is one of the less expensive colleges to go to. We’re in a critical juncture in history. Are we going to survive or not, with a healthy environment or a destructive environment?

see Q & A page 12

NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Repairs, Revolving Funds, and a Very Big Check

BY P.H. CROSBY – Minus one member, (but plus one member's recuperating dog, the vigilant "Georgia"), the Gill selectboard met on Monday, August 13th to receive project updates from administrative assistant Ray Purington, discuss potential sewer rate increases and revolving funds, and celebrate the receipt of "a very big check!" via the Green Communities Act, a very big replica of which adorned the wall behind the selectboard.

The Siemens energy upgrade project at Gill Elementary School has officially moved from the construction to the performance monitoring phase, and the town is looking forward to guaranteed annual utility savings to pay off the loan for the project.

Recent storms have demonstrated the urgency of moving soon on a town hall roof replacement, since heavy rains brought several more ceiling tiles down on the second floor. Sample request for quotes are being solicited from neighboring towns so the board can have its own draft ready, should an override request to fund a new roof for town hall be successful in a special town meeting planned for October.

Meanwhile, a plumbing walkthrough has identified some deficiencies at the Riverside municipal building, where the electric hot water on-demand system has not been functioning.

The Riverside area as a whole has been having some plumbing problems too, with quite a bit more water apparently exiting the system on an annual basis than the water district imports. To determine how to best correct this problem, an Inflow and Infiltration study is first needed. The town doesn't have the dollars to fully fund a study currently, but both the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and staff in senator Stan Rosenberg's office have recommended at least proceeding with Phase I of the study, with consultant Tighe and Bond analyzing flow rates.

Discussion followed between the two selectboard members present, Ann Banash and John Ward, both residents of Riverside, about the possibility of paying for the study with an increase in sewer rates, with a particular focus on whether such an increase should happen as a one-time,

short-term assessment, or a rate increase that would put more of the burden on larger water users. Ward argued against the one-time, short-term assessment, calling it "regressive," and noting it would not help to encourage conservation, the way user rate increases might.

The full inflow and infiltration study may need to be funded by a community development block grant.

In any case, sewer rates in Riverside may be overdue for an increase, there having been none since 2005. There is no requirement for a public hearing on this matter, but board members advised publishing legal notices anyway, to make sure townspeople have sufficient notice. Funds are needed to fully cover this year's budget as well as at least a portion of an inflow and infiltration study.

With regard to the Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund, maintained by the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Gill has about \$40,000 in the fund at this time – good news. But representatives have a number of questions about a proposed agreement with the FCRHRA as to how that money can be accessed and spent. There are about \$548,000 in additional outstanding housing rehab loans in Gill, which over a period of decades will flow into the revolving account, as they are paid back at the sale of each rehabbed property.

Board members deliberated on whether that money should be kept in the account for emergency requests and for people who may have applied for the zero interest loan housing rehab program but been put on a waiting list. Members also considered the possibility of being able to utilize unaccessed funds from the revolving fund at the end of each fiscal year for other town needs.

Banash felt funds should be used for something related to housing rehabilitation, not just for general town operating expenses. Another option would be to keep a certain minimum amount in the account year-to-year, with any excess coming back to the town for other uses. The board asked Purington to request a yearly accounting so they would know what amount is available each year.

The general feeling was that funds in the revolving

fund should be accessed by eligible citizens as intended, as interest-free loans for housing rehab. Members expressed the need to promote the opportunity more widely to increase citizen awareness and utilization of funds for such things as lead abatement, window replacements, code corrections and similar home improvements for income eligible residents of Gill.

An ongoing issue regarding staff vacation and comp time was postponed until all three board members could be present.

Award turned to the \$139,900 check that arrived as a result of Gill successfully meeting state criteria to become a "Green Community." Seven area towns were awarded such checks that day in a ceremony in Amherst, making Gill one of 103 towns across the state so far to reap the benefits of that designation. The invaluable help of state field representative Jim Barry was heartily acknowledged by members of the selectboard and energy commission who were present, and the Gill energy commission itself was thanked for the hard work leading to this success. Four road signs acknowledging Gill's new official status as a Green Community will be posted at entrances to the town.

Awards are made to towns that, in the words of the state, "have made a conscious decision to buck the energy status quo and become a leader in renewable energy adoption and smart energy use." Awards can then be used to fund local renewable power and energy efficiency projects that advance both municipal and state clean energy goals. Grants awarded statewide so far have helped pay for the installation of solar panels on town office buildings, weatherization at schools and municipal buildings, and installation of high-efficiency street lights, as examples.

To date, state press materials note, 103 Green Communities have committed to a five-year total energy reduction equivalent to the annual energy consumption of 13,358 homes. This commitment equates to a greenhouse gas emissions reduction equivalent to taking 22,556 cars off the road. Officials also note the program is funded through auctions of carbon

see GILL page 7

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Meetings on Geothermal Problems at Senior Center Postponed

BY KATIE NOLAN – A scheduled meeting with senior and community center architect John Catlin regarding the center's geothermal well was postponed until August 27th, because Catlin had a family emergency.

Grit and debris from the well water is clogging filters in the system's piping, resulting in the geothermal system leaking into the building if the filters are not cleaned daily.

Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin said he was disappointed Catlin had not sent a representative to talk with the selectboard.

Speaking after the meeting, town administrator Tom Sharp said Catlin had suggested several remedies for the problem, including installing a special debris filter and routing the wastewater from automatic pipe-flushing to the overflow swale.

Nick Pollock of East Main Street wrote to the selectboard on August 8th about fixing up the basketball hoop at the Fire Hall #1 parking lot; he got quick results.

Pollock asked if the town could remove tree limbs and brush from the area, put a chain on the net and a square

on the backboard, and paint lines on the blacktop. By the August 13th selectboard meeting, the public works department had completed all the tasks except the painting, which they had referred to the recreation commission.

The selectboard appointed Leo Parent, selectboard member and treasurer Margaret Sullivan, Paul Zilinski, police chief Chris Blair, and public works director Paul Prest to the highway worker interview committee. The committee will interview candidates for highway foreman and highway worker positions and provide recommendations to the selectboard.

The selectboard agreed to meet with the Montague selectboard on Monday, September 17th in Montague to discuss Erving wastewater treatment plant #1, which serves Millers Falls as well as Erving. According to the contract agreement, the towns are required to hold regular meetings to discuss the facility. According to a 1973 agreement, Montague should share the costs of upgrades at the facility proportionally to the amount of flow it contributes to the plant. In 2010, the Erving

selectboard, after completing a \$6.4 million improvement to the treatment facility without first discussing the matter with Montague, asked the town of Montague to share some of the capital costs of that project. Montague currently contributes about 50% of the flow to the Erving side treatment plant.

Town administrator Tom Sharp reported the public works, fire, and emergency management departments applied for and received grants for new equipment. Public works received \$5,000 to pay for a "manhole buddy" tool for removing manhole covers; the police department was approved for up to \$10,000 for a camera system for the police cruiser, and the emergency management department received \$5,000 for an enclosed emergency supply trailer.

The selectboard, acting on tax collector Michele Turner's recommendation, appointed Ann Petrain of Warwick as assistant tax collector. Richard Heath of Northfield Road was appointed as van driver for a Franklin Regional Transit Authority van that operates out of the Erving senior and community center.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Routine Business, and a Warning about Union 28

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – In keeping with the summer's relatively light schedule, the Wendell selectboard's August 15th meeting was just an hour long, ending while the sky was still light. Chair Christine Heard was away on vacation, and a good part of the posted agenda was little more than information town coordinator Nancy Aldrich had received in the two weeks since the prior meeting.

There was, however, a pole hearing National Grid scheduled with the goal of moving two poles from the east side of Farley Road to the west side.

National Grid representative Richard Nalewski explained that section of road has a tall stone outcrop rising on the east side, and a drop-off on the west side, with the primary wire parallel to the road on the east side, underneath taller transmission lines. National Grid wants 18 feet of clearance between the

primary wire and the ground, and seven feet of clearance between the primary lines and the transmission lines. The cliff makes those clearances difficult and the drop off on the west side makes it problematic to put the poles six feet from the road, as the highway commission prefers, to allow for snow plowing.

Jeffrey Pooser and Dan Keller, the board members present, approved the National Grid request with the understanding that the poles would be placed as far from Farley Road as the terrain allows.

Aldrich reported that the Franklin County Solid Waste District (FCSWD) has been collecting money Wendell has earned from selling recycled materials to the Springfield Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and held that money, over \$4,000 a year, in an escrow account with which it buys equipment for the WRATS. The new WRATS compactor is an

item the town acquired through that system. Now the FCSWD intends to place that money into a town revolving fund from which the Wendell highway commission, for example, could draw funds to buy and maintain equipment.

But since the finance committee prefers not to use revolving funds, that money will instead go into the general fund, and the WRATS budget line item will have to be increased by an equivalent amount at the annual town meeting.

Aldrich relayed that the Orange and Athol fire departments have started talks that could lead to the merger of those two departments. Keller said that makes sense given the ever increasing amount of paperwork, now internet work the state now requires, making a fire chief's or a police chief's job more of an administrative burden. With fewer active firefighters, and a part time

see WENDELL page 10

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Bias in Highway Department Interview Discussed

BY DAVID DETMOLD – More than a dozen townspeople turned up at the selectboard meeting on Tuesday, August 14th, when Jennifer Roberts King came before the board to discuss her disappointment in the hiring process to replace Matt Boucher, who left the highway department recently to take a job with Wagner Wood in Amherst.

