



Dakin Shelter Expanding

Page 16



Gordon King Receives Leverett's Gold Cane

Page 12

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

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YEAR 10 - NO. 19

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 9, 2012

Seaboard Solar Wants Wendell to Host a 10 MW Solar Farm

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - Dave Thomas, director of sales and project management of Seaboard Solar, from Danbury, CT, met with the selectboard on February 1st to promote his company's proposal to site a ten megawatt (MW) photovoltaic generating facility to be hosted by the town of Wendell.

Under the proposed agreement, the town's municipal electricity usage - approximately 0.5 MW - would be provided by Seaboard Solar at a discounted rate of \$0.11 / kwh or a reduced percentage of the retail price it now pays. Seaboard Solar would be responsible for selling the remaining 9.5 MW from the solar facility to other electricity users.

As a host community, Wendell would also be paid a half cent per kilowatt hour for the 9.5 MW Seaboard Solar would sell to the grid.

The company estimates savings on Wendell's electric bills would amount to \$18,550 a year, based on the average electric rate in Massachusetts of \$0.141/kwh, and the town's revenue, as host municipality, from the sale of excess electricity would be approximately \$47,500 per year,

a total annual benefit to the town of \$66,050.

Actual savings may vary depending on the final terms of the agreement and the actual rate Wendell is paying now.

Seaboard Solar is in a race with other companies to locate solar electricity generating facilities under favorable state incentives. As a small, relatively agile town government, Wendell may be able to act quickly enough for Thomas's company to begin installation of a solar farm soon. Thomas said he had been to Longmeadow six times recently, but has yet to speak directly to the selectboard there.

Although Wendell might be the host community for this solar farm, the site may in fact be located in another community, Thomas said, closer to a high load area in the east. This proposal is separate from Seaboard Solar's plan to locate a solar facility on 20 acres of town-owned land and up to 50 acres of contiguous private land on Wendell Depot Road. That plan is further from development than the sites Thomas is considering closer to the load area to the east of Wendell.

see SOLAR page 10

Trouble on the Playground



DETOLD PHOTO

How did the GMRSD Respond?

BY PATRICIA PRUITT
GILL-MONTAGUE - On Friday, February 3rd, six boys got into an altercation, with punches thrown and names called, on the Montague Elementary School playground. The parents of two of the boys involved call the incident bullying.

In conformity with state law, the Gill-Montague Regional School District adopted a bullying policy a little more than a year

ago which requires the district, among other steps that must be taken, to promptly notify the parents of all students involved when bullying or retaliation occurs.

The parents of the boys say the district never notified them; they heard about the incident from their boys.

On Friday, during a game of Capture the Flag, approximately 40 students were eagerly running here and there on the playground,

tagging and being tagged, in pursuit of the flag. Shortly after noon, a dispute broke out over who had tagged whom and soon escalated into an incident involving two boys being pushed, shoved, punched and called derogatory names by four other students.

Although teachers were on the playground supervising the play, in the bustle of the game the altercation

see SCHOOL page 7

Kiran Bhomik Mourned, Celebrated by Her Community

On February 12th at 2 p.m. a celebration of Kiran Bhomik's life will be held at the Student Union Ballroom in the Campus Center at UMass. Everyone is welcome.



LEE WICKS PHOTO

Kiran Bhomik and Kiko

BY LEE WICKS
LEVERETT - In Hindu, kiran means sunrays. To her fellow artists at Leverett Crafts and Arts, to friends, family, and the surrounding community, the death of Kiran Bhomik on Friday, January 27th, means that some of the sun has gone out of their lives.

Yet, as they struggle with this loss it is clear that in her short life (Kiran was born on December 13th, 1974) she warmed the spirit of everyone she met and created a lasting legacy at LCA, where she served as co-director with Walter Burnham for the last five

see KIRAN page 11

Special Legislation Would Impact U-28 Central Office Staff

BY KATIE NOLAN
ERVING - School Union #28 has a problem: shared U-28 employees and retirees were promised health insurance benefits when they were hired at rates that are now in excess of what most of the five towns making up the school union pay their own employees. In an era of tight budgets, and out of a sense of fairness to their town employees, who pay a greater share of their own health benefits, towns like Leverett and Shutesbury are balking at paying the higher rates for shared central office staff.

The answer devised by the U-28 towns of Erving, Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell is Senate bill 2092, sponsored at the request of the

U-28 towns by senator Stan Rosenberg and representative Steve Kulik. The bill is a simple and innocuous-sounding amendment to Mass General Laws (MGL) Chapter 71, Retirement Systems:

"...towns and regional school districts in a superintendency union may, in consultation with the joint school committee, enter into agreements to fund benefits for employees and retirees in the superintendency union in amounts proportionate to the benefits offered by each town or regional school district to their municipal or regional school district employees. Such agreements shall be approved by a majority vote of the selectboard or

council in a town and by the regional district school committee in a regional school district."

Kulik's office says the bill is moving along, has been reported favorably by the Public Services committee and referred to the Senate Committee on Ethics and Rules, and is getting closer to being presented for a vote. If the bill is passed by the legislature and signed by governor Deval Patrick, the five towns in Union-28 have expressed their intent to use the power to fund benefits for central office staff "proportionate to the benefits offered by each town."

This was the plan voted unanimously by the U-28 joint supervisory

see U-28 page 7

PET OF THE WEEK

Too Sheltered



Thinley

My name is Thinley. I'm a three year old male domestic short hair cat in need of a good home. My name implies I'm skinny, but I assure you that is not the case. I'm not chunky either though. I've been here at the humane society for quite some time. The vet staff had to fix my ears and one will likely be odd looking for the rest of my life. It's kinda cute though, isn't it? Despite my trials and tribulations I'm quite friendly, social and talkative. I love to be petted and I will rub up on you to let you know. Please come to the adoption center and meet me. We can have a long talk about the world or whatever else you might be interested in.

I am FIV+. My adoption fee has been waived. To learn more about adopting me, contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-781-4000 or info@dpvhs.org.

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14th in Montague

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LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

The Politics of Global Warming

Leverett resident Raymond S. Bradley will give a talk entitled "The Politics of Global Warming in the United States," on Wednesday, February 15th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Leverett Library.

Bradley is a University Distinguished Professor in the Department of Geosciences and director of the Climate System Research Center at the University of Massachusetts. His most recent book is entitled *Global Warming and Political Intimidation: How Politicians Cracked Down on Scientists as*

the Earth Heated Up.

Bill McKibben said Ray Bradley is, "one of the scientific heroes of the fight to slow global warming – and so, like many other researchers, he's taken endless lumps from the industry-funded pols trying desperately to delay action. His story is both fascinating and cautionary – about not just our planetary climate, but our political one as well."

The Leverett library is located on 75 Montague Rd. For more information visit: www.leverettlibrary.org

MILLERS FALLS LIBRARY NEWS

Cardboard House On Display



MILLERS FALLS - Abigail Johnson of Millers Falls made an elaborate house out of cardboard scraps at a recent session of the Millers Falls Library Club. The free drop in after school program is held every Tuesday from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. For more information, call 413-863-3214.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – February 13th to 17th

GILL-MONTAGUE - Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Kerry Togneri is the meal site manager. Council on Aging director is Roberta Potter. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Appointments are now being scheduled for free AARP tax aid. For information, meal reservations, or to sign up for programs, call 413-863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine if the center is not open.

Monday, February 13th
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic by appointment
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday, February 14th
AARP Tax Aid by appointment
10:30 a.m. Seated Health Program

11:30 a.m. Valentine Music with Steve Damon
1:00 p.m. RAD Self Defense
Wednesday, February 15th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, February 16th
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, February 17th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For Center and program information, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at 413-423-3649. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at 413-423-3308, for meal information and reservations. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Please call the Senior Center to confirm activities, schedule and to find out when the next blood pres-



A bobcat comes calling in Erving on Monday.

ATHOL PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAM

Clutter Control 101

Dave Downs offers a crash course in cleaning out closets. Join us on Tuesday, February 21st at 5:30 p.m. Attendees will learn

strategies for being thoughtful about what they keep and discard.

The program is free. Call the library to sign up: 978-249-9515.

WENDELL FREE LIBRARY NEWS

Upcycle Tees Workshop and Documentary

Join Lou Leeland at the Wendell Library for a workshop "upcycling" your old t-shirts. Bring one or two tees that are ready for a make over and turn them into something new, fun and cool. The program is offered by the Wendell Library Teens and Tweens Program (TNT). It is open and free for anyone ages 11-19.

