



# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 12 – NO. 11

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

DECEMBER 19, 2013

## Wendell Couple Demonstrates The ABC's of Simple Living

By CHRIS QUEEN

**WENDELL** – As the first flakes of a weekend snow storm began to fall last Saturday afternoon, neighbors and out-of-towners made their way to the new south entrance of Jonathan and Susan von Ranson's barn. Some had read "Couple finds path to building simple living space isn't simple" on the front page of the Greenfield Recorder, while others were members of committees and groups that consider human impacts on the natural environment.

In a town in which the state forest takes up most of the space, it is not surprising that members of the Simple Living Committee, the Climate Change Group, the Cultural Council, the Energy Committee, and the Zoning Board of Appeals all showed up to learn how daily life would work without electricity,

running water, and flush toilets.

As admirers of Scott and Helen Nearing, the legendary back-to-the-land activists in Vermont and Maine, Susan and Jonathan had built StoneOak entirely out of rocks and trees they harvested on Bear Mountain in the Wendell State Forest back in the 1980s. "Living off the grid" then was as much a reaction to the materialism of modern life as it was a determined attempt to reduce a "carbon footprint" which is now dramatically melting our ice caps, spawning super storms, and killing thousands of species every year.

Since the von Ransons left StoneOak in 1996 to live in an old house in Wendell center, they have dreamed of ways to replicate the simple living they enjoyed on Bear Mountain. Back then, they designed a high-efficiency masonry

see **SIMPLE** page A6

## It Takes A Village: Presents For "Kacy's Kids"

By CHRISTOPHER  
SAWYER-  
LAUÇANNO

**TURNERS FALLS** – Who says that there isn't a Santa Claus? Not Pamela, a downtown Turners Falls resident, who on December 18 was presented a new pink bicycle courtesy of a whole group of Santas.

Ninety-five other children in Turners also received a present from these same folks, and their families received \$20 food vouchers from Food City.

It all started last year when Bill Holbrook, owner of Jake's Tavern, wanted to honor the memory of his niece Kacy, who was killed in a car accident at the age of 18. "Kacy loved kids," said Holbrook. "And so how better to remember her than doing something for kids?"

Holbrook began spreading the word that the tavern would collect the names of Turners kids who were in need of Christmas presents. Last year, he got nearly 40 names; this year the names of 95 children were turned in.

Holbrook put the names of



Cindy Skelly of Montague Catholic Social Ministries, Bill Holbrook, owner of Jake's Tavern and Marie Putala of MCSM, look on as Pamela checks out her new bike.

"Kacy's Kids," as he calls them, up on the wall at the tavern.

"Customers began pitching in, saying they wanted to get these kids presents." And suddenly, Jake's became a bit like the North Pole a few days before Christmas Eve.

"It wasn't just me doing this," said Holbrook. "It was a group effort, a community coming together."

see **GIFTS** page A3

## Parks & Rec: No Sledding At Unity Park

By DAVID DETMOLD

**TURNERS FALLS** – Kids who look out at the new fallen snow this week in Turners may have to wait until next year to use the traditional sledding hill at Unity Park.

Where generations of Turners youth – and their parents – have coasted down the slope from the top of Third Street toward the playing fields, now an orange plastic fence has been erected on metal poles to prevent access, with signs saying "Hill is Closed for Sledding."

As fresh snow fell on Tuesday, parks director Jon Dobosz explained, "At the moment we are leaving the temporary fence up surrounding the ballfields at the base of the hill," to protect the newly loamed and reseeded playing fields from damage.

The plastic fence across the sledding hill prevents sledders from careening beyond the base of the hill and sliding right into the temporary wooden fence below.

Dobosz said this fall, there were one or two instances where vehicles were "maliciously" driven from the direction of the basketball courts right out onto the newly-planted playing fields. Similar mischief at the Millers Falls ballfields a few years ago resulted in arrests, when police caught the perpetrators, who

see **HILL** page A5

## ALPS Board Takes New Path to Summit

By JEFF SINGLETON

**LEVERETT** – After more than two years of work, and several twists and turns, the Amherst-Leverett-Pelham-Shutesbury (ALPS) Regional Planning Board has made what may well be its final proposal to promote elementary school consolidation.

On December 5, the board voted unanimously to recommend expanding the current Amherst-Pelham middle school/high school district that serves the four towns to include elementary grades.

consolidation without torpedoing the process.

The resolution also stated that the "one town" could later join at the elementary level and would have the option of sharing a superintendent even though it was not formally a member of the district.

The decision to amend the existing middle/high school regional agreement would mean that the planning board, a product of state law regulating the process of creating new districts, would go out of business.

It would be replaced by

new regional school committee be elected? How would state aid be calculated?

According to Andrew Steinberg, the chair of the regional planning board, these questions will need to be addressed by a future committee as the process moves forward.

"This is a concept," Steinberg wrote in a letter to state officials. "We have a great deal of work ahead of us to develop an amendment to the Regional Agreement that will implement this model and address the requirements, including those for governance and assessments..."

Members of the planning board have noted, however, that the proposed hybrid district is similar to, or at least no more complex than, the structure of the Mohawk Regional District in western Franklin County.

There, the so-called "Mohawk School System" contains three separate school districts: the Hawlemont District, which contains the towns of Hawley and Charlemont at the elementary level; the Rowe School District, an elementary district consisting of the town of Rowe; and the Mohawk District.

The Mohawk School Committee, because it

see **DISTRICT** page A7

## Facing the Future: The "Graying" Of Franklin County

By MARK HUDYMA

**GREENFIELD** – The baby boom is about to retire, and we're simply not prepared for it.

Baby boomers as a generation are less healthy overall, have fewer financial resources, and fewer dependable caregivers than the generation before them, but have a higher life expectancy and far greater numbers.

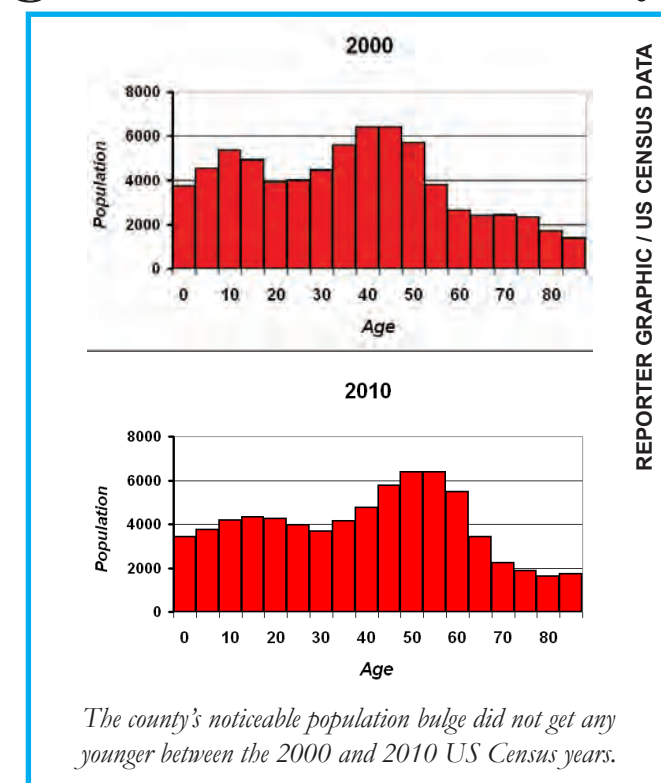
The gap in all these fields will likely be filled in many of these cases by governments, both local and not.

To help local elected officials prepare for this, Franklin Regional Council of Governments hosted a workshop last Thursday on "The Aging of Franklin County and its Impacts".

Cynthia Jacelon, a nursing professor from the University of Massachusetts, opened the workshop with an overview of aging, its effects on the body, then dove into the statistics.

Older populations, defined as sixty-five and up, are the fastest growing segment of our population. Up to 15% of Franklin County is over sixty-five, while that number is going to increase 16.4% over the next five years.

Jacelon urged attendees to think not just about the num-



bers, but to put them in the context of a changing society: "The very structure of the American family is changing. We're living in increasingly smaller households."

Elderly women, in particular, are subject to this, and are far more likely than men to be living alone.

The most popular topic of the meeting was transportation. Seniors often face challenges in moving around, especially to regular medical appointments. This immobility can lead to hardship for the seniors and their families.

Roseanne Martoccia, executive director of Franklin County Home Care Corporation, gave an overview of the services her organization offered, including "emergency fuel assistance for seniors that run out during the winter," meals, counseling for medicare beneficiaries, workshops and information sessions.

She also detailed the work already being done on the transportation problem, including a plan for a volunteer shuttle service for local seniors, which was met

see **GRAYING** page A7



Jonathan and Susan von Ranson, right, show their high-efficiency wood-burning, masonry cook and heating stove to visitors Mara Bright of Leverett, Lauren and Pam Kelley of Greenfield and Tony Hughes of Matinicus, Maine.



Whether the Leverett Elementary School will stay in Union 28, or is absorbed into the Amherst-based district, remains in question.



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**Janet Masucci  
Gill**





Compiled by DON CLEGG

Baystate Franklin Medical Center’s **women’s a cappella chorus** performs traditional holiday and secular music on Friday, December, 20, from 12:15 to 1 p.m. in the Main Conference Rooms at Baystate Franklin Medical Center, 164 High Street, Greenfield. Open to the public, free of charge.

John Furbish presents **four local historical background segments** at the Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank on Saturday, December 21, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Did you ever wonder how and why different landmarks are named? Why they stick through the ages? Stop by to learn the underlying reasons behind four such entities.

What is the deal with the changing locations for Ed’s Barber Shop? What mysteries does the Moltenbrey Hotel hold? How has Our Lady of Czestochowa collected such magnificent art treasures? What happened at the Yazwinski dairy farm back in 1675 that sticks

today? Furbish has done lots of research and will provide hand-outs on any of your favorites. This is sure to be an interesting topic so please call ahead to secure a seat, 863-4316.

The **Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra** will hold their annual **Celebration Holiday Pops Concert** on Saturday, December 21, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Greenfield High School on Lenox Avenue in Greenfield. There will also be a silent auction beginning at 6:30 and continuing through intermission.

Enjoy a **Christmas Candlelight Service** at Leverett Congregational Church on Monday, December 23, starting at 7 p.m. Come celebrate with traditional readings, choral anthems, and carol singing, closing with Silent Night by candlelight. On Sunday, December 29, starting at 10 a.m., help celebrate the Christmas season a little longer by **singing Christmas carols** and listening to a child-friendly story.

All are welcome and both events are free. Handicap access. LCC

is located at 4 Montague Road, Leverett (across from the Leverett Post Office). For more information, call Claudia at (413) 359-0003 or email at [Claudia@ClaudiaGereCo.com](mailto:Claudia@ClaudiaGereCo.com).

The **Annual Sawmill River 10K Run** in Montague Center is Wednesday, January 1, with a 10 a.m. start. Pre-registration has begun on-line at [www.runreg.com](http://www.runreg.com), or visit [www.montague.net/parksrec](http://www.montague.net/parksrec).

In addition, a handful of hardy souls are needed to help the Montague Parks & Recreation Department pull off this year’s run. The Department only needs your help for a couple of hours from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and you will be fed. Call 863-3216 if interested.

The sci-fi spoof **Barbarella, Queen of the Galaxy** will be shown at the Wendell Free Library, on Saturday, January 4 at 7:30.

Barbarella, a 41st century astronaut, lands on the planet Lythion and sets out to find the evil Durand Durand in the city of Sogo, where a new sin is invented every hour. Based on the popular French comic strip.

After a few months off, the **“Turners Falls Genealogy Gatherers”** are ready to get together again and share their family research stories and questions. Join us on Thursday, January 9, at Carnegie Library from 6 to 8 p.m.

for an informal discussion of family research. This informal group was formed to encourage anyone interested in genealogy. People with any level of experience are welcome.

Participants learn from each other and may take on group projects, such as cemetery inventories. There is a plan to establish monthly meetings, so all can count on a regular “fix” of genealogy. Bring a laptop and research together with the library’s wifi. Bring a friend, and maybe meet a cousin.