King, a Hemenway Road resident who has worked for 10 years with her father Richie Robert's excavating business, and is familiar with operating heavy equipment, interviewed for the position, but was passed over for another applicant, who lives in Deerfield. King was not pleased when a Silas Ball, a member of the five-man committee interviewing her reportedly asked whether, in the event a heavy snowstorm required immediate response, she might be found shopping down at the Holyoke Mall instead of ready to head in to work.

Selectboard chair Rich Brazeau, who was present at King's interview, said the highway department had not had a woman working with the highway crew during his time on the board, although superintendent Will Stratford said he thought the department had hired a woman at least once in the past for summer help.

A number of the residents who showed up for the meeting expressed dissatisfaction with the line of questioning at the interview process for King, and the fact that a woman had not been hired for the highway department in recent memory.

Brazeau said the town does not have a personnel policy favoring the hiring of town residents over applicants from other towns, other qualifications being equal, though he said the police department and perhaps the highway department do have a preference for people who can get to the job quickly in an emergency.

King, speaking after the meeting, said she had nothing against the person who was hired, but wanted to express her dissatisfaction with the way her interview had been handled. In her written recollection of the interview, she recalled Ball's exact question to her as, "If

there was an emergency due to a weather emergency would you be available to work or would you be shopping at the Holyoke Mall?"

King said she regards this line of questioning as discriminatory. She said her qualifications for the job include a decade of commercial truck driving, snow plowing as a subcontractor for the state, and familiarity with site work, excavating, and septic system installation and repair.

In light of this incident, the selectboard recommended the personnel board take a fresh look at how departments conduct hiring, "so everyone is given a fair chance to represent themselves," Brazeau said.

"There was a general discussion about protocol and training for people who maybe don't have any background conducting interviews. Questions could be typed out, but there would still be follow up questions."

Brazeau called the question about shopping at the mall before a weather emergency "unfortunate."

In other business, the selectboard granted permission for Moses Draper to use the Bill Rivers Conservation Area behind the Leverett Elementary School to conduct after school nature camp with children during the upcoming school year.

The board directed Stratford to explore the possibility of Western Mass Electric Company allowing some residents who own land along the utility's access road north of North Leverett Road to use the access road to reach their woodlots. The highway and police departments have a key to the gate of that recently improved access road, in case of emergencies.

Barbara Tiner has been updating the town website during the summer months, while she is filling in for town clerk Lisa Stratford in the role of selectboard secretary. Stratford, who has been on an extended medical leave, has recovered to the point where she is planning to return to fulltime duties in September, and she will be taking over role of updating the website at that time as well.

Special legislation allow-

ing the member towns of Union 28 to pay benefits for U-28 central office employees at the same rate and with the same benefit package they offer the rest of their town employees has finally been approved by the legislature and signed by the governor. Now the selectboards of each town in Union 28 need to vote to approve the new benefit system for central office staff. The Leverett board did so on the 14th.

"It's a fair thing for each town," said Brazeau, who said the selectboard in Leverett would soon hold a discussion about paying off a past-due bill to cover Leverett's share of benefits for a U-28 employee whose retirement two years ago sparked an extended effort to enact special legislation to change the practice by which the town with the most students enrolled in U-28 schools set the benefit level for central office employees.

In recent years, Erving has been the lead town, and Erving offers a more generous benefit package to town employees than any of the other U-28 towns.

"This has been a long battle," remarked Brazeau. "We're just glad to get it settled."

A public hearing is being scheduled for September 12th to once again consider loosening the town's restrictive cell tower bylaw, prior to a special town meeting to vote on the matter in early October.

Brazeau said it appeared the committee that had been established to look at the possible health implications of cell towers had as yet been unable to come to a consensus position on the matter, and so two separate reports may be forthcoming from that committee at the September hearing.

Leverett currently restricts the siting of cell towers to commercial zones, which are few and far between in town, and all located in low lying areas unlikely to attract the interest of a cellular communications company. The proposed bylaw, offered by the planning board at annual town meeting earlier this year and narrowly defeated, would have allowed cell towers, with specific setbacks from homes and schools, to

see **LEVERETT** pg. 10

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Senior Center Planning on the Docket for CDBG Application

BY DAVID DETMOLD – Planning studies for a new senior center and for potential façade improvements to ameliorate slum and blight conditions in downtown Miller Falls and the historic industrial district on along the power canal in Turners Falls are on the docket, along with an educational pre-school program for English as a second language speakers at the Montague Catholic Social Ministries, for the town's upcoming application for community development block grant funding in 2013.

The town is eligible to apply for up to \$450,000 in the coming year from the discretionary Department of Housing and Community Development block grant program. Bruce Hunter, of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority explained that new guidelines allow a maximum of \$1.3 million every two years to be distributed through the competitive program to towns the size of Montague. Since Montague received \$865,509 to fund the second phase of reconstruction at Unity Park this year, next year would be at best a lean year for CDBG funds coming into Montague. Therefore, it would be a good year to apply for funding for less expensive planning studies, as well as to keep the zero interest loan housing rehab program going to meet the needs of about a dozen low and moderate income applicants on the wait-

ing list in Turners, Montague City and Montague Center, Hunter said.

The FCRHRA has for many years administered the town's CDBG funds, along with the housing rehab program, receiving a percentage of the block grants for their work.

Community Development Block Grant funds may be used for a variety of purposes, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said, at a public hearing held at the selectboard meeting on August 13th, and these funds represent one of the few sources of discretionary revenue available to hard strapped towns like Montague in tight economic times. Funds are intended to benefit the needs of low and moderate income residents, a category defined as earning below \$35,000 annually for a single person, or \$65,000 for a family of four. In Montague, Hunter said, 57% of the residents meet the definition of low or moderate income, and 75% of senior citizens in town meet the criteria.

Abbondanzio noted CDBG funds can be used for infrastructure improvements, such as street, sidewalk and sewer upgrades in target neighborhoods, as well as for planning projects, slum and blight removal, public social services, housing rehab and improvements in public facilities.

Montague wastewater treatment plant supervisor Bob Trombley asked whether

the renovation of sewer pump stations could be funded under the CDBG criteria, and Hunter said yes, if the neighborhood where those pump stations are located have a majority of low or moderate income residents.

Jeanne Golrick asked whether property owners in Millers Falls or in the historic industrial zone would be required to accept money for façade improvements, or to sign off on the application for such funds beforehand, and Hunter answered no to both those questions.

Roy Rosenblatt, a member of the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC), asked whether program income, money that derives from CDBG housing rehab loans paid back into a revolving loan fund over time, could be used in the near future to help with the renovation of the former Cumberland Farms building on the corner of Avenue A and 2nd Street. The EDIC is the present landlord of that building, and recently voted to accept a plan from Montague Community Cable Inc (MCTV) in association with the Turners Falls RiverCulture project and the Montague Business Association to purchase the building for a nominal sum and renovate it as a new studio for MCTV, with offices for the other two organizations.

Hunter differed from Rosenblatt on whether the building would meet the defi-

see **MONTAGUE** pg. 10

GILL from page 6

emissions permits under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, as well as annual compliance payments made by electricity suppliers under the state's renewable portfolio standard.

Criteria that Gill had to meet included: providing as-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable energy generation, research and development, or manufacturing facilities; adopting an expedited application and permit process; establishing a townwide energy use baseline and developing a plan to reduce municipal energy use by 20% within five years; purchasing fuel-efficient vehicles (other than exempt police, highway and fire department vehicles); and passing the stretch energy building code

to set requirements to minimize life-cycle energy costs for new construction – all of which the town has recently accomplished.

The board moved next to a discussion of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District escrow fund. Gill has over \$11,000 in the account at this time, and the state Department of Revenue does not want the district to hold onto that much in funds for area towns, so decisions need to be made about how to access and use Gill's share of the money.

Board members discussed setting up another town revolving fund, with designated uses such as printing trash stickers, buying recycling bins for distribution or recycled copy paper, leaf pick-up, or payment of one month's trash-

hauling bill (which can amount to \$5600).

Ward proposed the money be spent to support and increase recycling, composting, or related activities, rather than just reduce the overall assessment by a fractional amount. Banash added it could be used to fund the bulky waste collection day residents have asked for. Members agreed to draft a proposal for allowable uses and urged community members to propose additional ideas.

The board approved the appointment of Donald LaChance as elections constable, before adjourning for a joint meeting with the finance committee and Gill firefighters to review and discuss the fire department budget.



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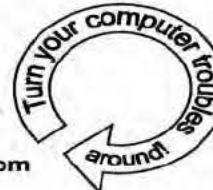


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Ted Lewis, Citizen of the Year



Ted Lewis honored at the Wendell Old Home Day, August 18th

JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL – Ted Lewis (right) received the Wendell Citizen of the Year award from selectboard members Dan Keller (left), and Jeffery Pooser. Keller spoke of Lewis' willingness to get his hands dirty and his feet wet in service to the town, his decades of service to the town, continuing to this day, on the Board of Health, the fire department, and 39 years on the selectboard. Keller said, "Ted has always been a "democrat with a small d," has taken calls at all times of day or night, and has always been ready and willing to help his fellow citizens in need.

HOME DAY from page 1

Lynne Meryl, Dave Wertman, Court Dorsey and Karen Copeland entertained the crowd, and then all joined together for one more song. Doug Tanner played a soulful harmonica. Other performers, Ajika, Medicine Mammals, the Remnants, Rhythm Inc. and Bear Mountain Boys kept the beat loose and funky all day long.