Lou Leeland is the owner of Lou's Upcycles, which is famous for taking what most people consider trash and turning it into something fun and fashionable.

See a complete line of Lou's plastic upcycles at www.etsy.com/shop/lousupcycles.

The workshop will be held on Sunday, February 12th at 3:30 p.m. The Wendell Free Library is located at 7 Wendell Depot Rd. For more information, call 978-544-3559.

The controversial documentary film, *Forks Over Knives*, will be shown at the Wendell Free Library on Friday, February 17th, at 7 p.m.

The film examines the profound claim that most, if not all, of the so-called "diseases of affluence" that afflict us can be con-

sure clinic will be held.

Monday, February 13th
9:00 a.m. T'ai Chi
10:00 a.m. Osteo Exercise
Tuesday, February 14th
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, February 15th
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing/Zumba
12:00 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, February 16th
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10:00 a.m. Posture Perfect
Friday, February 17th
9:00 a.m. Bowling

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

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

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6

Snejana Lashtur
Samantha Wegiel

Grade 7

Tess Hunter

Grade 8

Ryan Lenois

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JESSICA LARVIN ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG - Come and learn more about becoming a Foster Parent to a child in need of love, attention and security. Greenfield Savings Bank is teaming up with experienced foster parents and employees of DCF for an **informational session on foster parenting** on Saturday, February 11th, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the community room of the Turners Falls branch, 283 Avenue A. With Valentine's Day fast approaching, there are still children longing for a safe, warm and loving home.

There is a new, **free playgroup at the Hillcrest Elementary School**, 30 Griswold Street, in the village of Turners Falls. Families with children ages 0-5 are welcome to attend. The group will run from 9:30 a.m. until noon every Monday, except during

school vacations, Monday holidays and snow days. Participants may park at the main entrance, but not at the circle. The free playgroup is funded by the Gill-Montague Regional School District, Montague Catholic Social Ministries, Department of Early Education & Care.

Love and Heartbreak a Valentine's reading with writers, musicians and vendors with gift ideas is being held at the Greenfield Grille, 30 Federal Street, Greenfield starting at 1:00 p.m. Admission is free, by donation.

Baystate Franklin Medical Center's volunteers and members of the hospital auxiliary will hold their **Annual Chocolate Fantasy** on Friday, February 19th from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. in the hospital's main conference rooms.

The town of Montague is

T. F. FIRE DISTRICT NOMINATION PAPERS AVAILABLE

TURNERS FALLS - Nomination papers for the annual Turners Falls Fire District election are available to all district residents at 226 Millers Falls Road, until Friday, March 2nd. Papers must be returned no later than Tuesday, March 6th. The district office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

All potential candidates need to obtain 32 signatures from registered voters of the Turners Falls Fire District.

Offices are as follows:

Prudential Committee, for a three year term

Water Commissioner, for a three year term

The annual election will be held on Tuesday, April 24th. The polls will open noon to 7:00 p.m. District residents who wish to register to vote may do so at the town clerk's office located in Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls. For more information call the district office at 413-863-4542.

home to two boys' basketball teams that appear to be headed to the **Western Mass Divisional Basketball Tournament**. Franklin County Tech is presently cruising along with a record of 10 wins and 5 losses and has already

qualified for the tournament, while Turners Falls High has also won 10 games with just 6 losses. Best luck to both our teams!

For a trip down memory lane, join Tex LaMountain at the Academy of Music in

Northampton this Sunday, February 12th, at 2 p.m. for a **Rusty Nail Revisited** concert with members of Clean Living, along with Fat, the Mitch Chakour Band and Real Tears. *Send local briefs to: reporter-local@montaguema.net.*

MONTAGUE DEMOCRATS TO HOLD TOWN ELECTION CAUCUS APRIL 11th

Montague Democrats will hold their caucus to select candidates for town office elections on Wednesday, April 11th, 2012 from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. in the 1st floor meeting room of town hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Successful candidates receive the party nomination to appear on the Monday, May 21st town election ballot. Voting is by paper ballot.

Only registered Democrats may run in this, what amounts to a primary election for local

offices. Democrats who wish to run in the caucus must deliver their intention in writing to Democratic town committee chair Jay DiPucchio by 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 6th. Notice may be by hand mail, or email. Verbal declaration cannot be documented and is not acceptable.

Individuals choosing to run without Democratic party nomination should check rules with the town clerk. Occasionally, candidates for the caucus nomination also gather signatures

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

By the Democratic town committee's vote following the 2003 caucus, registered unenrolled voters also may vote in the Democratic caucus. No absentee balloting is allowed. All caucus candidates must be present at the end of balloting (or make other arrangements with the chair) or their election may not be certified.

*Below are term expirations. Incumbents so far having filed intention to run in caucus **.*

OFFICE	TERM	INCUMBENT	PARTY
Selectman	3	Mark E. Fairbrother**	Dem.
Moderator	3	VACANT	(important note below)
Assessor	3	Betty Waidlich	Unenrolled
Bd. Of Health Member	3	Christopher M Boutwell Sr.**	Dem.
Library Trustee (3)	3	Karen Schweitzer**	Dem.
	3	Barbara Stewart	Dem.
	3	Suzanne Kretzenger	Unenrolled
	3	Barbara Kukliewicz	Dem.
Park & Rec. Comm.	3		
Soldier Memorial			
Trustees (2): Veteran	3	Albert L. Cummings, Jr**	Dem.
Non-Vet.	3	Donald Girard <i>not running</i>	Dem.
Montague Housing Authority	2	VACANT, UNEXPIRED 5 YR TERM	

NOTE: The former moderator, Ray Godin, resigned due to a pension system technicality and has declared to the chair his intention to run in the caucus for the now vacant position.

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

Direct questions and letters of intent to: Jay DiPucchio, Democratic town committee chair, 35 Central Street, Turners Falls, 01376 or call: 413-863-8656 for more information.

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Bridge Progress Slows to a Crawl

The recent balmy weather has us thinking about the pace of construction on the Gill-Montague bridge.

The 1735-foot long bridge took just 16 months to build, from the base of the abutments to the top coat of asphalt, between May 1937 and September 1938, using nearly eight million pounds of steel and 9,000 cubic yards of concrete.

Now, in a project begun in 2010 and spending more than \$40 million, it will take the Mass Department of Transportation at least four years to complete the reconstruction of the deck of that bridge.

Half way through that project, as our part of New England is blessed with unseasonably warm, sunny weather week after week, we travel the one open inbound lane to Turners Falls, look around and see absolutely no one working on the bridge.

Oh, we hear that engineers are still hard at it in the basement of town hall, and supervisors are still poring over blueprints in the Mass DOT office on 4th Street. But as far as actual construction is concerned, there appear to be no hands on deck.

Why?

The business owners of Turners Falls cannot take a four year leave of absence from their restaurants, stores, galleries, bakeries and bars. They are trying their best just to keep their doors open.

The business community was told in March of 2010 by Mass DOT District 2 director Al Stegeman to buck up and "work together as a whole," to keep their businesses solvent while traffic is detoured for four years.

Downtown business owners might be more inclined to buck up if they saw construction workers actually working together with them to get this project done on time, or ahead of schedule.

In 2010, Montague Business Association member Chris Janke

demanding to know why bi-directional traffic could not be maintained on the bridge during the course of construction, with a signal light or police detail, to allow for ease of travel to our downtown.

Stegeman told him brusquely that would be impossible.