Slate Roof Press, a member-run, not-for-profit collaborative, is pleased to announce their **2nd Annual Poetry Chapbook Contest**.

Slate Roof publishes award-winning, limited-edition, art-quality chapbooks with letterpress covers. The winner becomes an active member of the press, and will have his or her chapbook published.

Winners make a 3-year commitment to the press, including monthly meetings in Greenfield, and share work responsibilities for many aspects of publishing. Submit no more than 28 pages of poetry. \$25 reading fee.

The deadline (to upload or postmark submissions) is March 31. For full contest guidelines, visit [www.slateroofpress.com](http://www.slateroofpress.com).

*Send your local briefs to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).*

## Another Letter Big Thanks to Pack 16!

All of us at Montague Catholic Social Ministries want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Cub Scout Pack 16 of Deerfield, Massachusetts for their outstanding effort during their “Scouting for Food” Drive.

Because of them, our Basic Needs Program has an additional 1,300 pounds of food to distribute to those in need.

Under the leadership of Cub Scout Leader Lillian Russell, participating Cub Scouts, Logan and Ritchie and Boy Scouts, Ryan, Alex and Jordan spent two Saturdays in November dropping off bags at people’s homes with a note asking for help for those in need and picking up filled bags

one week later.

Through their hard work and the generosity of their neighbors, on November 23, 250 bags of food were distributed to MCSM and The Survival Center.

With cuts in SNAP benefits and increases in heating costs, it can be especially difficult to make ends meet.

Thanks to Cub Scout Pack 16, our pantry is now better stocked to help our neighbors who find themselves in an emergency situation.

**With deep appreciation,  
Susan, Cindy, Vickie, Moon,  
Andrea, Taryn and Christine**

### GIFTS from page A1

Among those involved in this effort was Cindy Skelly, Family Support Programs Coordinator at Montague Catholic Social Ministries.

Skelly got involved with the project since many of the children’s names were known to her from her work at MCSM. She helped Holbrook obtain contact information for each of Kacy’s Kids.

Others, too, pitched in. Margaret Socquet and Marie Putala began selling chances at Food City to raise money for food cards for each family whose child’s name was on Holbrook’s list.

They quickly raised more than \$800, allowing them to purchase the Food City vouchers.

The largest gift this year went to Pamela, who yesterday was presented her new pink bike at Montague Catholic Social Ministries. On hand were Holbrook, Putala and Skelly.

When Pamela, her brother Johnny, and her parents walked through the front door, Pamela’s already large brown eyes got larger. An ir-repressible smile began growing.

When told that it was her bike, she immediately grabbed the handlebars and held on, the smile by this time seemingly permanent.

Johnny got a present, too. But as Holbrook noted, those who gave the gifts got the best present of all.

Next year Holbrook says he’s going to close the tavern and ask Santa to come deliver the presents in person. He’s sure Santa will make it.



Fish & Wildlife Service and four state fisheries agencies agreed to steer migratory fish into the chaos of the privately-owned Turners Falls power canal. A singular New England opportunity to recoup and expand the river’s biodiversity was lost.

Just as in 1980, at best one-fish-in-ten emerges alive upstream there today. Some years it’s 1-in-100.

That mistake stemmed from a failed quest to create a hatchery-strain of extinct Atlantic salmon here.

As a result, due diligence wasn’t applied to the needs of growing populations of herring, shad and sea lamprey, who would now have to survive a trip through an industrial canal on their spawning runs. It also scuttled the only natural spawning grounds of the endangered Connecticut River shortnose sturgeon.

Merriam-Webster defines *due diligence* as “the care that a reasonable person exercises to avoid harm to other persons or their property.”

Today, after 14 years of power company-subsidized canal studies that remain unpublished, we know scant little about conditions fish encounter throughout that canal. Save for a few dozen yards at its entrances and exits, two full miles of watery *terra incognita* lay in between. That missing knowledge comprises this ecosystem’s black hole.

Yet with just tidbits of canal study information leaking into the public sphere, there is evidence that canal conditions – and the weeks-long migratory delays fish experience there – are proving lethal.

## GUEST EDITORIAL Due Diligence: Looking Beneath the Surface

By KARL MEYER

New England’s Great River is at a critical juncture in the closing days of 2013.

An ecosystem door was slammed shut at Turners Falls 215 years ago when private investors built a dam across the river. After 1798, migrating fish no longer reached northern Massachusetts, Vermont or New Hampshire.

In a landmark 1872 decision the US Supreme Court reopened the door to an ecosystem restoration via “Holyoke Company vs. Lyman.” It upheld a Massachusetts law requiring dam owners to provide fish passage as part of the public interest of stakeholders upstream and down.

Yet today there’s still no working fish passage at Turners Falls.

As a stakeholder wishing to see the Connecticut River’s fisheries restoration succeed after decades of failure, I’m participating in the current 5-year Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s hydro relicensing process.

It will determine conditions in the river for the next 30-40 years. If you go to [www.northfieldrelicensing.com](http://www.northfieldrelicensing.com) and click on “2013 Documents,” you’ll find FERC’s “Study Plan Determination Letter” dated 9/13/2013.

It’s a 74-page catalogue of studies FERC has determined necessary to protect the public interests as they move to issue new long-range

hydro licenses on the river in 2018.

Curiously, if you open that letter and scroll to the last word on the last page (74) you’ll find “Karl Meyer,” listed as “Recommending Entity” for Study 4.2.3, “Hydraulic Study of the Turners Falls Power Canal.”

I was surprised to find my name there, given that each of the 18 studies above it lists FirstLight, owners of the Turners Falls Power Canal, as Recommending Entity.

But this was no accident on FERC’s part. They’d originally included the canal study as part of Study 3.2.2 in their preliminary judgments on the science needed to define the impacts of FirstLight’s hydro operations on river environments. I’d agreed with them.

But FirstLight, in all subsequent filings, seemed determined to exclude it. They simply excised “power canal” from 3.2.2: “Hydraulic Study of Turners Falls Impoundment, Bypassed Reach, ~~power canal~~ and the Connecticut River below Cabot Station.”

Their main argument was that the water surface level in the canal remains relatively stable through the year.

But given that what happens below the surface is what’s critical to the needs of migrating fish, I argued a canal study was a critical consideration.

Two generations back, a chance to restore fish runs beyond Turners Falls was squandered when the US



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Students of  
the Week**  
(week ending  
12/13):

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Joseph Kochan

**Grade 7**  
Ryan Campbell  
Vanessa  
Moreno-Sibrian

**Grade 8**  
Kylie Fleming

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## NOTES FROM THE GMRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### Catching Up: November 26 And December 10

By PATRICIA PRUITT

#### November 26

The school committee heard the superintendent's report after voting to table the minutes from November 12, and voting to approve the warrant for November 26.

In his report, Superintendent Michael Sullivan outlined his activities in the previous weeks which included accompanying principals of the high school and Montague Elementary to observe classes and discuss their approach to giving feedback to teachers through the evaluation process. He has also done this at Gill Elementary. In addition he himself participated in a day-long training on how to help principals implement the new teacher evaluation system as part of their instructional leadership in their schools.

As part of the school committee's professional development, Sullivan has been bringing pertinent articles to its attention for "homework". This week's assignment was *Leading the Instructional Core*, an interview with Harvard professor Richard Elmore.

Sullivan related the response of his administrative team to the article. There was consensus that the district needs to focus on close examination of the tasks students are asked to do, to see if, in fact, these are cognitively challenging.

The administrative team also observed that the district has a ways to go to more fully develop the preconditions for success (what Elmore calls "internal capacity"), including: strong leadership; people having opportunities to talk to each other about the work, knowledge and expertise about what good instruction looks like; curriculum support; and internal and external professional development.

The next topic was the development of a task force to

review options for how to meet the district's business, financial reporting, and human resource needs for the future. Sullivan wants the task force to assist him in making a report for the SC consideration in January. He hopes SC member Misty Lyons will be able to join the group, time permitting.

Another area of importance to the district is the state's shift to PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). Sullivan has requested a slower approach to implementing PARCC testing for students in our district, and has received approval from DESE for a two-year transition plan.

"It is my belief that the extraordinary time students would need to spend taking the combined PARCC and MCAS assessments presents a cost to them which would outweigh the benefits gained by having available their MCAS performance results," said Sullivan. "I recommend that we decline to have our PARCC-tested students take the 2014 MCAS tests, in the subjects in which they are PARCC-tested."

Later in the meeting Mike Langknecht moved, and Sandy Brown seconded, that the students taking the PARCC pilot test would not be required to take the same subjects in the MCAS tests. All voted in favor.

The meeting went into executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations.

#### December 10

It was a night for Power Point presentations – two, in fact: one by Jeanette Voas, evaluation coordinator for the Partnership in Youth program run by Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG); the second by Superintendent Michael Sullivan and Director of Teaching and

Learning Marty Espinola.

Voas presented the results of the annual Youth Risk Behavior Survey taken every year from 2003 to 2013, nationally, statewide, and regionally (in Franklin County/North Quabbin).

The survey seeks to study the trends and shifts in youth participation in risky behaviors and covers behaviors that can adversely impact student health such as use of alcohol, marijuana, cigarette smoking, involvement in physical fighting, experience of bullying, experience of symptoms of depression, consideration of suicide, involvement in sexual activity, educated in school about AIDS and HIV infection, and condom use.

**The survey suggests  
there is about a 30%  
likelihood an 8th  
grader experiences  
bullying at GMRSD.  
By 10th grade, that  
figure falls to 20%.**

Voas stressed that over time the survey gives a reasonably accurate sense of the risks youth between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade are taking, and that young people are no more likely to lie on a survey than adults are.

The survey showed some discrepancies in results: for example, while 68% of students in the region said they had received education about HIV/AIDS, only 37% in the GMRSD said they had.

The national response to this question, at 10<sup>th</sup> grade, was 84%, and the state's was 82%; at the same grade level, the GMRSD lagged behind at 58%.

Nationally, 30% of 10th graders reported being sexually active, while state-wide and regionally 31% said they were; at GMRSD, the figure was 37%. The percentage of GMRSD seniors reporting sexual activity was 52%, compared to 48%

### Carl Ladd Named New Hampshire Superintendent of the Year

By JEFF SINGLETON

**GROVETON, NH** – Former Gill-Montague Regional School District Superintendent Carl Ladd has been named the New Hampshire "Superintendent of the Year" for 2013-14 by the New Hampshire School Administrators Association.

Ladd currently serves as Superintendent for School Administrative Unit #58 which oversees the operations of three separate school districts in the northern part of the state. School Administrative Units (SAUs) are similar to Superintendency Unions in rural Massachusetts.

In announcing the award, the administrators association called Ladd "truly an exceptional person. His work ethic, humility, and integrity are beyond reproach." The chair

of the SAU school board stressed Ladd's ability to set "realistic goals approved by the board at the beginning of each school year. Such goals are buildable in subsequent years providing a consistent way forward for educational progress..."

Ladd graduated in 1996 from Lyndon State College in Lyndonville, Vermont, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree. He earned a Masters of Education from Norwich University, also in Vermont, in 2002 and a Doctorate of Education from Argosy University (Sarasota, Florida) in 2011.

Beginning in 2000, Ladd held a number of teaching and administrative positions in New Hampshire School districts, eventually becoming superintendent of Unit #58. That was the job he left to head the Gill-Montague district in 2009 and

that was the job he returned to in the spring of 2011.

Ladd's tenure in Gill-Montague was an eventful one. The district had been declared a "level 4" underperforming district in 2007 and the state had assumed "fiscal control" in December of 2008 after years of conflict over budgets and educational assessments.

Ladd joined the technical panel, an ad hoc group that produced a "plan for fiscal stability" eventually endorsed by the school committee, the member towns and state officials. He also produced budgets which were considered "affordable" by town officials.

Eventually state fiscal control ended and the member towns began approving budgets and assessments by wide margins. However, despite the end to the budget wars, internal conflicts on the school committee, as well as conflicts between Ladd and some committee members, seemed to intensify.

nationally.