Early in the event, Ted Lewis was presented with a plaque naming him Wendell Citizen of the Year. This honor was bestowed for his lifetime of service to the town. Lewis served 39 years as a member of the selectboard and now still serves on the board of assessors.

In truth, a good time was had by all.



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Mike Sliva offered inked caricatures for all and sundry

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NOTES FROM GILL MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Superintendent Search Committee Delayed

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE – The search for a permanent superintendent at the G-M schools has been put off to another day.

Joyce Phillips, Gill-Montague school committee chair, opened the meeting Tuesday night, August 14th, with an announcement that Pat Correia of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), who had been scheduled to give a presentation on the superintendent search process, would not be able to attend the meeting as scheduled.

Sandra Brown, member from Gill, then offered a motion to establish a search committee for a permanent superintendent.

Her motion included a plan with very specific details regarding the makeup of the search committee and suggestions of how the search should proceed. The motion was seconded by Marge Levenson of Montague, but Phillips stopped the process before the discussion could commence. Phillips said this vote

was not on the agenda and open meeting laws require the committee to give 48 hours notice when items of public interest are discussed.

A lengthy discussion followed, with Brown arguing her motion should be considered an “anticipated subject” since the agenda had Correia discussing the development of a search committee for a permanent superintendent.

Michael Langknecht of Montague said he thought the committee had agreed, “There should be no surprises in a meeting.” He said there had been no time to prepare for such a vote. Jennifer Waldron of Gill agreed with Langknecht, and asked to table the discussion.

Brown said she was concerned the committee not repeat the process that happened last year, when the decision to hire a superintendent was pushed off so late in the year that the committee felt they only had time to hire another interim superintendent, and no search committee was established.

Phillips said the agenda anticipated Correia making her presentation and then advising the committee on the best way to move forward. With the assurance that the superintendent search would be on the agenda for the next meeting, Brown withdrew her motion.

A warrant subcommittee has now been formed by the school committee. Support for this was not strong when Phillips first recommended it. Initially there had not been enough members willing to serve. Phillips announced that Misty Lyons, Leslie Cogswell and Jane Oakes will make up the warrant subcommittee, with Jennifer Waldron as backup member and the chair available if necessary. The subcommittee will take over the responsibility of approving warrants so the full committee will not have to approve them at meetings. The subcommittee will also be able to sign warrants when the school committee is not meeting in its usually bi-weekly schedule, such as during holidays and summer vacations. Subcommittee members will each individually review the war-

rants and sign them at the business office. They do not have to meet and sign them together. Andy Paquette of Management Solutions, now in charge of the business office at the district, will be available to answer any questions.

Management Solutions had been working for the district on a trial basis and was given the contract for managing the business office after the company put in the only bid. The Interim superintendent Mark Prince accepted the bid, signing a two-year contract with Management Solutions on August 8th, 2012 for \$82,000 a year.

Beth Lux, Erving representative, told the school committee that Shutesbury, Pelham, Amherst and Leverett have formed a joint regional planning committee with a possible goal of forming a new K-12 regional school district by 2014. If this takes place, Shutesbury and Leverett would withdraw from Union-28, stranding the elementary school in Erving, as well as Swift River, the elementary school shared by Wendell and New Salem.

Superintendent Prince said he had been speaking on this topic already with Joan Wickman, Union 28 superintendent. Prince said Erving’s non-voting representatives to the Gill-Montague school committee should be included in professional development and be provided with the same materials as members of the G-M school committee.

The school committee voted to approve the student handbook, with some corrections, after a presentation by Patricia Gardner, the new principal of Turners Falls High School. There was some concern about the dress code, and also an expensive calculator required for an advanced placement math class that students would have to pay for themselves. But Gardner needed approval for the handbook so it could be sent to the printer in time for the start of school.

Some members said the dress code was inconsistently enforced. Gardner said students must be dressed appropriately for school, and administrators will be reasonable in interpreting the code.

MONTAGUE from page 7

nition of a public facility, in which case funds derived from community development block grants could only be used for accessibility improvements on the building. Rosenblatt said after the meeting he was not speaking on behalf of the EDIC, but based on what he called a consensus of that group he was considering pursuing the matter, since the town presently has \$27,000 in the program income account, which could perhaps be made available to help with putting a peaked roof on the former Cumberland Farms building, and further façade improvements to it, which would fit in with the town’s community development strategy by upgrading a gateway building in the downtown, which is intended for use by the general public.

Following the public hearing on the town’s upcoming CDBG application, wastewater treatment supervisor Trombley, flanked by consultants from Camp Dresser and McKee, took up the matter of renovating the town’s eight pump stations once again. The topic had been discussed and tabled at the previous selectboard meeting when it emerged that renovations to these critical compo-

nents of the town’s sewer system, three of which are nearly 50 years old, would carry a price tag of about \$1 million each.

The town’s consultants proposed applying for low or zero interest loans to assist in the reconstruction of some or all of the pump stations from the state’s Clean Water revolving loan fund, with a deadline for application approaching at the end of August. Communities that meet the designation of economic justice communities, which Montague may meet, are able to get a percentage of the principal of such loans forgiven, and ratepayers would in any case face no impact on loan repayments until FY’15 at the earliest, CDM representatives told the board.

After determining that the town would be under no obligation to accept the loan, or to renovate all eight of the pump stations at the same time, the board authorized Trombley and the consultants to go ahead and prepare the application.

The board also approved Trombley’s request to spend \$44,500 from his budget to install a fourth dewatering zone in the treatment plant’s new Fournier press, which

WENDELL from page 6

chief, the Wendell fire department is facing pressures similar to those being faced by Orange and Athol, although fortunately with fewer incidents to respond to (and report on).

Similarly, Aldrich relayed information from a newspaper article which stated that Leverett and Shutesbury were negotiating to disassociate from Union 28 and join with Amherst and Pelham in a four-town regional school district, for elementary as well as upper school students. Both selectboard members were aware of the article and the possibility that if Shutesbury and Leverett withdraw, Union 28 would be too small to remain fiscally viable, potentially leaving Erving Elementary School and Swift River School in a pickle for administration.

The state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must sign off on any new configuration of school districts.

The selectboard chair was required to sign an annual contract for accounting software and serv-

ices from FRCOG. Since Heard was away, Pooser nominated and elected Keller as acting chair, and Keller signed the contract.

Dog officer Maggie Houghton reported that Andy Hamilton’s dogs ran away from a site where Hamilton was working, and were picked up by the New Salem dog officer. Hamilton paid the fine in New Salem and picked up his dogs.

At a recent dog hearing in Wendell, Hamilton was told the dogs had used up their last chance to break the leash law in Wendell, and since then they have not caused a new complaint in Wendell. The board members were not eager to evict the dogs from town and since their offense was in New Salem they decided not to intervene immediately.

LEVERETT from page 7

be built anywhere in town, subject to special permit.

The window project at the Leverett Elementary School has run into more snags, as asbestos mastic has been discovered beneath at least one more of the windows being removed and replaced with modern, energy efficient units. The remediation of the asbestos will add time and money to the oft-delayed project, and so the town may ask the school to contribute some funds from their maintenance budget to help pay for the added cost until special town meeting can address the issue. The front entrance to the school may be closed off for a week or two in September, as the last repairs are made to windows in a corridor, although all classrooms should be ready by opening day.



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FOR CLERK OF COURT
VOTE THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 6th**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG
More Homes, Stores Broken Into

Thursday, 8/9
3:21 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for violation of a restraining order and intimidation of a witness.
5:36 p.m. Larceny on Turners Falls Road. Report taken.
Friday, 8/10
4:42 a.m. Report of burglary on Millers Falls Road. Unfounded.
7:16 p.m. Arrested [redacted] and [redacted], both of [redacted], on Walnut St. Charged both with trespass, breaking & entering, assault & battery with a dangerous weapon, and reckless endangerment to children.
Saturday, 8/11
11:01 p.m. Unwanted person at Cumberland Farms. Warned.
Sunday, 8/12
12:27 a.m. Report taken of breaking & entering of a vehicle, Randall Wood Drive.
10:33 a.m. Report taken of

breaking & entering, Randall Wood Drive, second location.
12:50 p.m. Report taken of breaking & entering, Randall Wood Drive, third location.
3:26 p.m. Investigated breaking & entering of a vehicle, 2nd St.
4:35 p.m. Report taken of breaking & entering of a vehicle, Randall Wood Drive. Fourth location. Advised of options.
10:38 p.m. Investigated domestic disturbance on Avenue A.
10:48 p.m. Investigated domestic disturbance on Crescent St.
Monday, 8/13
9:03 a.m. 911 call for domestic disturbance on G St. Peace restored.
9:14 a.m. Larceny at transfer station on Sandy Lane. Referred to an officer.
7:31 p.m. 911 call for fight on Montague City Rd. Referred to other police.
10:18 p.m. Restraining order violation on Millers Falls Road.