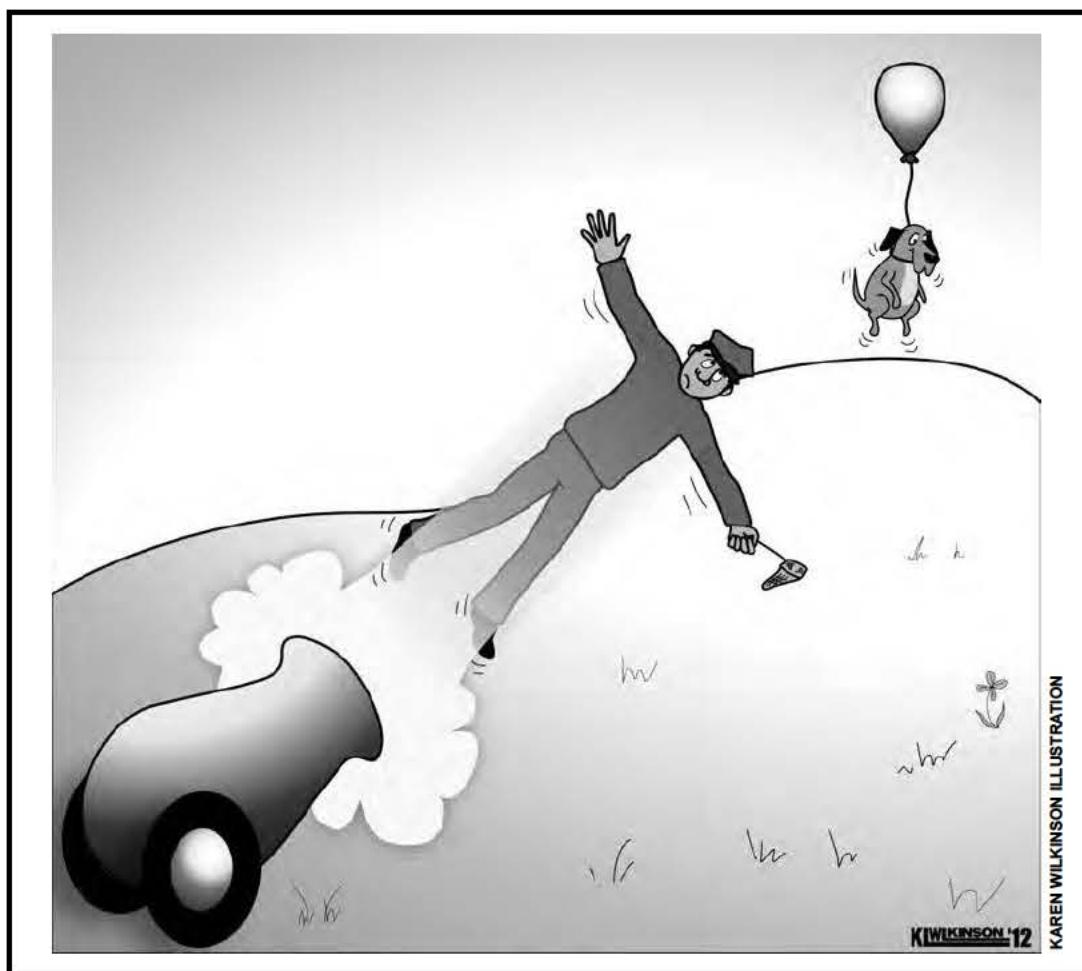
But when you see the long sections of the unimproved side of the bridge deck simply barricaded off for most of the winter, with no construction in progress, you have to wonder how hard it would really be to maintain two way traffic around the two short spans of demolished deck, especially with no workers in sight for months on end.

It beggars the imagination to understand why in 2012, with all the modern machinery available for major construction projects like this, the best Massachusetts and SPS New England can do to reconstruct a bridge that provides the vital lifeline for commerce to an entire town is to parcel out 40 million dollars in dribs and drabs over four long years. It raises our hackles to see no visible sign of life on the bridge deck project at all throughout this mildest winter in memory. The steel workers of 1937 would have laughed to see the leisurely pace of their counterparts today.

But the downtown business owners aren't laughing. They need the bridge open to two lane traffic again as soon as humanly possible. Winter is a slow time in the best of times, and it is demoralizing to see no apparent effort going forward on the project that affects our downtown more than any other.

We know appealing to bureaucrats to pick up the pace is like beating your head against a wall.

Perhaps the best we can do is appeal to local residents to find their way around the detours and continue to support our businesses in this too long winter of our discontent.



Launching the Regional Dog Officer

— the Gill selectboard's top priority for local technical assistance projects from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments in 2012 —

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Miscellaneous Musings

Being a retired physical educator, I was pleased to read that governor Deval Patrick advocated educating the whole child (Governor Patrick Praises Gill Elementary, MR X#16), which includes teaching the arts, music and physical education.

With the increase of Type 2 diabetes, walking is the simplest aerobic activity, as it has been

since the evolution of man. Proper diet and aerobic activity can reduce the onset of Type 2 diabetes by 70%.

On another topic, why not do a story about the Millers Falls Drum and Bugle Corps? Their performances were important to us in the 1950s. A story like that would bring back memories for those of us who lived in town

during that era.

Finally, the police logs of the different communities provide knowledge of people who make poor choices. The majority of us make good choices every day. It's too bad that small percentage of people can't do the same.

— David Yez
Monmouth, IL

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U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan as of 2/1/12

Wounded: 14,342 Deaths: 1,892



The Montague Reporter Nears Subscription Goal

As our goal of reaching 1,000 subscribers for our independent, community-owned newspaper draws close, we are turning to friends in three towns in our coverage area to help boost us over the finish line.

As it turns out, Gill, Wendell and Leverett are each nearing 100 subscribers within their borders. So, let's make a contest out of it.

Whichever one of those towns reaches 100 subscribers first, the Reporter will donate \$50 to the friends group at the Gill, Wendell or Leverett library, and a \$50 gift certificate to the Montague Reporter advertiser of their choice to the lucky subscriber who reaches the 100 mark.

We won't tell you which town is closest to that goal right now, but it is very close.

So, if you have friends in Gill, Wendell or Leverett who have been thinking about subscribing to the paper (or if you'd like to help by buying them a gift subscription), now is the perfect time to do so. Just use the subscription blank on this page.

Friends in all towns are encouraged to come to the Montague Reporter Sweetheart's raffle and bake sale table in the Food City breezeway, 250 Avenue A, in Turners Falls, between 1 and 6 p.m. for a special \$5 off on new subscriptions on Sunday, February 12th.

Sign Me Up!

- ☐ \$20 for half year subscription
☐ \$25 out-of-area subscribers

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Raffle

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1 - 6 P.M.

Raffle

Bake Sale

TEE SHIRTS

The Montague Reporter

GUEST EDITORIALS

Leverett Rocks to a No Nukes Beat

BY ANN FERGUSON - Saturday, February 4th was a day for education and community building at the No Nukes Benefit and Speak Out to Shut Down Vermont Yankee held at the Leverett town hall. Over 200 people attended during the course of the seven hour event, which featured speakers, a variety of musical acts, a circus performance, food, art, face painting for children, and opening songs by the Raging Grannies.

Hattie Nestel, a member of the Shut it Down Affinity Group, gave a Power Point presentation that described the dangers of nuclear power and suggested the Green energy alternatives available today. As Nestel put it, "Vermont Yankee is just 25 miles from where I live in Athol, and that puts my home in the 'dead zone' of forced evacuation in the

case of a Fukushima-type accident. Radiation would continue to kill living things in this 25 mile radius for hundreds of years."

Frances Crowe, 92, former director of the American Friends Service Committee in Northampton, spoke movingly of her history of her peace and anti-nuclear activism. She talked about Montague resident Sam Lovejoy's toppling in 1973 of the weather tower meant to collect data for a twin nuclear power plant Northeast Utilities intended to build on the Montague Plains. Randy Kehler of the Safe and Green Campaign, an organization working to mobilize nuclear opponents within the 25 mile evacuation zone around Vermont Yankee spoke of his years of war tax resistance and antinuclear activism. His home in Colrain is only ten miles from the reactor,

yet he mentioned Vermont Yankee still has not sent the promised emergency radio residents who live close to the reactor are supposed to receive. He spoke of a lack of safety at the nuclear plant, equipment breakdowns, and the radioactive contamination of groundwater and fish in the Connecticut River, and concluded by urging informed citizen resistance to the recent federal court decision overturning the state of Vermont's democratic decision to close the reactor on schedule on March 21st, 2102.

Sister Clare Carter of the Leverett Peace Pagoda detailed plans for a "Remember Fukushima" walk from Seabrook, NH, to the Pilgrim reactor in Plymouth, to Vermont Yankee this spring (for more details go to: www.newengland-peacepagoda.com).

The benefit provided entertainment as well as education for all ages. Valley musicians Court Dorsey, Annie Hassett, the Red Valley Fog band, Julia Burrough, the Diggers band, Annie Patterson and Christian Hine gave us political folk music. As Annie Hassett remarked, "music is the soul of social movements,

and the singalong audience certainly demonstrated a lot of soul!"

Who Da Funk It, Snakebaby and the Outer Stylics band rocked the old town hall with dance music that encouraged some spirited dancing not often found in this venue. The Ever Evolving

see **NUKES** pg 11



ANN FERGUSON PHOTO

The Outer Stylics Band at the Leverett Town Hall

Gill-Montague Education Fund Grants Help to Shape 'Ambassadors of Enrichment'

BY JOYCE PHILLIPS - Every aspect of Gill-Montague student education has been broadened and enriched with hands-on opportunities in technology, the Wellness Center, culinary arts, all-school plays, Nature's Classroom, and Heifer International. Student enrichment mini-grants go beyond the ordinary field trips, to class trips to museums in Boston, a Broadway classroom, a Paris luncheon, and a Hawaiian luau, to participating in environmental programs, and encountering a larger world as students integrate themselves into their communities. Beyond their own growth, students have become our 'ambassadors of enrichment'. The following projects illustrate the far-reaching success and value of just a few of the Gill Montague Education Fund enrichment (GMEF) grants.