Superintendent Sullivan expressed interest in more information on the bullying issue relating to adults in the school. The survey suggested there is about a 30% likelihood of an 8th grader experiencing bullying at GMRSD. By 10th grade that percentage falls to 20%; by 12th grade, 17%.

Next, Superintendent Sullivan offered his own presentation, as a status report of the district's Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP).

The AIP identifies 4 objectives: developing high quality instruction, aligned curriculum, and standards based lesson plans; use of student performance data to drive instruction; professional development for teachers and administrators to support first two goals; and development of school committee governance.

In the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's 23-page document on AIP, the state laid out 4 clear lacks, or insufficiencies, impeding the successful outcomes for students and teachers.

Implementing the AIP strategies is no walk in the park, but an in-depth, rigorous learning experience for the entire school body.

For example, the first objective requires 6 initiatives and 24 specific activities related to aligning curriculum or lesson planning. The professional staff have committed to measurable improvements at all levels in the 2013-14 school year and beyond.

Sullivan announced plans to meet with parents at each district school to hear their perceptions, praise, and concerns about their schools and the district. In addition, he is surveying faculty and staff on the same topics, but with more specific questions.

The committee again went into executive session for the rest of the meeting, to discuss collective bargaining, and to discuss the deployment of security personnel, or devices or strategies with respect thereto.

The state refused to end the district's level 4 designation due to concerns about leadership instability.

Ladd left the GMRSD having completed only two years of a three-year contract. At the time he emphasized the needs of his family and a request from his former district that he return (a request he called "the answer to our prayers" at the time).

That was the motivation he reiterated in an email to this reporter: "Yes I left reluctantly for personal/family reasons.- I would have liked to have stayed to finish the job I started- it just didn't work out that way. And it was very good that I did come home when I did for many reasons."

Ladd also emphasized that "I actually learned a great deal from my two years at GMRSD. Some of what I learned is what I would not do again which is valuable too I think. But I made great friends and hopefully made a small difference."

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## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

## Energy, Cable Access Upgrades; Water in the Basement

By DAVID DETMOLD

The town of Gill has been saving up money for improvements to its cable access system, and has been holding out on spending the bulk of its Green Communities grant pending the results of an energy audit of town buildings.

Now, those results are in, and the selectboard is considering spending most or all of the remaining \$134,000 from that grant on insulation and new, efficient propane boilers for town hall, the Slate Library and the Riverside municipal building.

At the same time, the board is considering spending the bulk of the \$54,000 that has accumulated in its cable access fund to install a new array of remote-controlled, wall-mounted cameras and a top of the line switcher at town hall to streamline and professionalize the broadcast of meetings.

### Town Building Upgrades

Relying on an extensive energy audit of town buildings performed by Bales Energy Associates, and citing cost estimates from that audit, members of the town energy commission advised the selectboard on Monday, December 16 to spend \$15,818 to purchase a new propane boiler and tank to replace the 82% efficient 1999 oil furnace at town hall, and additionally to spend up to \$18,714 to insulate the walls and attic of that building.

To accomplish the latter task, the town would have to install a new plywood deck above the dropped ceiling of the second story meeting room, and blow in cellulose.

Thermal imaging, perhaps with the help of the fire department's new thermal imaging device, could reveal any gaps in the cellulose insulation in the walls, which could then be addressed with added insulation.

The commission members advised removing the dropped ceiling at the Slate Library to reveal the original peaked ceiling and balcony, then adding spray foam insulation to the sloped ceiling, and building out the interior walls to allow for insulating the interior of the historic cinderblock building.

**The work on the Slate Library would entail moving its collection during the course of construction.**

That work would entail moving the library's collection during the course of construction.

The energy commission members said they had held a preliminary discussion with the library trustees about the idea of moving the collection, using town volunteers in a

"bucket brigade" across the town common to the second floor of town hall, where it could be made available to the public until work at the Slate is completed.

That work, including the installation of a new propane boiler and new energy efficient lighting, would cost about \$30,677, according to the estimates from the energy audit.

At the Riverside building, the energy commission recommended spending more on retrofits — \$66,386 — than on the other two buildings combined.

It would cost that much to replace the aging, accident prone 65% efficient oil fired boiler — due for another \$1300 repair this season — with an efficient propane furnace, to retrofit or replace the steam radiators with hot water radiators, and to insulate the attic and first floor walls.

Selectboard member Randy Crochier said he had been among those on town meeting floor who voted several years ago to put the Riverside building on the market, rather than invest more town resources in it. But he said town meeting had voted decisively to keep the former Riverside school building for community use, and, he said, since, "We own it, it's our responsibility to take care of it."

Presently, some rooms on the first floor of the Riverside building are leased to the Four Winds School, a small independent middle school, which provides \$575 in monthly rent, enough for the building to break even on expenses now, according to town administrative assistant Ray Purington.

Additionally, the Riverside Water Department and the Gill Historical Commission have offices there, and the town's historical collection is housed there, along with the leftover equipment of the presently defunct Gill recreation commission.

As they discussed the energy retrofits to various town buildings, the selectboard also indulged in a theoretical game of municipal musical chairs, wondering if it would not serve the town better to move town hall to the Riverside building.

This would allow more room for various offices, leaving the present town hall as a much larger home for the library, while shifting the historical commission to the present Slate Library building. It would also leave the Four Winds School to land wherever the breeze may blow.

"We'll find out how many people really watch this on TV," by the public reaction to that theorizing, said Crochier.

### First Things First

The board indicated a willingness to proceed immediately with the \$66,386 in proposed retrofits to the heating system and building envelope at Riverside, regardless of the building's ultimate end use.

But the board suggested water

problems in the basements of town hall and the library need to be addressed first before tightening those buildings up.

The solution to minor flooding at the library basement may be to dig up the foundation walls and seal them from the outside, before regrading the slopes around that building.

But no one seemed sure how to effectively address the longstanding issue of groundwater, or runoff from Center Road, entering the basement of town hall, where town records are stored, and the board of health and assessors have their offices.

**The board wondered if it would not serve the town better to move town hall to the Riverside building.**

The problem worsens in spring, and after heavy rains, Purington said, and two sump pumps and a large dehumidifier appear inadequate to deal with the resultant inflow.

While on the topic, the board reviewed progress to date in meeting the goals outlined in the town's Green Community energy use profile, noting that some gains in energy savings had been achieved by installing new equipment at the Riverside pumping station and a new heating system at the safety complex.

Although those gains are harder to quantify, Purington said the results of installing a new energy efficient heating system, lights and boiler at

the elementary school are clear: the town and regional school system are enjoying a 51% drop in electricity use at that building, coupled with a 30% decrease in oil consumption.

These energy savings result in a decrease in utility bills of about \$15,000 annually, Purington said. While those dollar savings will be dedicated to paying off the cost of the energy upgrades for many years, the savings will eventually be passed along in decreases to the regional school and town assessments.

### Telecast Upgrades

Janet Masucci, volunteer camera operator and video editor handling the twice-a-month videotaping of selectboard meetings for MCTV brought a detailed quote for new equipment she said would improve the broadcast quality of those meetings.

The final price tag -- \$29,998 — provided by Access A/V in Concord, NH, gave the selectboard more than a little sticker shock, but Crochier said he had long supported a cable access system that would match the quality of Montague selectboard broadcasts.

In Montague, wall-mounted remote controlled cameras and a sophisticated switcher at the back of the meeting room allow videographers to eliminate jumpy pan shots to the crowd to try to find speakers, who may have finished speaking before a hand-operated tripod camera finally zooms in on them.

Town meetings, selectboard meetings, and other public events air on the local cable access channel, via MCTV, Channel 17, available to cable subscribers in town, and are

also available for home browsing online via MCTV's Vimeo site.

The board will discuss this proposal further on December 30, but Purington said the price quote from one audio-visual supply store in New Hampshire could not be used for a municipal procurement above \$25,000.

A sealed bid, newspaper advertised process would have to be followed.

Still, the board noted that funds flow into the town's cable access account from a percentage of each cable subscriber's monthly bill, and accumulates in excess of \$10,000 a year above current expenses.

These funds are restricted in their use mainly for improving the town's cable access system.

### Other Business

National Grid notified the town that it plans to apply herbicides in 2014 along the utility's right of way under the high tension lines that cross Gill from east to west, north of Route 2, intersecting Main Road near the Kuzmeskus bus company.

"If there are sensitive areas" near this right of way, "including public and private drinking water supplies, please advise us as soon as possible so we may establish permanent records and implement appropriate protective actions," states the company's letter.

A phone number to reach Dawn Travalini, Lead Vegetation Strategy Specialist for National Grid is also given: (781) 907-2498.

The highway department spent \$96,593 in state Chapter 90 highway aid to chip seal areas of Center Road and Mountain Road last season.



*There is some evidence that the plastic fencing has not deterred all sledders.*

### HILL from page A1

were making a mess of the turf by spinning their vehicle around "doing donuts."

But whoever drove over the new playing fields at Unity Park this autumn got away with it, and, even with several inches of snow on the new turf, might be tempted to return and do more damage if the temporary fences were taken down, Dobosz said.

"But we may be able to come up with an alternate solution," he added, involving rearranging the fences, in order to clear the hill for sledding before the winter is much older.

"We have to make sure we take the proper precautions," said Dobosz on Tuesday. "Once we do that, we'll open the hill back up."

"The hill is most likely to remain closed, for safety reasons,

probably for the winter," Dobosz clarified on Wednesday, in a telephone call to the *Reporter* office.

Apparently, not every eager sledder in Turners has been willing to wait that long.

Part of the plastic fence is lying on the ground, and signs in the snow indicate that someone has been sledding right over it.



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**SIMPLE** from page A1

woodstove for heating and cooking, hand-pumped water (some of it heated by the sun in outdoor tubing), kerosene lamps, and a composting toilet.

An illustrated book about their home, “StoneOak: One Couple’s Canvas and Compass,” by Pam and Peter Gallant, is available at Wendell Country Store and the Leverett Village Coop.

Visitors to the unfinished barn apartment last weekend got to see both the past and the future of simple living. As the setting sun was replaced by the warm glow of kerosene sconces, a rapt audience of about 25 learned many things.

An old copper hand pump from Athol Pump Co. will draw fine, clear water from a new dug well to the sink.

The Finnish-design masonry wood-burning cook-stove stores heat from cooking or heating fires and contains a hot water reservoir for washing and bathing.

A small flue in a separate part of the chimney uses the “chimney effect” – air warmed by the chimney rises and pulls air through a pipe from the pit of the composting toilet. It serves to vent and aerate the compost, favoring aerobic bacteria and their odorless process of decomposition.

The Gap Mountain-style composting toilet is a passive (non-electric) two-pit moldering toilet. By alternating the pits, one need only remove the decomposed, dry compost – a “beautiful product,” according to audience members who had just emptied their pit – after a minimum of three years. The compost is buried in accordance with Board of Health regulations.

In addition to this guided glimpse of the future – with homage to lifestyles of our rugged forebears – Jonathan and Susan reminded the visitors that the Town of Wendell has repeatedly supported the concept of simple living. On July 15, 2009, a Special Town Meeting unanimously

declared Wendell a “Deliberate Energy conserving Community.”

On Nov. 18, 2009, a Special Town Meeting recognized the right of citizens to live with “little or no manufactured fuels or electricity,” and urged officials to help establish that right in law.

On June 6, 2011, annual Town Meeting passed a “home rule” petition, requesting limited local autonomy in public health matters. It turned out that such autonomy already exists in state law, “as long as the public is not at risk,” according to Charles Kaniecki, regional health officer for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

While the von Ransons have shown during their years at StoneOak that “simple living” is not only possible, but comfortable and even elegant, the future of their quest for non-electric living in a town center in the Commonwealth is not assured.

Permits for building and occupancy of an owner-occupied residence must be issued by town officials who have pledged to fulfill their duties to the best of their ability.

These include the building inspector, members of the board of health, and if necessary, members of the zoning board of appeals.

None of these approvals have been granted to the von Ransons yet, but hopeful signs for a favorable outcome have appeared in recent years:

Section 7 of the 2008 Mass. Global Warming Solutions Act holds that permit-granting authorities, such as local boards of health, “shall consider global warming impacts” in their decisions.