Services rendered.
Tuesday, 8/14
9:56 a.m. Larceny, Greenfield Rd. Report taken.
9:39 p.m. Cat struck on 3rd St. No police service necessary.
Thursday, 8/16
9:49 a.m. Larceny on E. Main St. Services rendered.
2:09 p.m. Burglary, breaking & entering, G St. Services rendered.
5:01 p.m. Burglary, breaking & entering on Ave. A. Investigated.
9:32 p.m. Investigated domestic disturbance, Central St.
Friday, 8/17
12:17 p.m. Larceny, Davis St. Report taken.
2:45 p.m. Missing person report filed. Advised of options.
5:49 p.m. Fight reported at Ave. A and First St. Unable to find.
9:21 p.m. Vehicle breaking & entering on K St. No police service necessary.
Saturday, 8/18
1:38 p.m. 911 call for domestic disturbance, vicinity of G St. Unable to locate.
2:34 p.m. Investigated domestic

disturbance, Crescent St.
3:10 p.m. Larceny on 4th St. Investigated.
3:51 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for default warrant and class E drug possession, at FL Roberts.
Sunday, 8/19
9:18 a.m. Breaking & entering at FL Roberts. No action necessary.
Monday, 8/20
7:55 a.m. Burglary at Bob’s Auto Body, Ave. A. Report taken.
9:53 a.m. Burglary at Loot, Ave. A. Investigated.
12:31 p.m. Larceny on Hillside Rd. Report taken.
6:00 p.m. Dog bite on 5th St. Services rendered.
11:17 p.m. Larceny on G St. Investigated.
Tuesday, 8/21
8:01 a.m. Larceny on Park St. Services rendered.
9:41 a.m. Larceny, Family Dollar, Ave. A. Services rendered.
1:05 p.m. Larceny, Loot, Ave. A. Referred to an officer.

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MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

Solar PV Prices Dropping Soon

KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

BY SALLY PICK — Four Montague residents have signed contracts for solar photovoltaics or PV, and soon the cost for all who sign up for PV through the Solarize Montague program will drop to Tier 2 pricing.

Mark Fraser and Daphne Bye of Taylor Hill Road were the first to contract for PV with the Solarize Montague program. Fraser said, "I couldn't imagine not doing this. We have a perfect site, [and] the incentives are insane."

Montague energy committee member Susan Conger followed suit last Friday. Beyond the savings and quick payback, Conger appreciates how simple the process is.

Compared to a typical contracting job on her home, which involves calling several possible contractors, meeting with them, reviewing each contract, and getting recommendations, the Solarize Montague program has streamlined the process for purchasing PV. Since the solar installer was selected through an extensive review process, Conger felt comfortable immediately signing a contract with them.

Two more households contracted for PV this week, bringing the town's total contracted kilowatts (kW) to about 15. If two additional homeowners signed contracts for

the typically sized residential PV system of 5 kW, the price will drop to Tier 2, saving a resident purchasing a 5 kW system \$250. If, after reaching Tier 2, another 5 people contract for 5 kW systems, the price drops precipitously for everyone, to Tier 3 (at 50+ kW total), saving each homeowner \$1,250 on their system.

So, now's the time to help push down the price for solar, before the final sign-up deadline of September 30th. Even if you sign a contract now at Tier 1 pricing, Northeast Solar, the program's solar installer, will refund you so that everyone ends up with the same tier price.

If you want to talk with Greg Garrison, NE Solar's general manager, you can just walk in to Ask Solarize Montague and ask him your questions about your quote, the installation process, ownership options, financing, PV equipment, your roof.... The next Ask Solarize Montague will take place Tuesday, September 4th, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.,



SALLY PICK PHOTO

Susan Conger (left) signs a contract for discounted PV under the Solarize Montague program. Anne Bronner, of Northeast Solar, the program's solar installer, guides Conger through the paperwork.

at the Safety Complex at the corner of Turners Falls Road and Turnpike Road. This Solarize open house will continue every other week through Tuesday, September 18th.

To find out more about the Solarize Montague program, call the community solar coach (that's me), Sally Pick, at (413) 559-7257.

A New Ambulance Proposal from Turners Falls Fire

BY JEFF SINGLETON — In the fall of 2008, a player for the Great Falls Middle School football team suffered a severe arm break during a game in Turners Falls. He lay on the field for at least 20 minutes waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

What if that ambulance had originated at the Turners Falls safety complex just a few blocks away?

That is a problem the Turners Falls Fire Department is hoping to address by buying an ambulance to serve as a back-up to the current service, provided by Greenfield-based Baystate Health Ambulance.

"Our main goal is to reduce a 20- to 30-minute wait [for a back-up ambulance] closer to a five-minute wait," said Turners Falls Fire chief Bob Escott this week, speaking of a proposal by the Turners Falls fire district to purchase a used ambulance with available funds. "That is the main goal this time around."

The last time around was the spring of 2010. The fire department, then under chief Ray Godin, proposed creating a full-fledged ambulance service to replace the town's current provider. The idea aroused opposition, and was eventually voted down at a fire district meeting. Some argued the proposal would have led inexorably to an expensive new town ambulance service. The current ambulance contract is between the town of Montague and Baystate, not between Baystate and the two separate fire departments in town: Turners and Montague Center.

According to interviews with members of the prudential committees of both the Turners Falls and Montague Center fire departments, opposition to the original proposal in 2010 also surfaced in the villages of Montague Center and Lake Pleasant, which are served by the volunteer Montague Center fire department. Although the approval of the Montague Center fire department was not required to approve the Turners Falls ambulance proposal, the proposed new service would probably have needed to cover these villages to be economically viable. Sentiment at the time was that the villages of Montague Center and Lake Pleasant would

have had to accept a lower level of coverage under a contract with Turners, which could at least initially only offer "basic coverage."

The current provider, Baystate Health Ambulance, is part of the health network that includes Franklin Medical Center. The Greenfield-based ambulance service, located on High Street, covers towns in Franklin County from Shelburne to Montague. It offers "paramedic coverage," which includes the capacity to administer a variety of high-tech medical services in the field. The original Turners Falls proposal not only would have lowered the level of service, but also raised questions about the capacity of the Turners department to train paramedics.

This time around, the department is looking at a proposal to buy a used ambulance to serve as a back-up to the Bay State system. Escott suggested the proposal would not be a big change from current practice, which has the TFFD answering calls in a pickup truck until the Bay State ambulance arrives. "We do a lot of this anyway," he said.

The ambulance would only transport patients when Baystate's primary service was not available. Thus the proposed Turners ambulance essentially replaces back-up services that come from a greater distance. The department could collect insurance reimbursements, potentially defraying the cost of the new service.

Some might see this as a slippery slope which soon may be used to justify a full-blown ambulance service in town. Escott denied there is any motive beyond the desire to reduce response time for backup service. "That's the only reason [for this proposal]," he stated emphatically.

These issues will be no doubt be discussed at an "informational meeting" at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 4th, in the community room of the Turners Falls Safety Complex at 180 Turnpike Road.

Representatives of Bay State Ambulance, the Montague Center fire district, and the town of Montague are scheduled to attend.

GREENFIELD COOP BANK COMING TO TURNERS

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH — The Greenfield Cooperative Bank is coming to Turners Falls, to establish a full-service bank branch in the former Bank of America building on Avenue A. GCB president and CEO Michael Tucker announced the bank's intention is to have the Turners Falls branch up and running sometime in 2013.

Why will it take a year?

In the banking world, things proceed at the pace of a speeding snail, what with application for permission from the FDIC and the Massachusetts Division of Banks to establish the new location, the negotiating and processing of the real estate transaction, obtaining designs and architectural plans for the interior work, obtaining regulatory approval for a remote ATM, and then finding contractors and tradesmen to do the work, which entails meeting building codes and passing inspections for the upgrades.

"We'll make changes to the interior to better serve our customers," Tucker said. "We'll also have new carpeting installed, refinish interior surfaces, and upgrade heating and air conditioning."

Greenfield Savings Bank president Rebecca Caplice, commenting on the move to establish a

rival bank branch on Avenue A, said, "It's better that it's a local bank. The more local business, the better for everybody."

Both the bank building and the original bank were the brainchild of local mover and shaker Alvah Crocker, the entrepreneur who had much to do with making Turners an industrial powerhouse in the late 19th century. Crocker's name still embellishes a nickel plated plaque in the bank's vault.

Crocker established both the Crocker Institute for Savings at the corner of Avenue A and Second Street, and the Crocker National Bank at the Bank of America site. Crocker's two banks were instrumental, in large part, in providing funds to build the power canal, bridges, mills and homes of Turners Falls.

The bank building had a rich and sometimes notorious history, as reported in the Montague Reporter earlier this year (MR 10#22, *A Bank Building with a Rich History of Skulduggery*). It included a bank robbery.

Later, the bank's treasurer, who served as Gill's town clerk and treasurer, embezzled large sums of money when he went to work for another bank, also as treasurer, where he deposited Gill's money, or some of it, anyway.

Then, there was the false accusation of a theft of money from the Rockdale Department Store by their night manager, later determined to be caused by a malfunction of the bank's night deposit box where he'd deposited the night's receipts.

Not until the accused manager paid for a more extensive dismantling of the box was he exonerated. This turned out to be the second time money got stuck in the offending deposit box, according to the janitor who had tipped off the distraught night manager, telling him to dig deeper.

Once Greenfield Cooperative Bank receives regulatory approval, Tucker hopes to establish a remote ATM so Montague, Turners Falls, Gill, and Millers Falls customers can make deposits and withdrawals more conveniently.

"The [troublesome] night deposit box had been replaced, but they [Bank of America] removed some of the parts that will have to be replaced," Tucker said. "But, it will be in good working order by the opening date."

He added, "The drive-up ATM can also be used for deposits."