'Community Service Trip to Kentucky:' For the past three

years, TFHS students have participated in an annual Community Service trip to Sandy Hook, Kentucky where they investigate and experience the challenges facing members of a rural Appalachian community. In partnership with Frontier Housing, a teacher and students from Elliott County High School, Gill-Montague students work on landscaping and construction of homes, as well as smaller projects. It has been estimated that the students have saved Frontier Housing \$13,000 in labor costs, and have made a noticeable difference beautifying the Laurel Gorge State Park area.

'Rise Up Cares for Kids:' Gill-Montague students bake birthday cakes for children living in homeless shelters. They bake cupcakes for Griffin's Friends, (an organization providing support for children receiving treatment for cancer at Baystate Medical Center) and

for children to eat post-treatment. They make use of 'guest bakers' and the assistance of the bakers at the 2nd Street Bakery in Turners Falls. In addition, they provide meals for the Family Inn.

'Bridging Communities - Postcards from the River's Edge:' The preK - 6 students in the Gill and Montague Elementary Schools are creating "a sense of place" of living in a river town. This joint project celebrates the communities that are connected by the Connecticut River. Students will exchange information on important places and landmarks in their towns. Using the strengthening of the Gill-Montague Bridge as the starting point, it will celebrate their learning together and developing pride in their towns and schools. The year of study began with the use of art and will extend into poetry, history, math and social studies. The project will 'bridge' to

UMass, where students will photograph the elementary paintings and create a town calendar.

On January 12th, Governor Deval Patrick invited the board of the Gill-Montague Education Fund to meet with him at the Gill School. Sandy Miner, president and Carol Gloski, treasurer of the GMEF shared their insights into the efforts and success of the organization with the governor. He expressed his appreciation for the GMEF and his hope that more communities would join in similar efforts in support of student enrichment. Patrick was amazed to learn the GMEF had awarded nearly \$70,000 in grants from the organization's annual Gala fundraiser. As we shared with the governor, this is only possible as a result of the continued support from communities - businesses, organizations and individuals.

The GMEF has chosen annual galas that feature a variety of performers to span generations, ranging from a local talent show, classical, big band, coun-

try, a cappella, the sound and 'strut' of the Mummies, and the golden age of rock 'n' roll.

Our 8th Annual Gala will feature *The Edwards Twins*, the brothers that look and sound like the stars! Direct from Las Vegas, The Edwards Twins have been voted the #1 impersonation show in the country by many newspapers, TV shows, and magazines. Identical twins Anthony and Eddie look and sound like many superstars. You will see and hear them perform as Cher, Elton John, Billy Joel, Barbra Streisand, Andrea Bocelli, Bette Midler, and a vocal impression set of several different superstars, all in one fantastic show. This will be one of the most extraordinary shows you will ever see.

For more information about "The Edwards Twins" and our enrichment grants, go to the GMEF website: www.thegmef.org.

Joyce Phillips is a founding member of the Gill-Montague Education Fund.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Emergency Management Office for Town Hall

BY KATIE NOLAN - Emergency management department (EMD) director Luke Hartnett and deputy Laura Conway asked the selectboard if their department could use the former senior center building as a temporary emergency operations center (EOC), and also if they could use a section of the town hall basement as an office and EOC.

Currently, emergency management has an office space in the police station.

The selectboard agreed to an EMD office and EOC in the town hall basement.

Regarding the former senior center on Pleasant Street, selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin said he felt the town should sell the building, a former elementary school.

Hartnett reported that the Federal Emergency Management Agency reimbursement for the town's response to Hurricane Irene had been received. Asked for the summary of costs for the major October snowstorm, Hartnett said he was still looking for a report from at least one department.

Goodwin commented that departments should have cost summaries prepared within a week or two after an emergency event.

The selectboard asked town administrator Tom Sharp to develop a report template for department heads to help them provide the cost information in future emergencies.

Hartnett and Conway were scheduled to meet later with the finance committee to present the EMD fiscal year 2013 budget request.

However, they previewed that meeting by telling the selectboard they intended to ask for an increase over FY'12 in order to set up a mobile EOC.

Highway supervisor Paul Prest presented the selectboard with a plan to obtain emergency generators for the new senior center, town hall, and fire station at a cost lower than estimated by senior center architect John Catlin.

Prest used ballpark estimates of costs for generators from Kinsley Energy Solutions on the assumption that town employees would do most of the preparation work, such as pouring a concrete pad and running conduits.

Kinsley's preliminary estimates were \$34,298 for the senior center generator and \$43,080 for the town hall and fire station generator. Prest also obtained a preliminary estimate of \$5,000 for an electrician to connect the generators.

The selectboard gave Prest authority to begin

some of the preparatory work. Purchase of the generators would be subject to public bidding.

Sharp was given the task of finding out whether the town can make changes to the new senior center building (such as installing the generator) before the one-year building warranty is up. He was also asked to find out whether there was enough money in the town budget to cover the purchase and installation of the generators.

Sharp told the selectboard that he had heard from the state land court attorney Jim Coppola that the town would have ownership of the former Usher Mill property by mid-March. The Usher Mill re-use committee will present their plans for the property to the selectboard on March 5th.

The selectboard decided to set up weekly staff meetings with department heads from the departments reporting to them: fire, highway, police, wastewater, and water. The three selectboard members agreed to rotate responsibility for attending one of the meetings each month.

The selectboard asked Sharp to contact the US Department of Agriculture which holds the town's water tank loan, to see if it can be refinanced at a rate lower than the current 5%.

The selectboard signed letters appointing Bruce Bezio, Carole Lyman, and Leo Parent to the Golden Cane committee.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Parents Invited to Weigh In on Changing School Start Times

BY DAVID DETMOLD - A public forum will be held February 15th at 7 p.m. at the Shutesbury Elementary School, 23 West Pelham Road, to gauge community opinion on the idea of changing the start times for the Amherst regional middle and high school.

Changing the start time for the regional school would very likely cause a change in the start time of the elementary schools in the four towns that bus upper school students to the region: Amherst, Pelham, Shutesbury, and Leverett, since the Kuzmeskus bus company, which brings students to the upper school, turns around and uses the same buses to bring students to the elementary schools.

Leverett school committee chair Farshid Hajir said the proposal that is most likely to gain traction, if school start times do change, would have the upper school begin an hour and fifteen minutes later, at 9:00 a.m. rather than 7:45.

If this change is adopted, it would most likely push the opening bell for the elementary schools back to 8:00 a.m., a half an hour earlier than their present 8:30 start time.

Kip Fonsh, who has been attending public forums on the question in Amherst recently, told the Leverett school committee on Monday, "It's split right down the middle. Everyone acknowledges the scientific evidence," which favors a later start time for upper school students, with improved educational outcomes for middle and high school

students who sleep later in the morning. But, Fonsh said, the disruption that a change in established schedules would cause in family routines weighs against the switch.

Even though public commentary on the issue has been evenly split, Fonsh said, "If it's better for the education of the kids," most who have commented so far appear to say, "Go ahead."

Fonsh stressed that the forum to be held in Shutesbury next Wednesday night will probably be, "the last opportunity for people to express their views," before a recommendation is made regarding school start times.

However, Fonsh also said it is unlikely any change to school start times would go forward without the unanimous approval of the school committees of each town in the region.

LES Budget Reduced

Superintendent Joan Wickman and Leverett Elementary School principal Ann Ross presented a revised draft of the LES budget for the coming fiscal year on Monday, revising the bottom line downward to \$1,731,999. This figure would represent a 1.16%, \$19,832 increase over FY'12, the current budget year.

Hajir said, "We started at a \$96,000 increase. Now we are down to \$19,832. I consider this a great effort."

Ross made it clear that the administration was able to offer a lower budget projection this month due to the unexpected

news that long time school building maintenance supervisor John Kuczek has decided to retire at the end of 2012.

Kuczek, who is intimately familiar with all the structural components and mechanical systems of the school, and maintains an operator's license for the school's public water supply, among his many other qualifications, has lately been paid a stipend by the town above and beyond his regular school salary to supervise the maintenance of other town buildings. His skills have been in great demand during the troubleshooting of the library's geothermal system, the building of the new greenhouse on school grounds, and all the recent renovations to town hall, among other projects.