The Wendell Board of Health presented its draft “Conservation-Oriented Housing Variance Procedure” before the selectboard this week.

Members of the Wendell Simple Living committee were invited to testify before the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy in 2011 to make the case for regulations allowing alternative

housing of the kind favored by the von Ransons.

The Secretary of Public Health met with town officials and members of the Wendell Simple Living Committee in 2012 to consider drafting special regulations for Alternative Housing that would include all the features the von Ransons have proposed.

While the DPH has not produced these draft regulations to date, it is expected that they will in the near future, followed by a period of public comment throughout the state.

In her invitation to Wendell townsfolk to attend the board of health’s presentation to the selectboard, chairperson Amy Simmons wrote that the new procedure “is designed to consider local homeowners’ initiatives on behalf of energy saving, climate and groundwater protection, resource recycling and the like that vary from Title V and the state sanitary code, but that the applicant believes meet the relevant state health and safety measures.

“This is a work in progress and the board of health welcomes all input and assistance with drafting these local regulations before we hold a formal public hearing in the near future. Please help spread the word.”

For those interested in the interface of environmental protection, social and economic justice, and public health and safety that the von Ransons and other concerned citizens have identified, as well as the impact of personal lifestyle choices on global climate conditions, a public discussion of these issues will be held this Friday, December 20, at 7:30 in the Wendell Free Library.

Panelists will be Jonathan von Ranson, local builder and activist Alistair MacMartin, and Wendell selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser.

The meeting is sponsored by the Wendell Climate Change Group. For more information, contact Chris Queen at (978) 544-0216 or [csqueen@post.harvard.edu](mailto:csqueen@post.harvard.edu).



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Power Transmission Station Planned

By KATIE NOLAN

WMECO representatives presented their company’s transmission station building plan to the Erving selectboard December 16.

WMECO wants to build a new 115,000-volt (115 Kv) transmission line 1.2 miles long from the Northfield Mountain substation to a new 115 Kv switching station in Erving.

The new transmission lines would lie along existing transmission lines. The 1.6 acre switching station would be constructed on WMECO property, near existing New England Power Company transmission lines.

WMECO estimates the cost of the new transmission facility at \$30 million.

WMECO will petition the state Department of Public Utilities to grant exemption from local zoning bylaws for the project.

In a letter to the planning board, WMECO wrote, “Zoning bylaws are normally not drafted with public utility infrastructure in mind and it is often difficult to ascertain the extent and nature of relief required.”

Potential Erving zoning bylaws that might impact the project include those regarding removal of natural materials, hillside areas, parking and loading, sign regula-

tions, and dimensional regulations and structure height.

DPU will require written approval from the town before granting WMECO’s petition for relief from local zoning bylaw.

The selectboard, planning board, and zoning board of appeals will meet jointly on January 27 to consider WMECO’s plan further and to decide whether to support the project to DPU.

As recommended by assistant assessor Jacqueline Boyden and IT specialist Jacob Smith, the board approved a contract with Crocker Communications for hosted email at the town hall.

Crocker will support 75 mail boxes for \$4,455 annually and \$948 in set up costs.

The school cafeteria staff wrote to the selectboard thanking Erving firefighters Ryan Betters, Mitchell LaClaire, Joseph Reed, and Mindy Sue Hodgkins for their help with the Thanksgiving meal at Erving Elementary School.

Duseau Trucking of Hatfield was awarded the contract for curbside collection of trash, recyclables, and the annual “anything goes” program the next 2 ½ years.

Duseau, the current curbside collection contractor, was the lowest of three bidders for the contract.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

All Was Quiet Upon Arrival

<b>Monday, 12/9</b> 9:30 p.m. Internet fraud reported. Under investigation.	regarding harassing texts. Report taken.	Dusty Road, Laurel Lake.
<b>Wednesday, 12/11</b> 1 p.m. Officer at North Street residence for property retrieval.	<b>Saturday, 12/14</b> 11:45 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on East Prospect Street.	<b>Sunday, 12/15</b> 9 a.m. One-car crash, Route 2 at railroad bridge. Report taken.
<b>Thursday, 12/12</b> 2:45 p.m. Suspicious vehicle reported on Central Street. Checked same. Was investigator.	1:45 p.m. Loose dog reported on Central Street. Dog returned to owner.	7:15 p.m. Welfare check on River Road. Transported same to hospital.
<b>Friday, 12/13</b> 6:15 p.m. Officer at North Street residence	7:30 pm. Domestic disturbance at Pratt Street residence. Verbal only. Subjects left the property.	10:10 p.m. Noise complaint on French King Highway. Loud music. All was quiet upon arrival.
	11:15 p.m. Alarm on	

Area Students Win Superintendents’ Award

By MICHAEL REARDON

**TURNERS FALLS** – Maxwell Pellerin, a Franklin County Technical School senior, was all smiles and a little at a loss for words as he waited to receive a Certificate of Academic Excellence at the Franklin County Area Superintendents’ Association Awards Dinner.

The Certificate of Academic Excellence is given to students who have distinguished themselves in the pursuit of high academic standards throughout their high school careers.

“I’m surprised I won,” he said. “I hadn’t even heard of the award until Mr. (FCTS Superintendent James) Laverty interviewed me. I was very honored and pleased when he called me back and told me I had been chosen of all the people who were up for consideration.”

Eight high school students from schools in the Franklin County area were recently awarded the



MICHAEL REARDON PHOTO

Left to right: Franklin County Technical School Superintendent James Laverty, Machine Technology instructor Tom Tourigny, Principal Richard Martin, Maxwell Pellerin, Max’s parents Greg and Chris Pellerin.

coveted Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents’ Certificate of Academic Excellence during a ceremony at Franklin County Technical School.

Pellerin, who lives in Montague and is in the FCTS Machine Technology program, said the key to

achieving high standards in school is simply hard work and taking the studies seriously.

“You have to believe what your teachers are trying to teach you is important,” he said.

In presenting the award to Pellerin, Laverty quoted Thomas Tou-

rigny, Pellerin’s shop teacher as saying, “Max is a hard working student who is always wanting to learn all that he can when it comes to the world of machining and advanced manufacturing.”

Laverty noted that Pellerin has one of the highest grade point averages in the senior class and is in the running for class valedictorian. He excels in all aspects of Machine Technology, is a dual enrolled student at Greenfield Community College, and a coop student at Valley Steel Stamp.

Pellerin is a member of the cross country and spring track teams, and is working to earn his student pilot license.

“One of the most impressive

characteristics Max exhibits is his strong moral fiber, honesty and trust,” Laverty said. “We are proud to have such a fine young man as Max Pellerin in receipt of this year’s Superintendents’ Award.”

Other recipients of the award were Eleni Diakolambrianos of Greenfield, Greenfield High School; Annali Yurkevicz of Sunderland, Frontier Regional School; Alexander Page of Athol, Athol High School; Sophie Letcher of Montague, Turners Falls High School; Carrie Crosby of Orange, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School; Joshua Rode of Heath, Mohawk Trail Regional School; and May Gryzbowski of Erving, Pioneer Valley Regional School.

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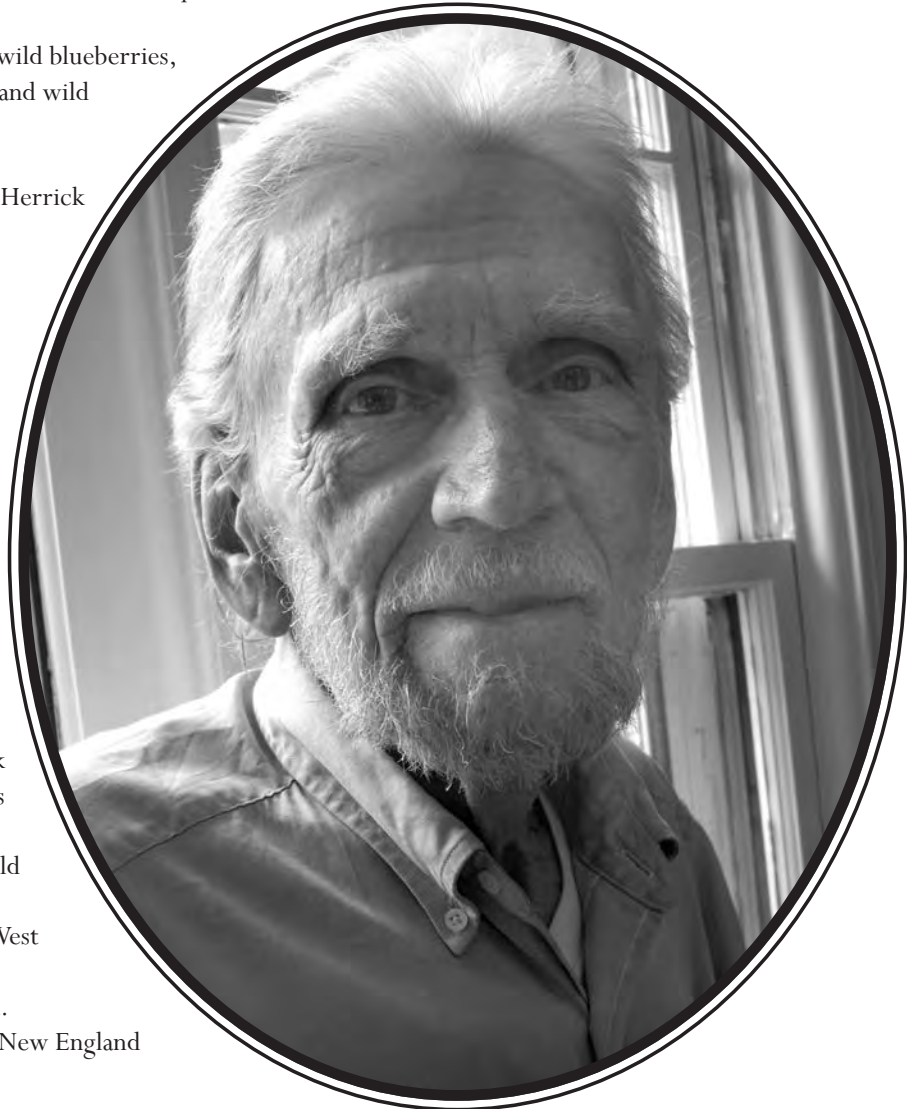


# Remembering Bob Ellis

By DAN LEAHY

An excerpt from Dan Leahy’s comments at the Wendell Library, November 23, 2013 in celebration of Bob’s 80th Birthday Anniversary (November 22, 2013)

Wendell was Bob’s Walden. And it is also our Walden.  
I want to take a minute to celebrate the uniqueness of this place.  
Many of us have created beautiful lives here. A place that is quiet, has abundant wildlife and a dark night sky. We are embedded in a landscape of small towns, productive farms and forests, surrounded by warm loving friends and neighbors.  
Wendell is a rich verdant tapestry. The forest is sprinkled with what I like to call “small utopias” and “beauty spots”. It’s all the hand built homes, studios, workshops and barns.  
It’s the gardens.  
It’s the places we go to pick wild blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and wild mushrooms.  
It’s our hunting grounds.  
It’s Judy and Alistair and the Herrick homestead.  
It’s the Diemand Farm.  
It’s Stone Oak.  
It’s Laurel and Bill Facey’s Farm.  
It’s Rosie and her neighbors.  
It’s Sharon and Pru’s Wild Browse Farm.  
It’s Paul and Melinda’s place.  
It’s the Meetinghouse.  
It’s Good Neighbors.  
It’s Apollo and Barbara’s next door.  
(If you climb up on the playground slide and peek over the fence as I did this August, you will see an amazing garden with an old world feel.)  
It’s Ted Lewis’s woodlot on West Street.  
It’s Christine Heard’s garden.  
It’s the M&M Trail, now the New England National Scenic Trail.  
It’s the WRATS.  
It’s the sugar shacks.  
It’s the Free Box.  
It’s the laurel thickets, the dirt roads, the stone walls and cellar holes.  
It’s Tom and Sylvia’s place.  
It’s Swallow Rise Farm, Michael and Karen Idoine’s place and the beautiful soil there.  
It’s Dan and Nina Keller’s place and all the history there.  
It’s the Post Office. No, it’s not the Post Office. It’s Charlie!  
It’s the Country Store and Deja Brew.  
It’s the Full Moon Coffee House.  
It’s the place Fran creates his music.  
It’s Johnathan and Susan’s new home.  
It’s all the conserved land: The Wendell State Forest; Whetstone Woods Sanctuary (lovingly created by Ina and Mason Phelps); Wendell Wildlife Management Area; The Town Forest; Fiske Pond.  
It’s the place we ski and snowshoe.  
It’s the Whale’s Head.  
It’s Bear Mountain.  
It’s Orcutt Hill.  
It’s the beaver ponds, the streams and the vernal pools.  
It’s the Miller’s River.  
It’s the Milky Way.  
It’s the shooting stars.  
It’s Venus, low in the eastern sky with an eyelash thin crescent moon. So beautiful, that you want to bow to it.  
It’s this library. It’s the stone sculpture out back. It’s the playground out front.  
It’s all the places we’ve yet to visit and discover.  
It’s being lowered into the earth in a handmade pine box, stuffed with goldenrod, sweet fern and cedar - on a hill side, in the forest, on a beautiful late summer day.  
It’s the wild and the cultivated.  
It’s the place we call home.  
Early next spring the peepers will awake us with their calls. In June, the dawn chorus will sound with the song of the Wood Thrush, the Veery and the Ovenbird. The Ravens will fly. The Trout lilies and Lady’s slippers will bloom. The coyotes will howl and the bears and bobcats will live their lives - season after season.  
This is an amazing place with amazing people. It seems like it was made for Bob Ellis.