Rest assured depositors' money will be in good hands at the new GCB branch.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG Suspicion Generally Unfounded

Monday, 8/6

7:35 am Report of Car vs. TT Unit, Route 2 at Old State Road. Report taken.
10:20 am Report of tree branch blocking lane, Route 2 in Faded. Removed same.
3:00 pm Assisted Gill Police with suspicious person walking on Route 2 heading east. Subject gone upon arrival.

Tuesday, 8/7

2:25 pm Report of two males entering the woods at the intersection of Pratt and West High St. Found to be fishermen. All set.

Wednesday, 8/8

1:00 am Suspicious person, Lester St. Checked same, no

problems.

1:02 pm Alarm at Christina's Restaurant. Building secure.
8:40 pm Observed male subject walking on Lester St., screaming and yelling. Checked same and advised to stop yelling.
9:00 pm Animal complaint, Highland Ave.: possible animal in residence. Found to be a bat. Removed bat.

Thursday, 8/9

5:00 pm Report of loose dog at Elementary School. Returned to owner.
10:00 pm Assisted resident with motor vehicle lock out on Gunn St.

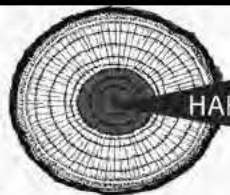
Friday, 8/10

12:00 am Suspicious vehicle, Lilian's Way. Unable to locate.
12:30 pm Suspicious vehicle in French King Bowling Alley parking lot. Found to be out of gas. AAA on the way with fuel.
8:30 am Report of loose Pit Bull on Semb Dr. Unable to locate dog.
Saturday, 8/11
12:15 am Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] for operation with revoked registration and operation without insurance, Route 2.
3:05 pm Medical emergency on Route 2 at bypass. Assisted on scene.
10:15 pm Assisted state police with large house party in Northfield.
11:55 pm Report of suspicious

vehicle at Erving Elementary School. Gone upon arrival.
Sunday, 8/12
2:45 pm Report of car vs. motorcycle, West Main St. Found to be operator who fell off motorcycle, no other vehicles involved. Biker had minor injury, transported by ambulance FMC.
6:10 pm Report of suspicious male in vehicle at Veterans' Field. Observed adults & children playing. All appeared well.
Monday, 8/13
9:50 pm Report of past complaint of loose Rotweillers, North St. Spoke with owners and complainants.
7:35 pm Suspicious vehicle called in on Maple Ave. Found to be a friend of a resident waiting for them.
10:25 pm Two teenage youths

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"The perfect remembrance"

GROWTH from page 1

from the Turners Falls Water District. They have come by to apply pressure to the lines in hopes of finding the leak. Until it is located the street cannot be repaved, the sidewalk cannot be replaced. The Mug Race had to be rerouted and cars have had to navigate around the construction.

Bergeron knows the leak will be found, eventually. He's as anxious as everyone else to see the job completed.

If you look down Station Road from the center of town, you see the former Montague Center School, a much-loved village school that was closed down in 2006 and is now slated for development into 22 apartments: 11 two-bedroom, 9 one-bedroom, and two studios. The aforementioned waterline is linked to this project, since the offer on the building was contingent on expanding the existing 6-inch waterline to 8 inches so a sprinkler system could be installed in the old school building.

Without that waterline, there would be no deal, and the town of Montague would have to maintain an empty building at a cost of about \$30,000 per year.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said, "When we closed the school, we expected to maintain the building for a few years until it sold. We put out three RFPs (requests for proposals) and had no response. It is not sustainable for us to do this forever, and an unoccupied building

deteriorates over time."

Enter Mark Zaccheo from Olive Street Development LLC. He stepped forward last spring with an offer of \$50,000 for the school building, contingent on the new waterline and a zoning permit for multi-family use.

"Mr. Zaccheo does high quality work. He's a wonderful landlord. The properties he's developed in Greenfield are beautiful and well managed," said Abbondanzio, speaking Wednesday prior to the zoning board meeting when Zaccheo planned to ask for a zoning variance to allow some of the apartment units to be smaller than the required 700 square feet.

Abbondanzio said he hopes reservations about the project among Montague Center residents would be calmed by Zaccheo's presentation at the meeting.

Sixteen notices were sent out to people living within 300 feet of the proposed project, but the zoning board received 41 letters from Montague residents expressing concerns about the scope of the project, most objecting to the idea of 22 units in the center of town.

This resistance puzzles Zaccheo. He has already spent a year and \$40,000 of his own money to develop plans for the property. He wants to make the building energy efficient with super insulation and solar panels on the roof. The existing building has poor insulation, and an old inefficient boiler. His plan, which aspires

to become as energy net-zero as possible, will exponentially reduce the building's carbon footprint. He thinks his vision fits in perfectly with the Solarize Montague initiative. And he sees his plan for the Montague Center School as an example of how people might live more gently on the planet, using less energy to house more people in modest but comfortable spaces. It is the absolute opposite of the MacMansions of the 1990s.

But Zaccheo is not the director of a non-profit organization, and he would not be pursuing this project if he didn't expect to make money. Also, the town might not have embarked on the waterline project in the absence of Zaccheo's offer, although Abbondanzio believes the waterline upgrade had to be done in any case to make the building attractive to any developer.

If the zoning board eventually approves Zaccheo's proposal, the town will be relieved of the ongoing maintenance costs of the building, and when the project is complete Zaccheo said it would generate tax revenues of close to \$20,000 or more annually.

Still, emotions are running high in Montague Center. Some say they would not mind apartments, but are worried about the density. The number of proposed apartments (22) and the size (one as small as 400 square feet) became the major subject of conversation during Old Home Days.

Villagers expressed concern about parking, traffic, the wildlife at the pond, a building potentially filled with rowdy college students, and something more ethereal – the quality of life in a small New England town where some families go back generations.

More than 80 people showed up for the zoning board meeting that began Wednesday night. It began at 7:30 p.m., and ended at 10 without a vote. The zoning board chose a continuance and said they needed to gather additional information before making a decision.

Ernest Brown, ZBA chair, read the letters the board received in opposition to the project. Afterwards, Zaccheo presented a power point overview of the project and town planner Walter Ramsey explained the process that led to the evening's consideration.

Ramsey offered his opinion that the project fits within town's master plan. He displayed demographic charts that showed Montague is growing faster than neighboring communities, and said dense housing such as Olive Street LLC is proposing would satisfy the need for additional housing in town while protecting valuable farmland.

Brown invited comments from the floor. While most speakers complimented Zaccheo's presentation and the fine work he has done in Greenfield, none of the two dozen speakers felt that a 22-unit apartment house would work in Montague

Center. Traffic emerged as a major concern, especially because the intersection of School Street, Court Square and Main Street is already dangerous. Concerns about the environmental impact of the plan were fielded by Brown, who said those questions were within the purview of the conservation commission.

Clarkson Edwards, a 35-year resident of Montague and former selectman, said he did not think the developer had planned for enough parking spaces. If the apartments attract working professionals, he said, there could easily be two cars per unit.

The abutters did not feel they had enough information in a timely fashion prior to the meeting, and some were frustrated that information they sought at town hall had not been readily available.

But most comments went straight to the heart of a small town life. Richard Dingland, who lives next to the school, said, "The town I grew up in is gone. It was eaten by New York suburbs. Montague Center is still here. It is small and quiet. We know each other. We have a neighborhood that works. I know the world I love can't last forever, but this variance would change the essential nature of the town." His remarks were followed by applause.

After an hour of similar statements, the board took time to confer and told the group they needed more information before they could vote.

**Q & A** from page 5

"There's been a lot of energy wasted with casino gambling and an unfortunate emphasis on destroying the wood industry. Full renewable energy credits should be given if the product is harvested sustainably. The state is making it extremely cumbersome, with moratoriums at harvesting at Quabbin, for example. Support our local economy, and the revenue stream for education will follow."

Jim White

"The reality is the state government does not completely fund school transportation, and that's a killer for rural communities. We've got to bring these kids further than anywhere else to bring these kids to school. That's completely unreasonable, and another double standard against rural communities. I believe the first element we need to ensure is equitable funding for school transportation."

"The state has cut the funding for education, and that has forced public colleges and universities to increase their fees. They just won't stop."

White said he would work to reform the MBTA, "which is of little or no benefit to the people of the 2nd District anyway," and which he called one of the biggest budget busters in the state along with debt payments and health care costs, and divert savings to public education.

Now that Massachusetts has undertaken the expensive part of health care reform, enrolling the

vast majority of its citizens in health care plans, would you support a further step to a single payer health care system, or how do you propose to keep the state's bill for health care under control?

Denise Andrews:

"Yes, we do need to move to a single payer system. It's not a simple solution. A lot of work will be needed to do it wisely and fairly, but the wealthiest country in the world ought to be able to provide good health care for all its citizens. In the interim, we need to apply the reforms that have just been passed, and continue to improve on those reforms by reducing executive compensation, keeping quality health care available to rural communities and addressing the service cost disparities between the hospitals, doctors offices and nursing homes. Insurance companies escalate the problem, giving worse contracts to rural hospitals; that's not helpful at all. We have to reinstitute the gift ban that we just repealed; we have to deal with prescription drug costs, eliminate couponing which is a cost driver, and dial up wellness and prevention care."

Rebecca Bialecki

"I do support single payer health care, but I think we need to look carefully at what model of single payer we move toward, and we need to do so incrementally. We're on the right path, and at this point I think we need to be cautious about the path the federal government's system takes,

and hopefully continue to lead the country in the right direction."