Once Kuczek retires, Ross said, the school would continue with only two full time custodians, instead of the current two full time, one three quarter time positions, and the problem of ongoing maintenance of town buildings, including the school's physical plant, would return to the town to solve.

Kuczek is training a replacement now to take over for him as head custodian at the elementary school when he retires at the end of December.

The budget news from the regional school is less good. An expected \$71,000 increase in Leverett's regional assessment was predicated on a 2% increase in state Chapter 70 aid. Although the governor's budget allows for a \$145 million increase in Chapter 70, the see LEVERETT pg 13

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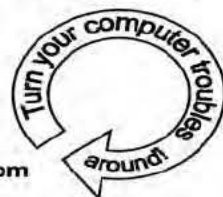
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U-28 from page 1

committee at its June 2011 meeting, and used to calculate benefit costs until that vote was rescinded at the September 2011 meeting, when the joint committee was advised by counsel that their plan conflicted with state law.

Under the system in place now, which has been past practice for many years, if an employee's health insurance premium is, for example, \$1000 per month and Erving as the lead town in the union with 26% of students enrolled offers a benefit program to its own town employees that pays 84% of an employee's premium, Erving will pay \$1000 times 26% times 84%, or \$218 per month for that central office

employee's health insurance.

If Leverett has 24% of the student population in Union 28, it follows the lead town's benefit package (at this point, Erving has the most students enrolled so Erving is the lead town) and pays \$1000 times 24% times 84%, or \$202 per month. Leverett pays at the rate of 84%, even though it pays for its own town employees' insurance at the rate of 50%, because the lead town currently sets the rate for all U-28 towns to determine their percentages for shared employees' benefits.

If the special legislation passes, Erving would still pay for employee health insurance at the same rate, but Leverett would pay at its town employee rate of

50%, and pay \$120 per month rather than \$202. At that point, the central office employee would be responsible for paying the \$82 per month Leverett is no longer paying. The employee would also pay additional amounts per month because New Salem, Wendell, and Shutesbury also pay for employee health insurance at lower rates than Erving does.

According to the minutes, several U-28 central office employees attended the September, 2011 U-28 supervisory committee meeting, and stated that after the June 2011 plan was put in place, "They are paying a lot more for benefits which is very hard on their family budget."

An anonymous letter sent to local media last week stated "some one needs to stand up for employees who have no protections and no one to stand up for them," as the special legislation moves forward.

Besides the percentage of health insurance premiums paid, other facets of the benefit package differ between the towns.

For example, Erving pays premiums for family or 'employee plus one' plans that include spouses of retirees. Erving considers employees eligible for retirement insurance benefits after ten years of service. Leverett pays insurance benefits for retirees only, not families or spouses, and requires 15 years of

service for retirement eligibility.

Under S2092, Erving would pay a share towards insurance benefits for a retiree who worked at U-28 for 14 years, but Leverett would pay nothing. Costs not picked up by the towns would be the responsibility of the individual retiree.

However, under the current arrangement, if the lead town shifts, as it may again soon, to a town like Leverett, with a less generous benefit package, then the other four towns would follow the lead of Leverett, and provide central office employees benefits at the lower rate. This past practice would also change under the pending special legislation **MD**

SCHOOL from page 1

cation went unseen by all but one other student.

The boys who suffered the aggression did not seek out anyone to tell. It was only after returning to the classroom that the story began to unfold, initiated by the student who had in fact observed the incident.

It is now roughly 2 p.m. The student goes to the teacher and tells her what she observed on the playground, including the language used. The two boys are in the classroom as well. The teacher asks them what happened and they tell essentially the same story as the student observer.

This teacher is now the first adult in the GMRSD system to know that two students have been at the receiving end of violent acts and language from four other students. The teacher tries to contact the principal by calling her secretary. She learns that the principal is not in the building, but is at a meeting.

The secretary calls the vice-principal who solicits more information from the teacher. He decides there are not a lot of specifics, but gives a report form to the school psychologist and asks her to follow up.

There is now a chain of action going from the teacher to the secretary to the vice principal to the school psychologist. It is now approximately 2:15 p.m.

The psychologist takes the two boys aside and talks with them. In the course of those discussions, one boy revealed he had been punched in the face by one of the four. He is sent to the nurse for examination. The nurse concludes there is no serious physical harm done.

At this point, four professionals have talked with the boys and three have concluded that no serious physical damage has occurred. In addition the secretary and the vice-principal are aware of an incident where boys were punched and called

extremely derogatory names, an incident involving six students.

Looking back, it is at about this juncture on Friday afternoon that parents are aghast they were not called.

At approximately 2:45 p.m. the psychologist brings the boys back to the classroom.

At approximately 3:25 p.m. school is dismissed.

The two boys on the receiving end of the altercation are friends and carpool with one boy's mother. In the car, one boy tells his mother what happened. She reparks the car and returns to the school wanting to know why she wasn't called when the altercation first came to light.

At this point the secretary calls the principal, who comes right away to speak with the parent about what she herself is just finding out.

At 5:00 p.m., the principal, Maureen Donelan, meets with one boy's father and the other boy's mother, the first of repeat-

ed meetings she has held with the people involved. During interviews, the parents of the two boys praised and appreciated Donelan for her sensitivity and willingness to meet with them.

Friday evening, the principal emailed the superintendent about the situation, began writing up the report on the incident, and responded to email from a parent.

On Monday, the principal and the adjustment counselor met with the four other boys individually. Parents of the two boys who were on the receiving end of the altercation kept them home from school because they felt uncertain about their children's safety.

Donelan also consulted with the DA's office to see if this altercation would qualify as an act of racism or a hate crime, and she was advised it did not meet those definitions. The school applied consequences, which are a matter of privacy. Donelan and the adjustment counselor plan to continue one-on-one consultations

with the four boys who punched or called the other two derogatory names.

Donelan has told her staff to call her from any meeting if such a situation should arise again.

On Tuesday, the two boys returned to school, and the school worked with the parents to make sure each boy felt secure.

Interim superintendent Nadine Ekstrom was also away on February 3rd. She first learned of the altercation through email on Friday evening. She responded to the email on Saturday. She has planned a meeting for Friday, February 10th with central staff and building staff to go over the steps taken or not taken on February 3rd, in order to evaluate why parents feel the school failed to follow its policy in this instance.

Ekstrom said her goal is to have everyone clear on how to proceed with an incident involving student violence or abusive language.

Ekstrom also said she plans to begin a schoolwide program teaching students about what constitutes conflict, harassment, or bullying.

The district already takes advantage of annual presentations by the DA's office on these topics, but Ekstrom feels more is needed.

Ekstrom said she was encouraged that one student did come forward and draw attention to what she saw happening during a game on the playground. **MD**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG
Disturbances, Domestic and other

Tuesday, 1/31

9:27 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], on a default warrant.

Wednesday, 2/1

2:47 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Eighth Avenue. Services rendered.

10:55 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street. Investigated.

5:23 p.m. Domestic disturbance on East Main Street. Investigated.

9:50 p.m. Domestic disturbance on East Main Street.

bance on East Main Street. Verbal warning.

11:17 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], at The

Rendezvous on Third Street, for disorderly conduct and a threat to commit a crime.

Thursday, 2/2

10:14 a.m. Threatening, harassment at Cute Nails on Avenue A. Services rendered.

3:17 p.m. Assault at Turners Falls Post Office. Investigated.

Friday, 2/3

8:22 a.m. Neighbor disturbance at Merriam's Pet Service on Hatchery Road. Advised of options.

12:47 p.m. Assault and battery at Franklin County Technical School on Industrial Boulevard. Services rendered.

7:21 p.m. Warrant arrest of [REDACTED].

10:48 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Fourth Street. Report taken.

11:59 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] for disturbing the peace and disorderly conduct on Park Street.

Saturday, 2/4

5:42 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Keith Street.

Sunday, 2/5

8:45 a.m. Larceny at the Survival Center on Fourth Street. Referred to an officer.

11:33 a.m. Fight behind alley on Avenue A.

3:09 p.m. Disorderly conduct at Turners Falls High School on Turnpike Road. Peace

restored.

11:56 p.m. Assault and battery on Bridge St. Peace restored.

Monday, 2/6

12:57 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street. Services rendered.

5:03 p.m. Default Warrant arrest of [REDACTED], on Elm Street.

Tuesday, 2/7

6:39 a.m. Brush fire on Federal Street. Services rendered.