## GRAYING from page A1

with enthusiasm from the crowd.  
One audience member commented that “we don’t have time to wait until next year’s meeting. We need to make this happen now.”  
After the meeting, attendees broke off into groups, eagerly exchanging business cards and planning how to fund and implement a shuttle service for seniors as soon as possible.  
Seniors living alone are often the victims of accidents, from falls to heart attacks. Due to the rural nature of much of Franklin County, there are increasing numbers of seniors who are isolated, or simply may not be able to meet their basic needs any longer.  
Dave Stevens, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Aging, asserted that senior centers provide one solution to these problems. They allow for social connection, physical wellbeing, and a place to find resources for older citizens. Stevens stressed the very different needs of different age groups, from baby boomers to the World War II generation, and how each generation wants different things from their senior center and government.  
Stevens also talked about what he called the “darker side” of seniors’ issues.  
Seniors, he said, are “the fastest-growing group for heroin use across

the state.” Current thinking explains that prescription painkillers given for surgery often lead to addiction in the user, and are followed by illegal pills. Heroin is much cheaper, and soon stands in for the prescribed painkillers.  
Bolstered by the availability of Viagra and other similar drugs, rates of HIV infection are spreading rapidly throughout senior populations. “People don’t like to talk about it,” said Stevens.  
Jacelon stressed the importance of staying active as a way to lead a healthy and productive lifestyle as increasing numbers of people live into their nineties and hundreds.  
“We have to be careful about what we even call old these days,” Jacelon joked, with an eye on the gray haired audience.  
Each presentation made a similar assertion: there is going to be a large increase in the number of seniors, and we do not yet have the capacity to support them.  
Jacelon discussed the projected shortfall of openings in nursing homes, while Stevens explained that the funding for senior centers simply will not cover this huge influx of individuals coming to enjoy their services.  
“We need to find creative ways to do more with less money,” Stevens said.



## DISTRICT from page A1

governs the high school which all towns attend, includes Ashfield, Buckland, Shelburne, Heath, Colrain and Plainville plus representatives from the towns that have their own elementary districts. By comparison the ALPS proposal seems rather simple.  
Still, a key question is whether the state will accept the arrangement the planning board is proposing, particularly the provision to allow “one town” to opt out at the elementary level. At the December meeting, the board voted to request guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) before moving forward. On December 11 Steinberg wrote to Christine Lynch, DESE Director of School Governance:  
“We recognize that this is an unusual approach to regionalization, but are optimistic that it can work. Before we ask the Regional School Committee and anyone else they designate to assist them and spend the time required to study the issues, consider options, and make a recommendation to them, we seek your guidance: Is this an approach (allowing one town of four to participate in a restricted number of grades) that the Commissioner of Education would consider?... We expect to begin the next stage of our work in January. I would appreciate your prompt response and guidance as soon as possible.”  
The latest proposal from the planning board reflects a long, and at times bewildering, odyssey. After over a year and a half of research, including a well funded analysis of educational and fiscal impacts by a consulting firm, the board voted on March 9 to recommend a new elementary district involving Leverett, Amherst and Pelham. Shutesbury, whose residents seemed to oppose consolidation at the elementary level, would remain in the separate Middle/High School District. In August, however, the planning board took a different path, voting to delay the process and consider other options including a “hybrid” K through 12 district.  
One might think this will be the last attempt by the ALPS board to reach the summit of the mountain they have been climbing for the past two years. Why continue the trek? The current proposal essentially involves moving two local elementary schools, which are already in a superintendency union (Union 28), into a region with Amherst and Pelham. The goal seems quite modest compared with the ambitious plans put forward several years ago when the state was encouraging school districts in Western Massachusetts to consolidate. Then, state officials were encouraging towns in Franklin County to combine into one or two large districts.  
But ALPS members seem not only committed to reaching the top, but quite passionate about it. “It is extraordinary that this group is committed to continuing the process after two years,” Steinberg wrote to DESE. “We serve on the Regional School District Planning Board (RSDPB) and fulfill the duties of additional town officials, all as volunteers. Our individual and collective effort to finding a way to regionalize elementary education in our towns exemplifies our appreciation that regionalization is working in grades 7-12, can be expanded, and will enhance education in our communities.”



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5:30 pm

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6:30-7 pm

Dance performance at The Brick House, 24 3rd St

7:00 pm

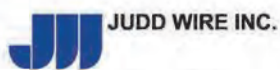
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to submit original poems. Please email: poetry@montaguereporter.org for consideration in the monthly Poetry Page. Include 25-word bio.

Poems may also be posted to the Montague Reporter, 177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

No prior experience necessary, at least as a poet.



WOBST PHOTO

Jude Wobst writes: "In October we spent some time on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, attending the Celtic Colours Festival and visiting old haunts. The photo was taken at Broad Cove."

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## What’s Happening At The Montague Retreat Center?

By LEE WICKS

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – If you are looking for a yoga class in a beautiful setting, or hoping to offer a class or workshop in meditation, dance, theater, story telling, writing or more, the Montague Retreat Center could soon be your go-to destination.

The building’s geothermal heating system is up and running, delivering a consistent indoor temperature of 72 degrees year-round in a lofty, light-filled space that would otherwise be difficult to heat. This matters, because you do

not want to feel cold while meditating or practicing yoga, and there are now classes in each, with more to come.

The Retreat Center is located at 177 Ripley Road, the former location of the Montague Farm commune and the Zen Peacemakers mother house.

Mira Nussbaum, who coordinates activities at the space, has a clear and compelling vision for the ways in which the Retreat Center can become a community resource for those looking for classes and activities, and for those seeking space to offer workshops and more.

Nussbaum said, “We hope to gather classes over the next two months and begin printing regular calendars with monthly schedules starting in February.” The current schedule can be found at the Montague Retreat Center’s Facebook page.

Sheadded, “For anyone who signs up to teach regular classes between now and mid-January, there will be a discount in rent for the first 6 classes in a longer series, allowing the teacher time to

see **CLASSES**, page B4



The center hopes to host five classes a day on weekdays in its main space.

### BOOK REVIEW

## A Home Run for Bunny

by Richard Andersen

Reviewed by DAVID DETMOLD

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – In the global outpouring of accolades surrounding the death of Nelson Mandela, it almost seemed that one extraordinary man, alone, had broken the chains of apartheid and freed his people from their bondage.

While honoring Mandela at his memorial service last week in Soweto, Barack Obama namechecked Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo. But the names of the hundreds of black students gunned down in the same township in 1974 for protesting the forced study of Afrikaans were not mentioned. Nor were the names of black children shot in the back in the Sharpeville massacre in 1961, during a protest against South Africa’s restrictive pass book laws.

In this country, after the petulant resistance of outliers like New Hampshire and Arizona was finally overcome, the life and achievement of Martin Luther King are now honored in all 50 states on the third Monday in January.

But where is the national monument to Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson, and Denise McNair? These four young girls were killed by white power bombers at a Birmingham church in 1963 – an act so despicable it is often credited with forcing Congress and Lyndon Johnson to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ending formal apartheid in America.

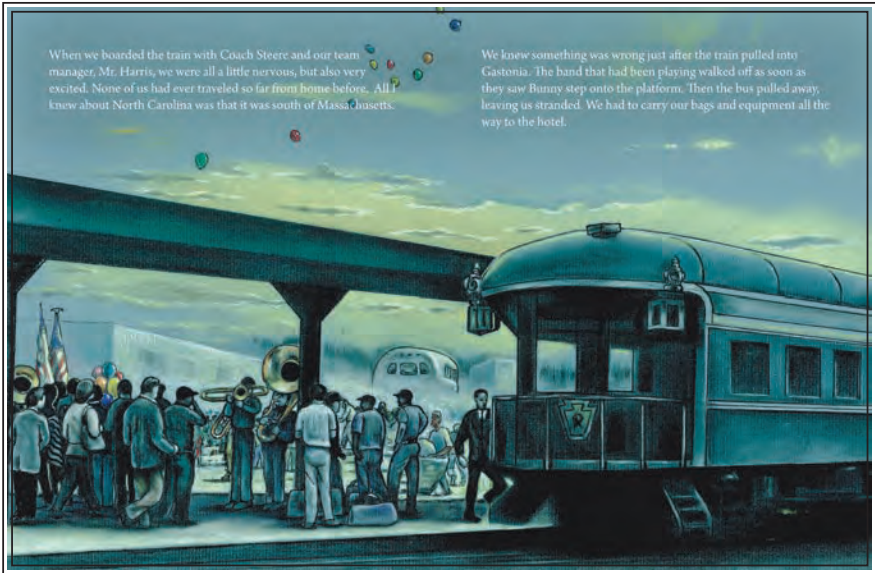
And who now recalls the name of Claudette Colvin, whose

arrest in 1955, as a 15-year-old in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a bus preceded Rosa Parks’ by nine months, and whose case, helping

*Robinson Story* a thing or two about bravery on the ballfield.

Some names should never be forgotten – and Bunny Taliaferro’s is one of them. Andersen has stitched that name onto the hardball of history with a book about this young black sports star and his equally impressive white teammates.

That story will be released by Levellers Press in Amherst for



Gerald Purnell’s beautiful illustrations bring Andersen’s retelling to life. Image courtesy Illumination Arts.

to abolish bus segregation, was ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court?

Montague Center author Richard Andersen now does for American sports what journalist Howell Raines did for the Civil Rights movement as a whole with his 1977 oral history *My Soul is Rested*. For too long, the towering achievement of Jackie Robinson in breaking the color barrier in major league baseball in 1947 has been considered the alpha and omega of the story of smashing athletic apartheid in America.

But the teenagers who played on the American Legion All Star team in Springfield, Mass in 1934 could have taught the director of this year’s smash 42 – *The Jackie*

adult readers next year, but it is available now in local bookstores, appropriately, in the form of a children’s book, published by Illumination Arts, powerfully told by Andersen and beautifully illustrated by Gerald Purnell.

At Springfield Tech in the early ‘30s, Ernest ‘Bunny’ Taliaferro was the standout in football, basketball and baseball, the first freshman to ever garner varsity letters on all three teams. He earned local headlines, rushing for more yards, leading the basketball league in steals, and going undefeated every time he took the mound.

Andersen says Taliaferro got

see **HOME RUN** page B4

## Real Autocars All the Way

By JOE PARZYCH

**BERNARDSTON**—Three Autocar trucks, once the pride of L. Beach, of Springfield, whose name is still visible on one of the truck doors, sit at the corner of Routes 10 and 142. The Gill Town Line runs behind the trio.