Genevieve Fraser

"It's the only thing that makes sense. So much of the cost is administrative, insurers, the complexity of multiple providers. It is destroying institutions, even Medicare and Medicaid. Hospitals like Athol's have been very impacted, and are having a really difficult time getting reimbursements. The cost-containing measures that have been passed into law should be helpful, but private insurers should be gotten out of the health care system, because the only thing they benefit is themselves. It's time to pay the person who did the work, not have all these middlemen take a cut, with their million dollar bonuses. It's similar to the Wall Street crowd that crashed our economy: we need to occupy the health care system, not just Wall Street."

Jim White

"I believe probably the ideal health care system would be single payer. But given what we've done in the state with health care reform in Massachusetts, we haven't had the chance to let the system mature. I don't think we have the stomach for single payer right now."

Meanwhile, White said the recent cost control legislation on health care came out of committee "with only about six people having seen it, a 300 page bill, and they demanded an up or down vote. We need to have more transparent government, and this is

just another example."

Would you support legislation to force banks that access federal funds to agree to inexpensive loan modifications for mortgagees who are current with their loan payments but under stress, or do you support other mechanisms for mortgage relief?

Denise Andrews:

"Absolutely. We just went through quite a shock in this country, where before people believed in bankers when they said you could afford a piece of property, because you trusted the institution. But that trust has been seriously breached because of banks overextending credit to nonqualified borrowers."

"It takes two to tango. The individual is accountable, of course, and the bank also needs to be accountable. But to me the individual is getting much more of the fallout from that dance. We bailed the banks out; we are not bailing out the individuals. We are doing foreclosure reform, but I have had many individuals say, 'Thank you, but you're too late.'"

Rebecca Bialecki

"I do absolutely support those banks that have received federal assistance to have to help out those customers that were so injured in the foreclosure crisis, largely driven by the banks themselves. We have to look at a lot of creative solutions for different kinds of homeowners that are out there. There are some in the midst of foreclosure; we have mini-

mal resources for those folks. But there are others because of continued high unemployment, who are current on their mortgages but are really struggling. I would like to see programs that offer some relief and debt restructuring for them, rather than wait for them to get into foreclosure, when it's more difficult to get out."

Genevieve Fraser

"Sounds wonderful. I also have signed the petition put out by congressman Jim McGovern to restore the Glass-Steagall Act [of 1933, which limited commercial banks from engaging in securities trading]. FDR created safeguards, and Congress foolishly tore them down, which led to the crash of 2008. I would restore Glass-Steagall. It's nothing but a Ponzi scheme with legal casino gambling – it's called Wall Street."

Jim White

"Well," said White, "I'm not facing foreclosure. I am upside down in our house, and we are stuck in a loan with a percentage that is almost twice as much as our credit rate would qualify us for. We had a Countrywide loan. Bank of America took them over and said, 'We're going to do loan modifications,' reducing people's interest. You call 'em up and they say, 'We've got your number. Don't call us; we'll call you.' They're not helping anybody I know. I would support forcing the banks to produce loan modifications for anyone in that situation."

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The editors would like to thank the following for their generous financial underwriting of The Poetry Page:
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Readers are invited to send poems to the Montague Reporter at 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376; or email us your poetry at reporter-poems@montaguema.net

Poetry Page edited by Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno
design by Claudia Wells

The Poetry Page

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

—William Carlos Williams

BUILT IN 1850

Before the war, this place was put together
For shelter, near the mills on Roaring Brook.
Above the well, a couple built one room
To house their daily needs and things and jobs;
A place to cook and eat and wash and mend,
And aloft, two spaces under the sloping roof
Where they – and theirs – could sleep the nights away.

That war, to free the slaves and save the Union
Sent work for the mills and workers for these rooms.
Children came and grew; more space was needed –
The second room behind the first came next,
More space to cook and eat and do the chores
And over that, a parent’s sleeping chamber,
To separate those growing girls and boys.

Producing food and wool had needs outdoors
So gardens grew where trees were cut for building.
Then a barn, to house the hens and plows and harrows
And last, a back room by the ledge, to shelter
All the work that needed dry, warm spaces
To do the jobs that needed indoor doing.

But hard work, many steps and storms and workers
Can press an aging building slowly downward;
Old loaded timbers sag from wall to wall.
Floors droop, and rooflines show their weary bend.
This town has many buildings settling downward –
Old houses show their age like people do.

— David Peterson
Leverett

Terrorism No More

Such evil has invaded this world of ours
Brought to the forefront by their destruction of
our twin towers
Destroying lives without warning, in a sneaky
fashion
Thus uniting the world in a fevered passion
A passion whose weapons are used for good-
ness and peace
They march together to make this evil cease
God bless this world of ours and all mankind
May he follow us into battle, his thought upon
our mind
We march not for revenge; we march for free-
dom and justice
To prevent evil from reaching out and touching
us
We sadly give our husband, our wife, our
daughter, our son
To insure peace and freedom for everyone
Our battle cries will continuously ring out loud
Proclaiming the destruction of evil’s shroud
Our righteousness will lead us on to victory and
pride
Terrorism will lose its place to hide
Such evil will finally be destroyed throughout
the world
And the American Flag will wave freely, commit-
tee, and unfurled
— James Wright
Turners Falls

Oxymoron Soldier

Oxymoron soldier,
Oxymoron war.
Merciless Messiahs.
Pleasant death,
Lawful murder; for
Unarmed militia and
Mobilised civilians.
Trusting infidels.
Hate fuelled clerics;
Preaching to lovers.
Loved leaders quoting;
Acts of hatred.
Patriotism for Shame,
Guilt strewn Justice;
Six years of September.
— Christopher Marshall
Bath, England

Animal Kingdom

*And God blessed them and God said unto them
Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth
and subdue it: and have dominion
over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air,
and over every other living thing that moveth upon the
earth.*
Genesis 1:28

*And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of
the field,
and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to
see what he would call them:
and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was
the name thereof.*
Genesis 2:19

Adam, of course, lacked
the technology required
for naming the deep-sea
angler fish or the giant tube worm.
Likewise it was difficult
to name the very small
creatures without
the aid of a microscope.
One lifetime not enough
time to finish the job,
not nearly, not with all
the inventing to do,
as well, he left some
unnamed, and perhaps
did not even have
dominion over those
nameless creatures.

He left the rest
for future generations
who would endeavor
to realize the behest
to dominate all
and perfect our birthright.
We must strive, therefore,
to find the fish of the sea
wherever they hide,
and those that moveth
upon the earth,
creating along the way
machines to aid
in completing the task.
We can rest, maybe,
when the work is done,
when all are cataloged
and known, subdued.
— Eloise Michael
Turners Falls

What’s Outdoors?

Growing PLANTS that bloom and please—
Mosses, grasses, ferns, flowers, trees,
Bushes bearing fruits and berries;
A green world, bound to make us merry.

And ANIMALS, moving everywhere—
Birds, bees, spiders, bugs, snakes, deer,
Squirrels, frogs, fish, beavers, hounds
Fill the air with sights and sounds.

The LAND itself has lots to show—
Hills above, soils, rocks below.
And WATERS; rivers, pools, ponds, lakes,
Oceans, icicles, rain, snowflakes.

And WEATHER – sun, clouds, winds and
storms,
May change hourly, cold to warm.
TIME changes too, from dawn to night,
And seasons four, each one delights.

But Indoors always stays the same—
Too many old things, in our way,
Boring, quiet, useless stuff....
So go OUTDOORS when you’ve had
enough!

Use all your senses when you’re out;
See things, hear things, smell things too.
Touch things, find things to think about;
Ask “Who? What? When? Where? Why?
—Go DO!
— David Peterson
(with the help of Grant & Myles Powicki)
Leverett

Each Harbor But My Heart

Beneath the speed bump of my bra
You slowly loose the knot of me
Unbinding minor chords of flesh
Rose and coral, waiting wreathed
With baby’s breath and lycra bands
Heat lightning murmurs on an edge of pane
Last night fireworks fade and startle
An inch worm on a one step march
Up the outraged fretwork of a neighbor’s gable
Your hands, all severed nerves and acid prints
Erase nubs and follicles where moisture curls
Espaliered, now fallen to the crows
In narrow hopping leaps of purple black
Mascara reluctant into shade
You need you fade I hear you closer
Every long abandoned isthmus
Each bruised and shallow aisle
Where a recluse beauty in a hallway mirror once
Searched for soft enfolded, touching
Each harbor but my heart
— David Detmold
Turners Falls

Contributors’ Notes:

Chris Marshall received his undergradu-
ate degree in English Literature from
Bath Spa University, England. In 2011-
2012 he was an Erasmus Scholar at
Kadir Has University, Istanbul where he
studied literature and culture.
David Peterson, a retired English teacher
and guidance counselor, has lived in
Leverett part time since 2004. He stud-
ied poetry with Robert Frost and
Archibald MacLeish, but according to
Peterson, neither considered him a liter-
ary threat.
David Detmold edits *The Montague
Reporter*.
James Wright loves on Avenue A in
Turners Falls.
Eloise Michael is the author of *Ferry
Meadow Farm*, The Reporter’s ongoing
serialized novel.

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Ferry Meadow Farm - part I

Montague 2017

BY ELOISE MICHAEL – The alarm goes off in the dark. I reach one reluctant arm out of the warm nest of covers and pat the bed table until I find my phone.

I could easily roll over and go back to sleep. I'm afraid I will, so I get up pretty quickly. I pull a thick sweater over my t-shirt, then shuffle into the kitchen to start the coffee-maker on my way to the bathroom. While I'm there, I look in the mirror, arranging my hair into a ponytail at the same time, then splash some water on my face.