4 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], for third offense of driving under the influence of alcohol.

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Researching Sanitation in Honduras



Pure Water for the World health promoter Ostilio Cerrato leads a community orientation discussing modes of water contamination in the San Francisco de Capire community of Trojes, Honduras.

BY ALI URBAN

TROJES, HONDURAS

Whenever one of my grandfather's children, grandchildren or friends went anywhere, he always reminded them: "Better be on your best behavior. You never know when you'll run into someone you know."

I'm sure my social network does not reach as far as my grandfather, Harold Fugere's – physical education teacher, driving instructor and nickname collector – once did, but I've certainly been glad on more than one occasion that I've heeded his advice.

There was the time my family saw the same couple from Greenfield in Wells, ME three summers in a row; the time my mother and I met a woman on our tour of Belgium whose family used to own a grocery store in Erving; and the night when I literally ran into a girl from my college amid the press of the post-fireworks crowd on Boston's T. In all of these instances, I was reminded that it really is a small world.

Most recently, this has been clear to me when I arrived in Trojes, Honduras, a small town four (or five, depending on the

roads) hours east of the capital Tegucigalpa on the Nicaraguan border.

While I didn't meet any people I actually knew there, as I walked into the office of Pure Water for the World, the non-governmental organization through which I would be conducting sanitation research during the month of January, I saw a large magnet adhered to the organization's Mobile Training Unit vehicle. On it was a list of the donors who helped make the purchase of the mobile unit possible, including the Amherst and Holyoke, Massachusetts Rotary Clubs, neither far from my hometown of Millers Falls. It was comforting to see that little connection to home as I arrived in a rural region of a country where I didn't really speak the language and I didn't really know what to expect.

Since then, I have had the fascinating opportunity to work with Pure Water, a Rutland, VT-based nonprofit that provides water, sanitation and hygiene services to communities in need of these services in Central America and the Caribbean.

Through an internship I

completed last semester with Pure Water in Rutland, I had the chance to travel to Trojes to conduct a study on the effect of sanitation education on latrine acceptance. As part of my undergraduate senior thesis and an extension of my internship, I'm hoping to learn more about how education about sanitation and hygiene influences residents of rural communities to seek to build a latrine, and in turn reduce the spread of water-borne diseases such as diarrhea, cholera and parasites.

Worldwide, 2.6 billion people lack access to proper sanitation. A development agency in India, Village Development, recently conducted a study which concluded the most acute problem stifling community development in India is poor health linked to excrement. It's a dirty, smelly topic, but one that demands attention and action in the international arena. I'm impressed by local organizations that recognize such issues (including the Montague Elks Lodge that generously provided funding to help make this research possible), and I am grateful for their support.

On one of my first days of field research, I drove with a team from Pure Water to San Francisco de Capire, a mountain community of about 60 households, mainly coffee farmers, to conduct a focus group asking residents about their perceptions of sanitation in their community and to observe a program orientation facilitated by Pure Water health promoters.

Participants were involved in demonstrations — one of which involved swirling a hair dipped in chicken feces in a pitcher of clean water. They were interested in learning more about the water filtration systems Pure Water will provide for each household, and actively engaged in discussions about the causes and results of water contamination in their community. In a development climate that can sometimes be focused on omniscient professionals dictating proper behavior, it was refreshing to witness a process that fostered community participation and investment.

I've enjoyed spending time in the town of Trojes, sampling local dishes including chi-

laquiles, a crunchy tortilla dish, and marmahons, a risotto-like meal. I even walked to the border and took a bus to Jalapa, Nicaragua. One Sunday, several hundred residents gathered for an afternoon-long religious event in the park, complete with loud speeches and even louder music. Recently, an American Pure Water volunteer invited me to teach some of her Trojes friends how to make pizza. While there, amidst a game of Monkey in the Middle with several Honduran children, I was struck by how international the language of play really is.

Soon, a group of American volunteers and Pure Water donors will be visiting Trojes to view the filter and latrine projects and learn more about the work Pure Water does in the region. Who knows, maybe someone I know will be in the group.

I better follow my grandfather's advice and be on my best behavior.

Ali Urban was the former contributor of the Montague Reporter's *High School Highlights* column.



A pour-flush latrine under construction in Trojes

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Notes from the Wendell Town Clerk

Dog Licenses Available

Dog licenses will be available starting March 1st at the town clerk's office. All dogs six months and older must be licensed and tagged every year. Proof of rabies vaccination and appropriate fee required: for a neutered or spayed dog, the fee is \$4; for an unaltered dog, the fee is \$5. There is a late fee of \$20 for dogs licensed after May 31st. The town clerk office hours are held Wednesday evenings from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Call (978) 544-3395 x 102 with any questions.

Absentee Ballots Available

Absentee ballots are now available at the town clerk's office for the March 6th presidential primary. The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot is noon on Monday, March 5th.

To vote absentee, you must be out of town on the day of the election, have a religious belief that prohibits you from being at the polls, or have a physical disability that prevents you from going to the polls. All absentee ballots must be returned to the clerk's office by the close of the polls on March 6th. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Registered voters who belong to any one of the three parties, Republican, Democratic, or Green Rainbow, must vote their party affiliation. Unenrolled registered voters can choose any one of the three party ballots.

Voter Registration Deadline

WENDELL - The last day to register to vote for the Presidential Primary on March 6th is Wednesday, February 15th. A special voter registra-

tion session will be held on this day in the office of the town clerk from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., 9 Morse Village Road in Wendell. You can also register by mail, or at the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Mail in registrations must also be postmarked on this date to be valid for the presidential primary. If you have recently moved to Wendell, or changed your address in Wendell, you must also register to vote. If you want to change your party designation you must meet the February 15th deadline. For information, call the town clerk at (978) 544-3395 x 102.

Nomination Papers Available

Nomination papers for the annual town election to be held in Wendell on Monday, May 7th are now available at the town clerk's office. The last day to obtain nomination papers is March 16th and the last day to submit nomination papers to the board of registrars for certification is March 19th. Offices are as follows:

Selectboard, board of assessors, cemetery commissioner, road commissioner all have one position open for a 3-year term;

Board of health has one position for a 3-year term and one position for 1-year to fill a vacancy;

Planning board has one position for a 5-year term;

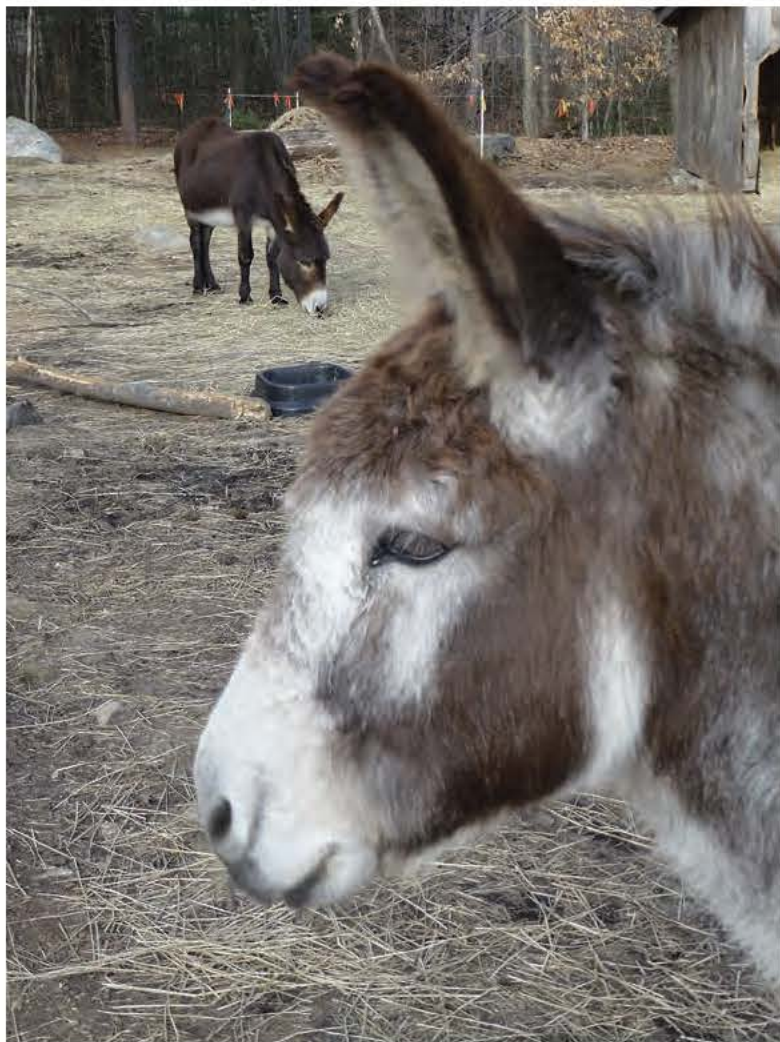
School committee has two positions open for a 3-year term and one position to fill a vacancy for 1-year;

Library trustees have two positions open for a 3-year term;

Moderator and tree warden each have one position open for a 1-year term.