Bob Cook bought the trucks from Claude Crapeau, a former State Engineer who had planned to restore them. Crapeau is gone now. Bob Cook has also joined him.

Mike Beaudion, present proprietor of Bob Cook Construction, now owns the beauties of old, and like Mr. Cook, he does not plan to ever sell any of the trucks, though many have wanted to buy them.

The rugged old Autocars attract a steady stream of lookers and photographers,

with pictures of the trucks appearing on calendars, according to office manager Sue Tessier.

Truck connoisseur Fred Chase, of Fred’s Four Wheel Drive, said the Autocars are of 1947 or 1948 vintage.

The Autocar Company began in 1899 in Aardmore, PA as a manufacturer of Brass Era automobiles. From 1907 on, they manufactured Autocar trucks, discontinuing the manufacture of cars in 1912.

The company continued manufacturing heavy-duty trucks until 1953, when they were taken over by the White Motor Company. Volvo Trucks next took over White Motor Company in 1980, and Autocar continued as a division of Volvo.

In 2001, Volvo sold Autocar to Grand Vehicle Works Holdings, which specializes

in cabover refuse trucks sold under the Autocar name. It is doubtful the engine and drive train or any of the present “Autocar” truck components are manufactured by the present company.

Most heavy-duty trucks, today, are assembled of stock engines, transmissions, and rear differentials, manufactured by others, so that the same combinations of components are sold under several names. Buyers often have the option of specifying the make of engine, drive line components, and suspension, so that only the name plate and cab are different.

When the trio of genuine Autocars sinking into the ground at the corner of Routes 10 and 142 were the proud possessions of Mr. Beach, an Autocar was an Autocar, all the way.



The trucks are of 1947 or 1948 vintage.

## West Along the River

### The Offices of a Snowy December Morning

By DAVID BRULE

**ERVINGSIDE**—6:30 a.m. Up with the earliest light, last Sunday’s snow bright outside the upstairs window, all night the stars come close to the earth, then to be outshone by the full Cold Moon.

That full moon made for a bright, white night. Clock inside my head has me up and outdoors before the first bird shadows drift into the yard. A cold zero degrees.

Cold for mid-December, even up here in northern Massachusetts.

Put the coffee on, plus sweater, boots, hat, wool vest, gloves, overcoat and out you go with the seeds and cracked corn just as the first doves float in on winnowing wings to get their quick breakfast before the first hawk surges through the yard and scatters them.

Trudge back inside, neighbors’ chimneys just beginning to pour out smoke with the early morning woodstoves being fired up. Yep, Bob Miner’s up over there, yep, Chuck Stafford’s lit his fire as well.

Turn on the radio and listen



BRULE PHOTO

to announcements of winter storm warnings, maybe 5-6 inches by nightfall. On top of Sunday’s foot of snow. Pull up the rocking chair to the kitchen table where the lamp light’s better.

No customary going outside for the first cup of coffee this morning, not worth it, coffee would be ice cold in minutes. The sun will have to rise over the valley without me, this a.m.

A couple of poems and stories from my morning books will have to do. Keep an eye on the clock though. Need to drive over to Turners to get Mother over to Cindy’s on Dunton Street by 8.

She’ll get her hair all trimmed and permed in time for her birthday tomorrow. What birthday it is though,

I’ll not tell here. Don’t dare.

On the way out the door, turn up the thermostat for the family asleep upstairs, take the chill off the bright kitchen, the aroma of coffee will surely have them up and lured down the stairs any time now.

Each time I turn the thermostat up in the mornings, I can’t help but think of my father in the old days, down cellar, cranking away on the coal furnace lever, to shake the clunkers down through the grate before getting the coal fire going again.

*Racka-racka-rack-rack* went that lever back and forth before sun-up. So early in the morning before he headed to work 6 days a week down at Dicky Williams’.

see **WEST** page B6



Pets of the Week



“Raymond & Shadow Snow ”

Are you someone who embraces the yin and the yang of life? Someone who can appreciate the warm sun as well as the cool shadows? If so, you might be just the person we’re looking for.

These siblings would love a home that welcomes both of us--he, the yellow lion of the desert plains and she, the dark enchantress of the forest.

When you come to meet us, tread quietly, speak softly and prepare to fall in love.

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

Senior Center Activities  
December 23 to 27

**GILL and MONTAGUE**  
**Gill/Montague Senior Center,** 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m.

All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

**Monday 12/23**  
10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle  
**Tuesday 12/24**  
9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga  
12 noon Lunch  
**Wednesday 12/25**  
**CLOSED CHRISTMAS**  
**Thursday 12/26**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
12 noon Lunch  
1:00 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday 12/27**  
10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1 p.m. Writing Group

**LEVERETT**  
For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

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

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

**ERVING**  
Erving Senior Center, 1

Care Drive, Ervingside, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at (413) 423-3308, for meal information and reservations.

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

**Monday 12/23**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10 a.m. Osteo Exercise  
12:30 p.m. Movie  
**Tuesday 12/24**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
10:30 Greenfield Savings Bank Craft Project  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday 12/25**  
**CLOSED CHRISTMAS**  
**Thursday 12/26**  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Muscles  
12 noon Cards  
**Friday 12/27**  
9 a.m. Bowling

**WENDELL**  
Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center for a ride.

FACES & PLACES



ELLEN BLANCHETTE PHOTO

The Gill-Montague Music Department presented a Winter Concert of holiday songs. Pictured here are students of a Middle and High School combined Chorus who sang “Jingle Bell Rock.” Also performing were students from the Great Falls Middle School chorus, who sang “Zum Gali Gali” and “My Favorite Things.” Thirty-six students performed in the Middle School Band, playing “The Little Drummer Boy,” “Greensleeves,” and “Let It Snow.” They played a variety of instruments including flute, saxophone, clarinet, trumpet, bass clarinet, horn, trombone, drums and other percussion instruments. The high school chorus performed “Stand By Me” and “Winter Wonderland.” The high school band performed “Hot Chocolate,” “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” by J.S. Bach, and “Sleigh Ride.” Refreshments were served in the lobby after the performance.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Calcium and Women

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION



By FRED CICETTI

Q. I’m a 73-year-old woman. How much calcium do I need?

Women who are older than 50 should be consuming 1,200 milligrams of calcium a day. Older women need plenty of calcium to prevent osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis, or porous bone, is a disease characterized by low bone mass and deterioration of bone tissue. Osteoporosis leads to an increased risk of bone fractures typically in the wrist, hip, and spine. One in two women and one in four men over the age of 50 will break a bone because of osteoporosis.

Women have less bone tissue and lose bone faster than men because of changes from menopause. Small, thin-boned women are at greater risk. Caucasian and Asian women are at highest risk. Age is a major risk factor because bones become thinner and weaker as you age. Heredity can also increase fracture risk.

There is more calcium in your

body than any other mineral. About 99 percent of the calcium is in our bones and teeth.

However, each day, we lose calcium through our skin, nails, hair, sweat, urine and feces. Our bodies cannot produce new calcium. When we don’t get enough calcium for our body’s needs, it is taken from our bones.

In addition to building bones and keeping them healthy, calcium helps our blood clot, nerves send messages, and muscles contract.

To get enough calcium, eat dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese. Broccoli, spinach and other green leafy vegetables are also a good sources of calcium. Then there are foods that have calcium added to them. These fortified foods include bread, soy-based drinks, cereals, tofu, orange juice and bottle water.

Here is a brief list of foods with average serving sizes and milligrams of calcium:

- \* White bread, 30 g: 53 mg
- \* Apricots, 160 g: 117 mg
- \* Orange, 160 g: 75 mg
- \* Tofu, 100 g: 510 mg
- \* Pizza, 410 g: 873 mg

You can take calcium supplements, too, but you should try to get the recommended daily amount of calcium you need from food first. Take supplements only if you come up short on calcium from your usual diet. Calcium supplements are available in a variety of forms, including tablets, capsules, chews, liquids and powders.

Don’t take any kind of supplements without consulting a physician. Seniors take lots of medicines and supplements can interfere with them.

To determine how much calcium is in a food, check the nutrition facts panel on the label for the daily value (DV) of calcium. This amount is based on 1,000 mg of calcium per day. For example, 30 percent of DV of calcium equals 300 mg.

Questions? Send them to [fred@healthygeezer.org](mailto:fred@healthygeezer.org)

If you would like to read more columns, you can order a copy of “How to be a Healthy Geezer” at [www.healthygeezer.com](http://www.healthygeezer.com).

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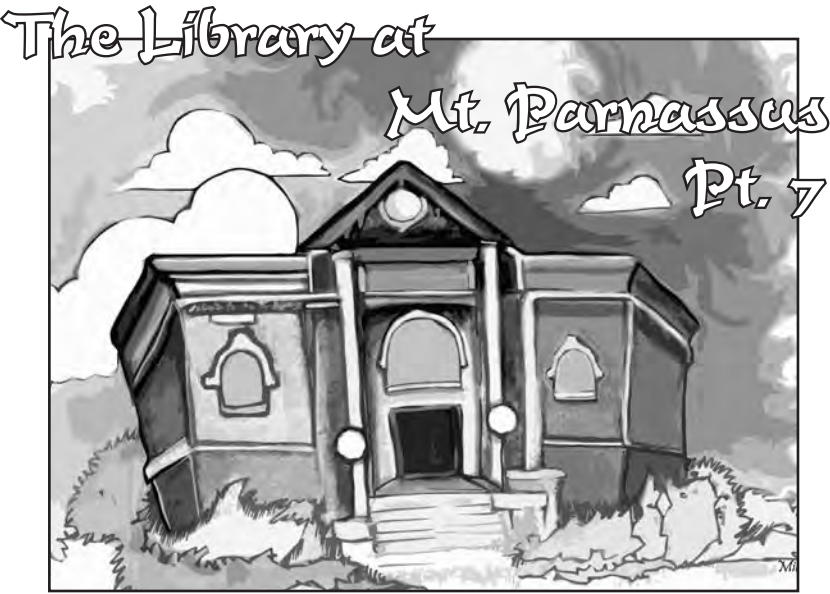
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Chastened by Melantha’s scorn, Otis returns to the library, only to find the lobby empty...



MIKE SLIVA ILLUSTRATION

By DAVID DETMOLD

The next day I walked back to the library through the freezing cold. In the gray halfflight of afternoon, I trudged up the wide granite staircase to the double leafed oak doors, re-playing the whole humiliating scene with Melantha in my mind.

I couldn’t decide whether to laugh the whole thing off or treat her coldly.

The bronze hinges crinkled in the frost. My fingertips stuck briefly to the door handle.

But inside, the main lobby seemed deserted.

It was too early for Melantha to be here anyway.

I heard noises coming from the children’s room, so I peeked in through the open door.

Penelope, the golden-haired children’s librarian, was practicing her arts and crafts with the after school kids.

Her shining tresses and laughing eyes held me in thrall each time I saw her. She worked marvels with the children on a budget of thin air. Today she had conjured up a pigsty out of clay and wattle, with a tilted feeding trough running slantwise down the center of the room.

Penelope was standing on a child-sized table, banging lustily on a metal pail with a spoon, encouraging the younger children to climb inside the pen and play.

She tossed her hair over her shoulder and called, “Sooou-eeee!”

A few of the more rambunctious boys were already wallowing around on the muddy rug, grunting, but for their part, the girls were holding back.

“Come on, girls!” cried Penelope. “Help me slop the swill!”

I turned away.

In the reading room, things were quieter. Cadmus was there, paging through his dusty genealogies with his pet crow, Ulysses, standing on his shoulder. I went over to them to say hello.

“Find anything in them old books yet, Bo?” We all called him Bo.

“Notchyet.”

“Where’s Klee?”

“Dunno. Home probably. Watching Daktari reruns.”

Cadmus shrugged, causing Ulysses to raise his wings and open his beak slowly, as if to speak.

I glanced over at Orville in his

corner. He was staring at the floor.

“Or.”

“Otis.”

He did not look up.

“How’re they hangin’ buddy?”

“N-n-n... N-n-n... Could be worse.”