I have to stop and think about what day of the week it is. I'm relieved when I remember there will be no video conferences today.

"Guess I look OK then," I say to

myself.

Even though I didn't bother to take a shower, I am still eating my bagel with cream cheese when 9:00 a.m. rolls around. I stuff down the last bite, slurp some coffee, and run to get a thicker pair of socks.

I grab some more coffee on my way back, and log into work at 9:04. Instantly there's a message from Diana.

diana722: 18 again?

I laugh as though we are in the room together and hope that she is the only one at Case Pearman who pays attention to the time that I log in each morning.

theresam: it's dark and cold in massachusetts

diana722: all the more reason to move back to phila

theresam: i think i remember that it's cold there 2

The phone rings. It's Diana. I pick up. "Hi," I say.

"Seriously, Resa," she says, "why are you still there? Rick's been gone for-like-a year?"

"Not that long," I say.

"Right, fine, and, OK, you don't have any friends there. Right? Do you?"

"Well, I—" I hesitate.

"My point, exactly," Diana interrupts.

"Diana, I could never sell this house now. No one has sold a house in five years at least."

"Rent it. Listen, promise me you will talk to a realtor today. Meanwhile I'll just look at what's available here. Shoot, I've gotta go."

I glance at my screen. My work is piling up, too. "K bye," I say.

"Bye," she says and hangs up fast.

While I am reading the messages that have come in since 9:00, I open Facebook on desktop 1 and start StreetLevel on desktop 3. The login screen comes up fast. "Hello there-sam," it greets me. "Please enter your password."

I do.

"Where do you want to go?" it asks me.

I don't know, so I scroll down to "most popular." People are looking at earthquake damage in Indonesia. "4,209,044 people watching," it says next to the lat-lng for the camera.

A few of the top ten are in the same basic area. The others seem to

be political protests in different cities, and a war zone. I click on a place in Paris, number four in "most popular."

A sea of protesters appears on my screen.

Then I get back to work. Another message from Diana pops up.

diana722: what r u watching?

I copy-paste the lat-lng numbers for her. Her reply is a different lat-lng, not far from the camera I'm looking at, probably the same street. I click on the location she gave me. It's another view of the same crowd in Paris.

Then I see him. He's standing up on something, so you can see him above the crowd. It seems like he is giving a speech.

"Jason," I say his name out loud.

— Continued Next Issue

MONTAGUE from page 10

allows for more efficient processing and hauling of solids leftover in the treatment process. Trombley estimated the installation of the fourth and final zone on the new press would reduce the time staff spent on dewatering solids by 30%, freeing them up for other tasks.

The board allowed the use of Peskeomskut Park by the Shea Theater on August 18th to show two free outdoor movies (Goonies and Back to the Future, Steven Spielberg classics) using the Shea's recently purchased portable

advisory committee to spend up to \$6,000 to hire the legal services of attorney Peter Epstein for the town's upcoming cable contract renewal negotiations with ComCast, in 2013.

A ribbon cutting was held at Unity Park for the first phase of reconstruction there on August 17th. "The kids love it," said Abbondanzio.

The board approved plans heading to the zoning board of appeals and planning board to draw new property lines around buildings the town took for back taxes in downtown Millers Falls, at 33 Bridge Street and 26-50 East Main Street.

The new property lines would require ZBA approval for narrow setbacks from existing buildings, but would also allow for some dedicated parking for each of the buildings at those addresses, as well as access to a new public parking lot in the rear of the triangular parcel of land to the south of East Main Street.

"Parking is pretty clearly needed to support businesses there," noted town planner Walter Ramsey.

Montague police detective Lee Laster was placed on unpaid medical leave for up to 12 weeks, with best wishes for a speedy recovery from selectboard chair Chris Boutwell.

A special town meeting was scheduled for Monday, September 10th at 7 p.m. with no word yet on warrant items to be discussed. Stay tuned.

smokestack was an integral part of the boiler building structure, while the GTD smokestack was not attached to any building.

One town meeting member asked if, after the cleanup, the building would be secured to keep metal thieves from stripping the copper and brass and to keep homeless people from camping in the building.

Goodwin said securing the building and the site was part of the project. In addition, accessible metals were already removed by the former owner.

In final comments on Article 1, Dubai said, "It's hard to get a concept [for future use of the site] before this hellacious mess is gone." However, he noted, even after the \$1 million cleanup is complete, more work will need to be done.

"It's not time to pick out the curtains yet," Dubai said.

Article 2 – updates to water department regulations, fees, and charges – was passed over on the advice of town counsel, who will be providing the selectboard with an opinion as to whether the updates are water regulations to be voted by the water commissioners (the select-board) or bylaws that should be voted by town meeting.

In the public announcement portion of the meeting, regionalization

planning committee member Beth Lux told the meeting that the Leverett, Shutesbury, and Amherst/Pelham regionalization committees had voted to form a unified committee, with the goal of regionalizing the elementary schools in those towns within two years. If this goal is achieved, Erving Elementary School and the Swift River Elementary School would be the only schools remaining in Union 28; the superintendency union might no longer be fiscally viable in that case.

Responding to Lux's report, the selectboard members present at the special town meeting agreed the selectboard and school committee should meet jointly to discuss this development. Lux recommended that the next town meeting appoint a five-member regionalization committee with a mandate to develop alternatives for the future of EES. The scope for the current three-member committee was to investigate options and provide information about potential regional partners.

Moderator Rich Peabody announced that Arthur Johnson had been appointed to a vacant seat on the finance committee.

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from LOCAL page 4

ongoing construction. Turners Falls and the surrounding areas were just starting to get on their feet before the construction began. These losses will be a huge setback to the quality of life here.

I want to thank Denise Andrews for her efforts to organize this meeting and to continue pushing for more help with our difficulties. For those of you on the other side of the river, it would be good to get Stephen Kulik on board with this as well.

— Jon Miller, Owner
Wagon Wheel Restaurant
Riverside
Gill

from BENEFIT page 2

describes her entry into the benefits counseling program this way:

"I recently had an enlightening and enjoyable experience that's available to any of you that are so inclined.

"When my income dropped unexpectedly 11 years ago, it was a god-send that so many programs were available to help. The SNAP program (formerly food stamps) gave me a debit card with benefits loaded every month that I used wherever food is sold, including farmers markets. Fuel assistance has helped pay for heat six months a year.

"When my home needed repairs, I received a \$30,000 no-interest loan I won't have to pay back until I sell my home. Last year, when the pump on my well died, I received a one percent interest loan from USDA to replace it, with low affordable monthly payments.

"Being on the receiving end of benefits counseling, I learned about a variety of programs available to people sixty years and older – in other words, programs available to me, my family, friends and neighbors. They are also available to people with disabilities. I was so grateful I became a

benefits counselor!"

September is the perfect month to find out about home modification, weatherization, insulation and programs that might help you get through the home heating season.

The benefits counseling program at Franklin County Home Care will host a free "Energy Event" on September 25th from 9 a.m. to noon at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls. It will be repeated September 25th from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the GCC downtown campus, 270 Main Street, Greenfield. Both locations are accessible and have nearby parking.

This energy event will inform persons 60 years and over and their caregivers about home energy benefits they qualify for to help them save money and obtain rebates for energy efficient appliances. One-on-one assistance will be available. Registration is appreciated for this event, by contacting your local senior center or Gretchen Smith at gsmith@fchcc.org, or (413) 773-5555 Ext 2258, or (978) 544-2259 Ext 2258.

Read more about benefits counseling at www.fchcc.org. Find their free online home repair guide there, too.

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EVERY WEDNESDAY

Avenue A, Turners Falls: *Great Falls Farmers Market*, 2 to 6 p.m.

Winterland, Greenfield: *TNT Karaoke*, 9 p.m.

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

EVERY THURSDAY

Jake's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Shag*, 6 to 8 p.m.

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Acoustic open mic* with Dan, Kip & Shultz from *Curly Fingers DuPree* hosting, 8:30 to 11:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Open Mic Night*, 9:30 p.m.

EVERY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

Montague Inn: *TNT Karaoke*, 8:30 p.m.

ART SHOWS:

NOW through August 25th

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Splash* turns the tiny art space into a veritable aquarium. Paintings by Ariel Jones and under-sea art by area artists.

NOW through August 26th

Gallery at Hallmark, Turners Falls: *Work by Hallmark Institute of Photography June 2012 Graduating Class*.

NOW through August 30th

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Nature's Light*, photographs by local West Deerfield photographer Judy Cummings.

September 1st - 30th

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Photographs by Peter J. Crowley.

LOCAL EVENTS:

FRIDAY, AUGUST 24th

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Home Body and Bunny's A Swine*. Indie/Electronic. \$3.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Pamela Means*, folk/rock/jazz. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Empty Banks*, jazz

trio. 9 to 11:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25th

The Millers Falls Rod & Gun: *Critters and Crustaceans* (a.k.a. beef and lobster)

DORON GILD PHOTO



Red Heart the Ticker will perform at the 1794 Meeting House in New Salem on Saturday, August 25th at 7:30 p.m.

cookout. Music by the Curly Fingers Dupree Band. Clam chowder at 11:00 a.m. Feeding time starting at 2:00 p.m.

Thompson Temple, Lake Pleasant: *Psychic Fair* sponsored by the National Spiritual Alliance. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Institute for the Musical Arts, Goshen: *Lady and the Amp Fest*, celebrating 10 years of girls rocking the summer. 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Watershed History: Water Under the Bridge Bike Tour*. Meet at Discovery Center entrance. 12 to 2 p.m.