On Monday, May 7th, polls will be open at the town offices from noon to 8:00 p.m. The deadline to register to vote is Tuesday, April 17th.

For more information, call the town clerk at (978) 544-3395 x 102.



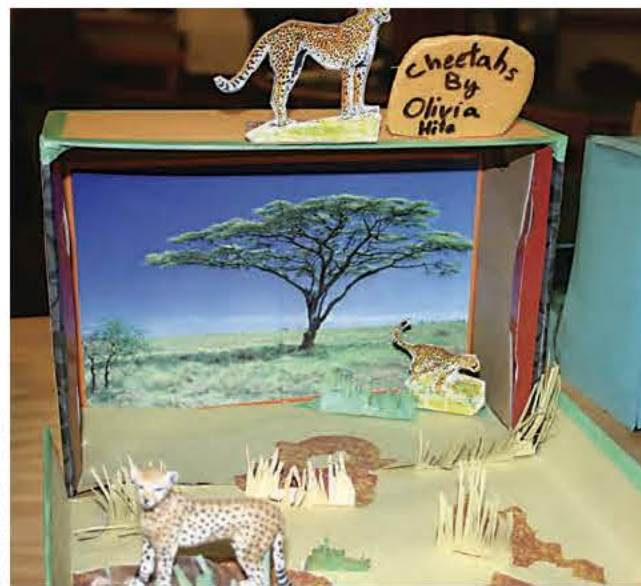
LINDA HICKMAN PHOTO

WENDELL - These two donkeys have very different personalities. One is shy, and the other can't wait to get "up close and personal." They live on Wickett Pond Road in Wendell.

Panthers and Cheetahs and Condors

Oh, My!

5th Grade Dioramas on display at the Leverett Elementary Library.



DETOLD PHOTOS



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from SOLAR page 1

Town counsel Kopelman and Paige sent a seven page memorandum to the Wendell selectboard and other town officials outlining some of the pitfalls and opportunities of third party renewable energy facilities. The memo advised drawing up a contract that would protect both the town of Wendell and Seaboard Solar from unforeseen changes in regulations and pricing.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said a 20 year agreement, as Seaboard Solar is proposing, would need to go before town meeting for approval. There is not time to negotiate a contract before the scheduled special town meeting on February 28th, but it might be sufficient for the town meeting to vote to authorize the selectboard to continue negotiations with Seaboard Solar, and to draw up and sign the contract.

Selectboard member Jeoff Pooser asked whether in five years this agreement might work against Wendell if better opportunities arise in the field of renewable energy.

Keller said he thought that would be unlikely, since there is now a push to develop renewable sources of electricity, and state and federal incentives are unlikely to stay at their current level.

Regionalization Committee

School committee member Ray Didonato told the board five people have offered to serve on the school regionalization study committee approved at annual town meeting. Only three positions were authorized. But Didonato said, except for executive sessions, it is always legal for interested citizens to attend a committee meeting, so there should be no problem if all five wish to participate. He called it a rare situation to have so many people interested in serving on a committee, and raised the point that having three regular committee members and two alternates would allow for a quorum if

one or more of the regular members had to miss a meeting.

The selectboard appointed finance committee member Doug Tanner, school committee member Ray Didonato, and parent Dee Collins as committee members, with school committee member Dick Baldwin and parent David Coy as alternates.

Regionalization is a complex issue, with Union 28 member towns Shutesbury and Leverett considering joining a region with Amherst and Pelham. If either of those towns leaves Union 28, the remaining towns would be left in a financially untenable situation to sustain a three town superintendency union.

Erving has formed a regionalization study group, and Didonato said Swift River and its school committee would be better off to study the options rather than get caught off guard by a precipitous change.

Nonviolence Training

Alistair MacMartin opened the meeting by reserving the town hall for Saturday, February 11th, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for a conservation commission sponsored nonviolence training session for people opposing the continued operation of the Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor.

MacMartin asked whether he could put a sign on the town common to advertise the training. Keller replied it would be alright if someone held the sign, but not if the sign were just placed on the common, in which case it might be construed as a political position of the town.

MacMartin called opposition to nuclear power more of an environmental position, but he agreed that placing the sign on private land across the street would avoid the appearance of town sponsorship. The training session will be finished in time for the Full Moon Coffeehouse later that same evening.

Tax Rate Set

The board of assessors met the selectboard for their annual tax classification hearing. They recommended that Wendell continue with a single tax rate, as it always has, and the selectboard approved that choice.

The tax rate this year is \$18.94 per \$1,000 of valuation, up \$0.95 from last year. The town's excess levy capacity is \$197,925.

Keller thanked the assessors for getting the tax rate set and the bills out on time.

Assessor Stephen Broll said thanks should go to Wendell's professional assessor, Helen Williams.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich relayed a letter from the Mountain Laurel mobile home court complaining about a large increase in their tax assessment and resulting tax bill.

Aldrich said the assessment went up based on the price of one lot which sold there recently, indicating the lots had been undervalued. Land and out-buildings are taxed as real property, but trailers are not taxed as a home. Residents of the mobile home court can apply for abatements after the tax bills come out.

The selectboard approved a request by Seal LaMadeleine to continue her Tuesday, 11:00 a.m. improvisational movement classes at the town hall through February.

Aldrich said she finally got a return call from Massachusetts Audubon about the summer camp scholarship they have offered to one Wendell student in recognition that Audubon owns many acres in town for which, as a non-profit organization, they pay no property tax.

Last year's second place winner in the essay contest, Cole Emery, will get this year's campership.

Selectboard chair Christine Heard said Mass Audubon had also been offering programs at Swift River School, but that part of the organization's pay-

ment in lieu of taxes seems to have run its course.

The open space committee has contracted with Karen Idoine to teach four workshops, including some field workshops, on integrated pest management.

Finances, Mahar

The finance committee came to the meeting to explain some fine points of the town's finances. Committee chair Michael Idoine said though the town's tax rate has gone up by \$0.95 from last year, property values in town have generally gone down (though that may be news to Mountain Laurel mobile court residents), so the average tax bill will not increase as much as the tax rate hike might imply.

State transportation aid to Wendell will go down \$1,500, veterans benefits will dip by \$600, and payment in lieu of taxes on state owned land in Wendell will decline to \$87,255 in the coming fiscal year, if the governor's budget holds.

Idoine said the DOR strong-

ly recommends that Wendell stop relying on mid-year appropriations, and budget for all anticipated expenses at annual town meeting. A stronger reserve fund would allow the town to meet unexpected mid-year expenses.

Jim Slavas said the Mahar regionalization committee was making slow progress, after last year's defeat of the hybrid regionalization plan for a K-12 region for Orange and Petersham, with Wendell and New Salem continuing with their present 7-12 regionalization with Mahar.

Slavas said the Mahar regional assessment method is still weighted heavily against Wendell, on a cost per student basis.

He noted that a K-12 regional plan would require either at large elections of school committee members by residents of all four towns, or a regional school committee made up of 15 members from Orange, and one each from Wendell, Petersham and New Salem.

Neither approach seems attractive.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Vandalism spree and suspicious people

Monday, 1/30

6:55 a.m. Reported suspicious motor vehicle on River Road. Checked area. None was located.
7:15 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Center Road. Assisted resident with a tow.
10:00 a.m. Assisted Mt. Hermon with follow up of a party trespass at 2:20 a.m.
6:05 p.m. 911 hang up call from resident on River Rd

Tuesday, 1/31

9:30 a.m. Warrant issued for party on North Cross Rd. No one home at this time.
1:20 p.m. Vandalism reported at Machine Repair Business on French King Hwy from Sunday overnight.
1:35 p.m. Vandalism reported at Used Car Business on French King Hwy from Sunday overnight.

1:45 p.m. Vandalism reported at 2nd Used Car Business on French King Hwy from Sunday overnight.
2:00 p.m. Vandalism reported from Auto Repair business on French King Hwy from Sunday overnight.
2:30 p.m. Custody issue at Child Care Business on Main Rd.
Wednesday, 2/1
9:10 a.m. Animal complaint on W. Gill Rd. owners spoken with.
12:45 p.m. Searched area in Riverside for reported armed robbery Suspect.