“Not too bad today?”

“N-n-n... Not too bad, Otis.”

“Attaboy, Or. Hang in there. You want a cup of tea?”

“N-n-no. No. Th-that’s all right.

N-no thanks, Otis. Caffeine m-makes me jumpy.”

“It has that same effect on me.”

The fracas in the children’s room was growing louder. I heard the shrieking of the girls and the loud, discordant squealing of the boys. Above it all, Penelope calling for attention in joyful, strident tones.

I walked back over to close the door, but could not resist another peek.

By now, all the boys were rolling in the sty, pushing greedily for position at the trough and nipping at each other’s flanks. The girls had formed a circle outside the woven fence and, as I watched, began skipping round the room in a merry rondelle.

Their gaily printed frocks switched back and forth as they danced. Each girl had one hand lightly poised on the shoulder of the next, while with the other she tossed pink crepe-paper flowers high up in the air. The sty was littered with them.

Penelope stood on tiptoes in thin strapped sandals, high above the moil, her gold hair shining like tinsel. She held her long skirts in her hands and swished them back and forth in time to a skirling bouzouki melody that issued from the horn of an ancient phonograph. She sang a wordless counterpoint, accompanying the mournful music in clear, thrilling shaped notes.

It was an isle of enchantment, a whirl of childhood frenzy. The boys dashed happily to and fro, the girls danced, and Penelope stood tall, like a gaily bedecked Maypole, in the midst of all the mayhem.

“Children,” she called out sweetly, “are you ready for a magic trick?”

I did not wait to see, but quietly closed the door and walked back through the lobby.

Penelope put such care and planning into all her programs, always emphasizing the true potential of her little wards.

Continued next week.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

... But You Sure Can’t Choose Your Family

Monday, 12/9

10:01 a.m. Caller stated that he was monitoring his home security system from work and witnessed his sister breaking into his apartment. Upon arrival, officers were told that sister and friend were not trying to break in; just knocking on door. Caller later reported additional footage indicating that subjects may have had a different intent. Summons issued.

1:48 p.m. Purse stolen from an Avenue A residence by a family member. Summons issued.

4:50 p.m. Wallet stolen from purse in Avenue A apartment. Report taken.

5:24 p.m. Report of ongoing threatening/harassment. Advised of options.

Tuesday, 12/10

9:11 a.m. Report of several sightings of a potentially rabid fox on Taylor Hill Road; fox appeared sick and was making strange noises. Animal control officer checked area and found two apparently healthy foxes that were allowed to go on their way. ACO advised that the fox sounds may have been related to mating.

Wednesday, 12/11

2:04 p.m. Request for officer to Franklin County Technical School, where students had been “burning out again.” Services rendered.

5:20 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street. Party who left before officers arrived determined to have warrants out for his arrest. Investigated.

5:27 p.m. Two-car motor vehicle accident at Federal Street and North Leverett Road; one driver reported neck pain/injury. Ambulance and fire

department notified.

6:06 p.m. Call from Greenfield woman reporting that her mother, who appeared to be intoxicated, was attempting to get into her apartment. Greenfield police notified. Mother drove away from scene; area departments advised to be on lookout.

6:29 p.m. Possibly intoxicated mother from previous call stopped near Turners Falls Water Department. Son of party took custody of car and dog. Party took breathalyzer test and was released to her son; summons issued.

9:26 p.m. Report of domestic disturbance on Second Street. Unable to locate involved parties.

9:37 p.m. Caller reported that her son’s classmate tried to sell him marijuana at church that evening. Advised of options.

Thursday, 12/12

7:50 p.m. Caller reported that his baby mama had her mother’s car without permission and that her mother had told him to call the police if this happened. Report taken.

Friday, 12/13

1:37 a.m. Officer issued citation for texting while driving and marked lanes violation to the operator of a vehicle that struck a curb at Unity Street and Maple Street. Officer also assisted operator with changing tire.

2:56 a.m. Loud music complaint on G Street.

7:49 a.m. Caller reported that someone hit and killed a wild turkey on Oakman Street. Officer responded to see if remains could be used or if they needed to be disposed of.

9:40 a.m. Complaint regarding neighbor dumping snow in yard when he plows. Advised of

options.

11:32 a.m. Complaint that an unknown female is logging into caller’s Facebook account, posting on caller’s friends’ walls and harassing her. Advised of options.

4:32 p.m. Caller reported being followed frequently by vehicles that are so close behind him that he cannot see their headlights. Caller believes he may be under investigation, but can’t imagine why. Advised caller that it probably wasn’t an investigator, since an investigator would be trying to avoid attracting attention. Advised of options.

11:25 p.m. Request for officer to respond to Rendezvous and speak with an intoxicated male whose dog had been tied out on the porch of the establishment for 3-4 hours. Officer advised dog owner of complaint and observed that dog had blanket on and did not appear to be in distress.

Saturday, 12/14

12:42 a.m. Caller concerned that mother, with history of medical issues, was missing from her apartment in Turners Falls. Local police departments and emergency room advised to be on lookout. Caller later reported that her mother had returned home safely. All clear.

12:50 a.m. Request for officer to remove belligerent, intoxicated male from Rendezvous. Courtesy transport provided. Male party later advised that his dog’s collar was missing.

1:15 a.m. Reports of a fight in the parking lot of the Route 63 Roadhouse. Responding officers reported that situation had been mediated.

9:29 a.m. Caller reported

that her husband had kicked her out of their residence and was not allowing her to see their young child. Responding officer spoke with both parties and advised of options.

12:11 p.m. Caller reported slipping on the ice in front of a local business and asked that an officer speak to the business owners. Services rendered.

10:55 p.m. Caller requested that officer check area for a “sketchy” male who came to her door with a shovel and offered to clear her walk for a fee. An officer who had seen the party earlier reported that there was nothing to indicate that this person was “sketchy.” Unable to locate.

Sunday, 12/15

1:50 a.m. Caller reported that male snow shoveler she had called about earlier was back on her porch and looking in her windows. Male taken into protective custody and released to family.

10:15 a.m. Report of operator of red pickup pushing snow into High Street near Scotty’s. Parties spoken with.

5:21 p.m. Report of unwanted person at Winthrop Street residence. Advised of options.

5:49 p.m. Single-car accident on North Leverett Road; damage to vehicle and guardrail. Operator cited for marked lanes violation/traveling at speed greater than allowed in conditions.

7:00 p.m. Caller reported that as she was driving in the Greenfield Road area with her window down, a ball of ice was thrown through her window. Caller observed two parties in area, but could not provide description. Unable to locate.

WENDELL FREE LIBRARY NEWS

Beginning December 22: Mostly Yoga

At the Wendell Free Library on Sundays from 10 to 11:15 a.m., beginning December 22, seven Wendell-area body movement teachers will take turns leading a variety of yoga styles or occasionally psychocalisthenics.

Yoga teachers include Shay Cooper, Donna Horn, Dona O’Dou, Sam Scherer, Patty Smythe and Christine Texiera. “Apollo” Compagnon teaches psychocalisthenics.

Classes run through May

2014. Students of all levels are welcomed. A small donation of \$3 or more is requested to help sustain the program. Copies of the teacher schedule are available at the Library. Mostly Yoga is sponsored by Friends of the Library.

Beginning January 8: Ukelele University

Replay Music Store of Greenfield is holding their first Ukelele University, and they’ve chosen the Wendell Library as the location.

For six Wednesdays, starting January 8, from 6 to 7 p.m., two zany, fun instructors will help 12

lucky 7-to-11 year-olds explore their musical talents by learning the ukelele.

The total fee for all six classes is only \$10 per child, and every child will leave the course owning their very own ukelele!

This program will fill up fast; first come, first served. Only one child per family, please.

To sign up, contact Sarah Cadran at Replay Music Gear (413) 773-3037.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Firearms Complaints

**Tuesday, 12/3**  
8:10 a.m. Investigation of motor vehicle accident on Turners Falls-Gill bridge.  
11:30 a.m. Main Road resident transported to Franklin Medical Center for possibly suicidal behavior.  
1:20 p.m. Annoying and harassing behavior by Oak Street resident reported.  
3:58 p.m. Firearms complaint on Dole Road regarding hunters on private property.  
**Wednesday, 12/4**  
8:20 a.m. Complaint of sick fox on Wood Avenue.  
10 a.m. Firearms issue on Barney Hale Road.  
10:20 a.m. Glass reported in center of intersection of Main Road and Route 2.  
Assisted cleanup.  
11 a.m. Motor vehicle towed from Factory Hollow construction site for unregistered operation.  
**Thursday, 12/5**  
8:15 a.m. Follow-up with Greenfield PD on past breaking & entering in town. Suspect in custody.  
**Friday, 12/6**  
4 p.m. Motor vehicle accident at intersection of Route 2 and Main Road. Under investigation.  
**Saturday, 12/7**  
1 p.m. Court process served on River Road resident.  
2:30 p.m. Welfare check on Barney Hale Road.  
**Sunday, 12/8**  
10 a.m. Accident follow-up from 12/6.  
2:25 p.m. Assisted resident with trespassing issue on Munns Ferry Road.  
9:15 p.m. Verbal dispute among family members on Hoe Shop Road.

CLASSES from page B1  
build an audience.”

If enough people come forward with ideas and energy, someday there will be five class slots a day with time for set up and clean-up in between. Classes will run from 9 to 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m, 3 to 4:30 p.m., 5 to 6:30 p.m., and 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

These weekday classes will be reserved for yoga, dance, drama, story telling, meditation, Dwell-Right design, and more. See the below schedule for details.

Weekends will be reserved for weddings, parties, reunions, memorial services, concerts and community events. Construction of the catering kitchen is well underway, and should be completed by spring.

I’ve been fascinated and chal-

lenged by yoga in the last year and a half, and took a class at the Montague Retreat Center recently to get a feel for the place.

Perhaps it is because I am partial to our gentle landscape of rolling fields and farmland, but sinking into a sense of peace and calm and quieting my busy mind, seemed easier in this setting.

Seeing neighbors was wonderful too. Much has been written about the human need for community and how hard it can be to achieve.

Certainly having gathering places for people with common interests goes a long way towards forging the connections that result in a strong community.

I will be back, and hope to see more friends and neighbors there, too!



LOOKING BACK 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on December 18, 2003: News from The Montague Reporter’s archive.

Recycling A Paper Mill

If Jerry Jones has his way, the former Strathmore paper mill will be taking a bold leap back to the future, once again becoming an incubator for small industries and a home for artists.

In the winter of ’94, when International Paper shut down its machines at the Strathmore mill for the last time, Indeck Energy Systems, owners of the neighboring cogeneration plant, took a 15-year lease on the building.

They turned their plant manager, Fran Zabek, Jr., loose on the local art world with an irresistible offer of heated commercial space for \$2 a square foot.

Tenants jumped at the chance, and by the summer of 1996, over two dozen manufacturers, musicians and artists were at work in the newly dubbed Strathmore Arts and Industry complex.

It seemed the long-awaited renaissance of Turners Falls was right around the corner.

The number of tenants swelled to 35 before Indeck announced it would mothball its coal-fired generator at the end of the year, cutting off the source of steam heat that had made the arrangement possible.

After failed attempts to put together a deal, all tenants were forced to move out by the end of 2000.

Now Jones hopes to revive the concept. His company, Western Recycling, which brokers odd lot and damaged rolls of paper from mills throughout the region to buyers in Third World countries.

Jones’s son, Scott Jones, purchased the mill from International Paper last December under the name Western Properties, LLC.

Jones runs a fleet of 30 tractor trailer trucks, warehouses paper, and ships it to places like China, India, and Pakistan.

But he said the Strathmore is unsuitable for his company’s needs – he would prefer a smaller building with more loading docks, and easier access.

He has shown the mill to several manufacturers he hoped to lease the plant to, but all were daunted by the difficult entrance road, and

multi-floor layout.  
So Jones hired Jamie Christensen, one of the entrepreneurs who helped develop the Arts and Industry Building in Florence, as a consultant, and approached the Town of Montague for help.

At its December 8 meeting, the town agreed to ask the FRCOG to apply for predevelopment planning funds to address two key hurdles: parking and access.