Greenfield Savings Bank Lobby, Turners Falls: *Artisans on Avenue A*. Stretch Your Budget with unique, one of a kind gifts: a treasure trove of custom-made creations from jewelry to paintings, stained glass, magical emu lotions, pillows, sweaters, whimsical decorations, seasonal flags and all-natural soaps. 1 to 4 p.m.

The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum, Hadley: *Honest Harmony* concert. 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *All Ages Metal Show*. 5 to 11 p.m.

1794 Meeting House, New Salem: Northern Routes 4: *Red Heart the Ticker*, *Crystalline Roses*, and *Matthew Goulet*. 7:30 p.m. \$10.

The Arts Block, Greenfield: *The Ha-Ha's Improv Comedy Show*. 8 p.m.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Ottomatic Slim* Chicago Style Blues, 9 p.m. to midnight.

Route 63 Road House, Millers Falls: *Chickenwire*, Country & Southern Rock 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bell Engine*, Berkshires based band. 9:30 to 12. Free.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 26th

East Leverett Meadow: *Kestrel Release*. 1 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Ben Cosgrove* instrumental. 2 p.m.

The Arts Block, Greenfield: *Rhythm Nomads* with Tony Vacca, Vinx & Massamba Diop. 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Surly Temple* with Jim Henry, Guy DeVito, Doug Plavin & Tommy Boynton! 8 to 10 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Karaoke*, by TNT productions. 9 p.m. to midnight. Free.

MONDAY, AUGUST 27th

Montague Center Library: *Evening Crafts*. Children can make simple crafts or take home materials. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Open Mic* hosted monthly by Dada Dino: music, song, poetry. Signup time 7:30 p.m. 8 p.m. to midnight. Free.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 28th

Route 63 Road House, Millers Falls: *Poker*, Texas Hold 'Em. 7:30 p.m. Free.

The People's Pint, Greenfield: *Karaoke*. 9:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4th

Safety Complex, Turners Falls: Ask *Solarize Montague*. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Frances Crowe community room, 60 Masonic Street; Northampton: *COINTEL-PRO 101*. Film and discussion. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th

The People's Pint: *Old Time Session*. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th

Downtown Greenfield: *34th Annual Franklin County Fair Parade*. Memories, Music and Magic. 5 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Falltown String Band*. 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Relics*. Brian Mallet and Lefty Cullen playing oldies from the 50s & 60s. 8 to 10 p.m.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th

Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Franklin County Fair*.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Watershed History*. The first in a series of four talks in September on four immigrant groups (French/Canadian, Irish, Polish, and German) that settled in Turners Falls during industrialization. 6:30 p.m.

Johnson Chapel, Amherst College: Author Bill McKibben of 350.org gives a talk on global warming, *"Jail Notes - the Fight for the Planet Starts to Quicken."* 7 p.m.

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *The Producers*. 7:30 p.m. Music before the movie: *Doug Creighton & Bob Snope*, Quebecois melodeon & guitar. 7 p.m.

The Arts Block, Greenfield: *Ed Byrne Latin Jazz Evolution*. 8 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: singer/songwriter *M.R. Pouloupoulos*. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*, reggae. 9:30 to 11:30 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th

New Salem General Store: *5th Annual Hilltown Brewfest*, a benefit for the Wendell and New Salem Fire Departments. 12 to 5 p.m.

Great Hall, Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Artist Reception*: Photographer Peter J. Crowley. 1 to 3 p.m.

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Greenfield Arts Eclectic* for cultural omnivores. Live music, one act plays, poetry readings, and small press fair. 3 to 9 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Watershed History: The Grand*

Trunk Hotel, built in 1872 and taken down in the 1960s, old photographs, and testimonials tell the story of grand old days in Turners Falls. 6 to 7 p.m.

Memorial Hall Theater POTHOLE PICTURES

Friday & Saturday
September 7th & 8th at 7:30 p.m.

THE PRODUCERS

Mel Brooks' directorial debut. Classic comedy about corruption on Broadway. Starring Zero Mostel. 1968.

Music 1/2 hour before movie:
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Sat. *Leo T. Baldwin*, to Krock

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The Rendezvous

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AUGUST
2012

ROCKIT QUEER
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September

2ND & 4TH SUN = KARAOKE - now 9pm-1am
3RD MON = BINGO FIRST & LAST MON = OPEN MIC
1st Friday - Drew Palon 3rd Weds - Quiznite

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------------------------|
| THURS 8/23 | Ray Mason, solo | FREE 8pm |
| FRI 8/24 | HOME BODY (indie/electronic) | \$3 |
| SAT 8/25 | Bell Engine (electric/acoustic indie) | FREE |
| SUN 8/26 | TNT Karaoke | FREE 9pm |
| MON 8/27 | DADA DINO'S OPEN MIC | 8pm, sign-ups start at 7:30 |
| WEDS 8/29 | Cap'n Allen's South of the Border All-Stars!! (Latin) | 8:30pm |
| FRI 8/31 | FIRESEED (old-time, jazz, celtic) | 7:30 FREE |

SAT September 1 is OUR 5th (FIFTH!!!!) Anniversary.
We will have a party! Details to come!

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MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – After two weeks of refreshing ocean breezes, we return to the humidity.

The good news is there are over three inches of water in the rain gauge, and the lawn looks green again. It is also badly in need of mowing, along with the legions of weeds in the garden.

We arrived in the fine state of Maine in the last days of July and broke up the traveling with a restorative dinner and night on Bailey's Island. This spot is the last of a string of three small islands off the coast of Brunswick and home to the world's only cribstone bridge, just newly restored. The bridge consists of large chunks of granite and some rectangular stone piers, all cunningly stacked so as to hold together by weight and balance alone while letting the tides and the storm waves pass through.

We end the day toasting the sunset from the lawn of our lodging

and arise to morning java on the same chairs at the edge of the water. No mishaps, except the loss of one freshly-baked muffin to a wily seagull.

Back on the road we travel the coast along Route One, stopping in Damariscotta for lunch. After the predictable bottleneck in Wiscasset, the road has opened again and is largely traffic-free. The tide's in, water views abound.

Our home away from home is a cottage down one of the many peninsulas of the midcoast region, about three hundred plus or minus miles from home, and a million miles away for body and spirit.

Maine's summer season is a condensed one. When we arrive, strawberries and rhubarb are still available in the farm markets; a few days later, the same markets are featuring the wild blueberry crop and the first of the corn.

For two weeks we enjoy unscheduled down time, tourist tours, a ride on the ferry, plentiful meals of fish and fresh vegetables, and walks, walks, walks.

A long day's travel brings us home again to the waiting lawn and the unkempt garden. In those too few weeks of days, the onions and

garlic have matured to harvest readiness. So have the weeds in the raised beds and the green beans.

There is an upside to this beefy weed crop. While the deer did munch up most of the kale, she nipped gently as you would crop lettuce with a pair of scissors. The kale plants responded with new growth and have escaped further depredation, camouflaged by weeds. So too the last attempt at a bean crop. These plants have matured past the palate of the greedy woodchuck and may very well produce for us if the warm weather continues.

After the onions and garlic are pulled, they will sun-dry on a raised screen so they will store longer without spoiling. We have both yellow and red onions, so will use the non-storing reds first.

Most of my tomatoes are indeterminate. Thus they will continue to grow until the weather gets too chilly or they get frosted. This is great because the tomato supply keeps growing, but over time I've gleaned that this endless growing also slows the ripening of the large varieties because the plant feels no hurry to finish.

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

Post Vacation Blues

Still, we have harvested beautiful, firm red Early Girls, plenty of cherry tomatoes and an heirloom or too.

The sweet peppers have large fruits, which are also still green. While they are perfectly edible this way, we prefer to let them mature to their chosen red or yellow or brown (chocolate), as they will be all the sweeter when cooked.

As the season winds down, we are already thinking about next year's garden. The asparagus bed is very healthy and we look forward to a hearty crop. I will not plant the peppers so close to the tomatoes next season, as they have had to work too hard to compete for the sun. I promise myself to get the salad greens started much earlier with a seeding just after the first frost. Next year's pumpkin plants will start in the sunroom to accelerate their growth.

Most of all, we are committed to putting up a serious fence to keep out the varmints. We don't mind sharing a little, but losing an entire crop is just too hard after the work of planting and tending. We also resolve to try a couple of new things, as yet undetermined.

After Christmas, when all of the seed catalogues arrive, we will feast our eyes on the gorgeous colors and shapes and no doubt order too much again.

In the meantime, there is still the continuing harvest to enjoy right away, as well as the pickling and cooking to squirrel away freshness for the long winter months. Oh yes, and it's probably time to order a couple of cords of stove wood.

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Holiday in Honduras



This summer Michael Mackin visited his son Josiah in Utila, Islas De La Bahia, Honduras, where he is a professional scuba instructor. He managed to snap this photo of Josiah, relaxing dockside and catching up on the news from his hometown.

Harvest Fest Benefit



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I look forward to meeting you and would appreciate your vote on Thursday, September 6, 2012.

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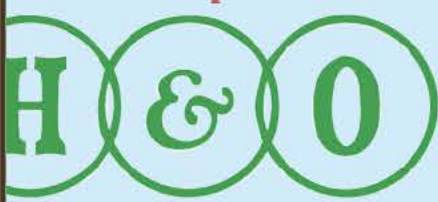
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