Jones plans to subdivide the mill into artist lofts and workshops, with double steel doors for security, and hopes the town will allow him to refurbish some of the upper floors of the mill into residences for the artists themselves, who might take inspiration from the island setting, overlooking the canal and the river.

According to building inspector David Jensen and fire chief Ray Godin, Jones has been taking steps to bring the building into line with code and fire safety issues.

Godin says Jones has contracted with an engineering firm to design upgrades to the mill’s sprinkler system.

“We’ve asked him to do some things, and he’s getting around to doing them,” said Godin.

HOME RUN from page B1

his name from an ancestor who was held in bondage on a Virginia plantation, where he was forced to labor as a blacksmith. Taliaferro is a derivation of the Italian for iron worker. He got his nickname, Bunny, for his speed.

Like a young Ted Williams, he batted over .400; he had more hits, scored more runs, and stole more bases than anyone else on the team. But when he joined the other American Legion All Stars in 1934 for a trip to North Carolina to compete in the east coast playoffs, they would not let him play.

When the team pulled into the Gastonia, NC train station after cinching the 1934 New England Championship Series on the strength of Bunny’s shutout performance on the mound (not to mention his two home runs and six stolen bases in one game), the welcoming band packed up and left the platform when they saw that one of the ballplayers was black.

The bus waiting for the team refused to carry them to the hotel, and the desk clerk would not allow them to register – unless they agreed to call Bunny the coach’s valet.

When the team showed up the next day for practice, a hostile crowd of thousands rained the in-

field with bottles, cans and racist threats. Bunny walked up to the batter’s box to take his practice swings.

Their coach tossed six pitches in his direction. Bunny hit each one out of the park.

Andersen, who as a child

national championship, and caught a train back to New England that same night.

Still, the news of what had happened to their team in North Carolina reached home before they did. Springfield threw them a huge celebration at Union Station, just as if they were champions. Which, indeed, they were.

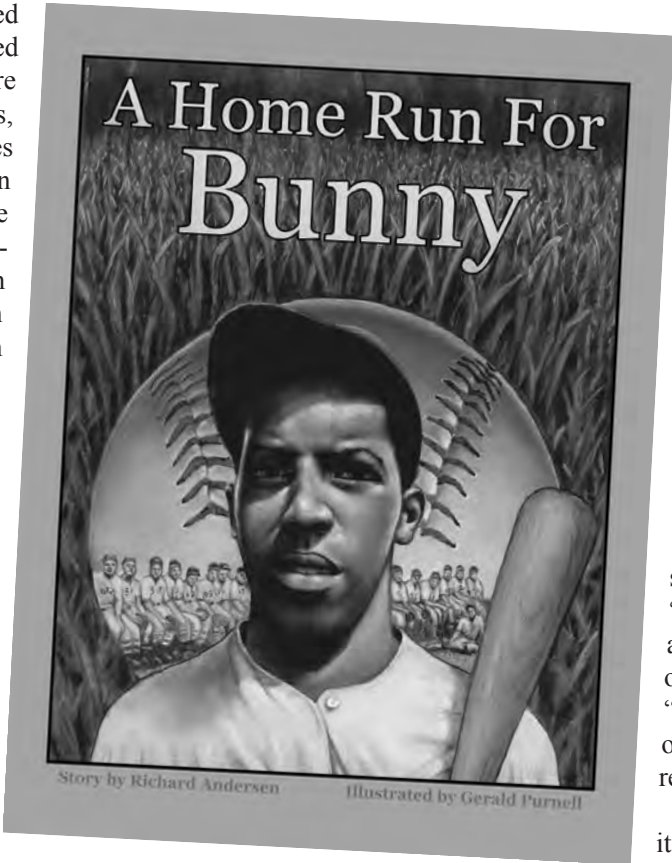
The Springfield American Legion voted to withdraw from baseball rather than compete on segregated fields. It was not until 76 years later, in 2010, that the Springfield American Legion Post 21 decided once again to host a baseball team.

That year, Deval Patrick came to their opener to commemorate Talieferro and his team’s brave stand. Patrick called theirs “an act of particular courage.” Springfield’s mayor, Domenic Sarno, said, “Bunny Talieferro’s story is one that should be told and retold.”

Now, thanks to Andersen, it will be.

*A Home Run for Bunny* is available locally at the Book Mill, Amherst Books and Broad-side Books.

It provides thought provoking reading for children 7 and up, for baseball fans of all ages, and anyone who wonders what it was like to be young, gifted and black in a world where star athletes were judged by the color of their skin, rather than their prowess on the playing field.



The Schedule, So Far:

Here is a brief explanation of the current offerings. If you have an idea and are thinking of renting the space, go to [www.montagueretreat-center.com](http://www.montagueretreat-center.com) for information about the rates and the facility, or call Mira Nussbaum at (413) 824-0855.

If you are interested in one of the classes, contact the instructor with questions, or show up at a class to see if it’s a good fit.

**Sundays (starting Dec. 29):** Women’s Yoga Circle, with Nancy Paglia, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. An opportunity to create a sacred space within. Contact Nancy for more information: (413) 687-2125 or [npaglia@crocker.com](mailto:npaglia@crocker.com).

**Mondays (starting Jan. 20):** Evening Yoga, with Nancy Paglia, 5:30 to 7 p.m. All levels of experience are welcome.

**Tuesdays (starting Jan. 7):** Morning Yoga with Lisa Enzer, 9 to 10:15 a.m. Mild to moderate postures to create calm focus, physical function and inner awareness into alignment.. Call Lisa at (413) 367-2658, or [enzer@earthlink.net](mailto:enzer@earthlink.net).

**Tuesday evenings:** Evening meditation and Dharma talks, 7 to 9 p.m. Open to all; participants may come for the meditation and the talk, or for just one of these activities. [dantikpm@gmail.com](mailto:dantikpm@gmail.com) or (413) 256-1594.

**Wednesday evenings:** No classes scheduled. Any ideas? To book the space, call Mira at the number above.

**Thursdays:** (Jan. 9 to Feb. 13) Yoga Express with Lisa Enzer, 5:30 to 7 p.m. Six-week session. Gentle and therapeutic postures, a blend of yoga, movement practices and accessible creative explorations to sustain health and happiness.

7:30 p.m., Montague Movement (open movement with a DJ). Dance the darkness of winter away.

**Fridays (starting Jan. 10):** Yoga with Eric Burri. Breath-centered posture sequences build strength, flexibility, and mind-body awareness. Jan. 10 class is a free introduction. Contact [yogaumass@yahoo.com](mailto:yogaumass@yahoo.com).

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## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

### ONGOING:

#### EVERY DAY IN DECEMBER

Historic Deerfield, Deerfield (excluding Dec. 24 & 25) Open Hearth Cooking, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Gift Making in the Visitor Center at Hall Tavern Ballroom, 12-4:30 p.m., \$.

#### EVERY SUNDAY

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

#### EVERY TUESDAY

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

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

#### EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

#### EVERY THURSDAY

Montague Center Library: *Music and Movement with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson*. Children and their caregivers are invited. 10 to 11 a.m. Free.

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Open Mic with Dan, Kip, and Schultzy* from Curly Fingers Dupree Band. 8:30 to 11:30 p.m.

#### EVERY FRIDAY

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

### ART SHOWS:

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: On display in the Great Hall through December, *Landscapes and Nature Photography* by Tom Stratford.

### EVENTS:

#### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

Montague Elementary School *Holiday Concert*, Sheffield School Auditorium, 6:30 p.m. All are welcome.

*It's a Wonderful Night in Turners Falls!* Holiday Photos & Glass Blowing Demo at River Station, 151 Third Street, 5:30-8:30pm. Craft Fair at St. Kazimierz, 197 Avenue A, Caroling begins Food City, 5:30 p.m. Dance Performance at The Brick House, 24 Third Street, 6:30 p.m. Tree



Local favorite, singer-songwriter and Grammy nominee Seth Glier plays the Arts Block in Greenfield on Friday, December 27, 8 p.m.

Lighting and Visit from Santa at Spinner Park, Avenue A + Fourth Street, 7 p.m. Free screening of "It's A Wonderful Life" at The Shea Theater, 8:30 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Open Mic Night* hosted by Pamela Means, 7 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half Shaved Jazz*, 8 p.m.

#### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Baystate Franklin Medical Center's *Women's A Cappella Chorus* performs traditional holiday and secular music, 12:15 to 1 p.m., Main Conference Rooms, Baystate Franklin Medical Center, Greenfield.

The Bohemian Kitchen, 24 North Main Street, Orange: North Quabbin Community Co-op fund raiser, musical performance by *Olde Lysergic Duo*, *Richard Meunier & Topo Hakinen*. BYOB, refreshments

served, 7 to 9 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Blueberry Buckle*, family band, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & The Mud, Blood & Beer Band*, Johnny Cash favorites, 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Show of Cards*, folk/rock/hip-hop, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *The Electric Carnival*, blues based rock & roll, \$, 9:30 p.m.

#### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Northfield Mountain Recreation, Northfield: *Solstice Headlight Hike*, 6 to 9 p.m. Pre-registration required, (800) 859-2960.

*Pioneer Valley Symphony Chorus* and the Greenfield Public School Choirs. Program includes HANDEL's Hallelujah Chorus, BRITTEN's A Ceremony of Carols, TCHAIKOVSKY's

Waltz of the Flowers, 7 p.m. held at Greenfield High School.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Gender Role Free Contra Dance*. All dances smoke, drug and alcohol free. Please refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes and other highly scented products. Bring soft-soled shoes to protect the wooden dance floor. \$, 7 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Seth Adams* with special guest Rick Murnane, pop/rock, 7:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Holiday Party with Moose and The High Tops*, \$, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Dedicated to Delilah*, 80's pop rock and ballads, 9 p.m.

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

#### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

Academy of Music Theatre, Northampton: A Celtic Nutcracker, *Celtic Heels Irish Dance Company*, \$, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Pat Jones & Charlie Shew*, 20th century roots music, 8 p.m.

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

#### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Blue Pearl*, blues/jazz, 8 p.m.

#### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Larry Allen Brown*, folk americana, 8 p.m.

Arts Block, Greenfield: *Seth Glier*, \$, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Wildcat O'Halloran Band*, 9 p.m.

#### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

Unitarian Society, Northampton: *Miro Sprague Trio*. Featuring Marty Jaffe on bass, and Paul Wiltgen on drums, \$, 7:30 p.m. Arts Block, Greenfield: *Roger Salloom, Charles Neville, & Friends*, \$, 8 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *The Equalites*, reggae, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Reprobate Blues Band*, 9 p.m.

#### MONDAY, DECEMBER 30

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Dada Dino's Open Mike*, 8 p.m. sign-ups starting at 7:30 p.m.

#### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31

Jake's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Tex Mex Dinner Party*, 5 to 9 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *New Years Eve Celebration with the music of Psycho*, \$, 8 p.m.

Arts Block, Greenfield: *New Years Eve with John Sheldon & Samirah Evans*, \$, 8:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sandy Bailey and her Funky Friends Soul Shakin' R & B Dance Party*, \$, 10 p.m. open 'til 2 a.m.

#### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *M.R. Pouloupoulos*, americana folk, 3 p.m.

#### THURSDAY, JANUARY 2

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

#### FRIDAY, JANUARY 3

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Lonesome Brothers*, hick rock, 8 p.m.

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

#### SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

*Interrupting Racism*, free workshop. Guided with empathy and humor by Keely Malone, an experienced facilitator and member of Mass Slavery Apology's core group. Held at First Congregational Church, Greenfield,

10 to noon. More info: email@massslaveryapology.org or 413-625-2951.

*Greenfield Winter Farmers Market*, Greenfield High School, Greenfield, 10 to 1 p.m.

#### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Simon White - Acoustic Style*, acoustic reggae by Simon White, Peter Kim, Jay Stanley & Boo Pearson, 8 p.m.

#### THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

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

#### FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Jessica Smucker*, pop, 8 p.m.



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24 3rd Street, Turners Falls

Teen Drop-In Center  
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**THURS. 12/19 8pm FREE**  
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