Thursday, 2/2

7:20 a.m. Reported threat to commit murder at Bartons Cove on the river, investigation ongoing.
12:20 p.m. Court documents served to subject on Boyle Rd.
Friday, 2/3
2:30 p.m. Suspicious person and motor vehicle parked at public safety building. Checked OK.
4:40 p.m. Motor vehicle accident at Main Rd. and French King Hwy. Investigated
5:48 p.m. Court documents served to subject on Boyle Rd.
8:15 p.m. Responded to Riverside area for reported illegal drug activity.

person and motor vehicle parked at public safety building. Checked OK.

4:40 p.m. Motor vehicle accident at Main Rd. and French King Hwy. Investigated
5:48 p.m. Court documents served to subject on Boyle Rd.
8:15 p.m. Responded to Riverside area for reported illegal drug activity.


Saturday, 2/4

10:40 a.m. Susp mv/person at residence home on French King Hwy, checked ok
12:40 p.m. Internet crime reported to subject at Mt. Hermon.
4:40 p.m. Follow Up investigation with party on Franklin Rd regarding Assault and Battery.
Sunday, 2/5
12:40 p.m. Suspicious person at Mt. Hermon Campus past. Located by security, Long history of criminal activity.

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KIRAN from page 1

Burnham said, "Kiran had an amazing spirit – she really was the 'sunrays' of her name. With an ability to quickly connect and be liked by people, her networking qualities were in tune with a wide world of interesting artists. Being a wife (to Henry Wilson) and mother to two beautiful children, (Taikoda David

Wilson, age 7 and Tsukiko Tome Bhomik, age 5) also gave her a natural connection to other parents. Because of this, one of her programs, Go Kid's Art, Go! was the most popular event Leverett Crafts & Arts ever hosted, with hundreds of people passing through and participating each year."

Burnham added, "Likely the result of strong international

connections through both sides of her family, Kiran was open to world art and culture. She organized the Diwali Festival of Light which delighted people, as did Omulu Guanabara Capoeira (Afro-Brazilian martial arts, dance, music, and acrobatics), and more.

"Kiran brought a warm personality and an open mind to everything I saw her do. She

could be amazingly tender, while somehow juggling all the details of events she made possible here. Her passing affects me in a profound way. She was a very beautiful person with a big heart."

Similar feelings echoed through many conversations with Kiran's friends last week.

Emily Millsbaugh, who shared a studio with Kiran, said, "I was her doula for the birth of her daughter, so we had a special bond. I also helped care for her during her last weeks."

She paused a little to gather her thoughts. The loss is still very recent and the feelings raw.

"Kiran wanted to create a place where people could create themselves. She brought fresh energy to the (LCA) Center. Each time she organized a show, she transformed the gallery. She worked so hard. She brought everything she touched to life."

Shanti Stark remembered Kiran's involvement with the arts from a time before she got involved with LCA.

"With others, she started the Amherst Art Walk. She also pioneered the Taste of Art, which resulted in arts hanging in local coffee shops and restaurants."

David Henion is president of the board at LCA and also the owner of Henion's Bakery in Amherst. His earliest memory of Kiran dates back to when she was a junior in high school and hung some of her own art at the bakery. "There was one photograph of a winter scene so haunting and vivid that it still lives in my memory," he said. "From our earliest encounters I saw her as an artist with a keen eye. When she was hired as co-director at LCA, we thought of her as representing the next generation of artists. She was hired to connect with the younger generation, and she did. She had great ideas. She brought more people into the building than I'd ever seen before."

EveLynn Werling Goodhind, a fellow artist and close friend of Kiran's had the honor and privilege to be one of the four women ("angels" she called them) who were able to be by

her side as she struggled with cancer these past months, along with her family. In an email message, Goodhind wrote, "Kiran had a smile that would light up any room. She desired to be taken seriously regarding her many passions: Love of the arts, care of the planet, care of our bodies with raw foods, and spiritual growth. Kiran saw the good in people, and had a way of shining it up and showing it to them. I deeply love, miss, appreciate and celebrate her."

It is customary when a person dies, to list all the people left behind. In Kiran's case I think her loved-ones, friends and colleagues might argue that they don't feel left behind, because there is still so much of her here in her words and art, everyone's memories, and especially her children.

Shanti Stark submitted this poem, written by Kiran. It is filled with images of bursting life, but the first line also speaks to the temporal existence of us all.

Kiran means the sun's rays.

I believe in the sun, the moon, and that I could be gone very soon.

I believe in love, and music, and dancing until you float off the ground.

I believe in dreams, and screams of bitter sorrow.

I believe my brother David's spirit is here, and that he knows I am painting for him.

I believe in the blues, good shoes,

and having fun outrageous clothes

even if you don't have anywhere to wear them.

I believe in peace, even in this world of cruelty and fear.

I believe we are all seeking for something deeper

and something freeing for our souls.

I believe creating art is that something.

I am naturally high and soaring free when fully immersed in my creations.

I thank you for being here so I can share them with you.

from NUKES pg 5

Soul Circus offered a short play on Mother Nature vs. the Corporate Nuclear Industry, replete with dancing animals, a nefarious nuclear CEO, and of course Mother Nature herself.

Many in the crowd signed up to join affinity groups forming now throughout the tri-state area, to organize townspeople opposed to the continued operation of Vermont Yankee. This effort is occurring within an emerging grassroots campaign of non-violent direct action, in support of the state of Vermont's decision to close the reactor on schedule this March.

As Kehler outlined the plans, the SAGE Alliance will sponsor a month of action in March, to include a march planned by Greenfield Community College students for March 3rd from

Greenfield's Court Square to the Vermont Yankee reactor, leaving Greenfield at 10 a.m., with a vigil at the reactor followed by a party at the Stone Church in Brattleboro that evening. On March 11th, the first anniversary of the ongoing Fukushima meltdowns, a mock evacuation will be staged from the reactor to Brattleboro, with participants carrying their belongings in satchels and wheelbarrows; a teach-in will follow in Brattleboro that evening. On March 22nd, the day after VY's original 40-year operating license expires, a call has gone out across the region to Occupy Vermont Yankee headquarters in north Brattleboro, with planned civil disobedience by dozens of affinity groups trained in nonviolence. On March 31st, a mass legal rally is planned for the town common in

Brattleboro, to which Vermont legislators and Governor Peter Shumlin have been invited, to show support for the democratic efforts of the state of Vermont to close the accident prone reactor and move forward to a Green energy future.

More information on these and other actions is available at the SAGE alliance website: www.sagealliance.net.

The No Nukes Benefit and Speak Out raised over \$1000 to benefit the Safe and Green Energy (SAGE) Alliance. As well, it raised the spirits of activists who have been working for decades to shut down Vermont Yankee, and brought dozens of new friends into the expanding circle of resistance to the nuclear menace still operating just a few miles north of our villages.



On Sunday, January 29th, residents of Burlington, Vermont attended a teach-in and speak out in City Hall Park calling for the Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor to be retired on schedule by March 21st, 2012.

DETOLD PHOTO



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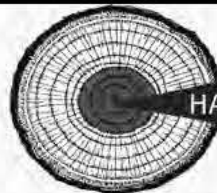
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Gordon King to Receive Gold Cane Award



Gordon King

BY DAVID DETMOLD

LEVERETT - Gordon King will receive Leverett's Gold Cane award for longevity on Friday, February 10th, after the senior lunch on the first floor of town hall.

As the oldest man in town, King can look back from the perspective of his 93 years, and recall a lifetime of service to family and community. He was the town's fire chief for 23 of those years, chaired the UMass department of Urban Forestry until his retirement in 1983, after 33 years on the faculty, and is the past president of the International Arborists Association.

He lives on Shutesbury Road, by Roaring Brook, in an 18th century farmhouse he first moved to in 1950.

"This was the miller's house," he said, as sun

streamed in the cozy, low ceilinged living room. The foundation of the grist mill could still be seen out back by the brook when King first moved in.

The miller apparently didn't just grind the grain. "They distilled a lot of it, too," said King, wistfully. He noted a left turn at the bottom of the hill brings a traveler to Still Corners Road.

I always thought that road sign led to sylvan quiet.

King was born in New Jersey in 1918, attended college at North Carolina State for \$25 a semester in 1937, and transferred to Michigan State in East Lansing to study Municipal Arboriculture. He graduated from Michigan in 1941.

Shortly thereafter, working for the city of East Lansing,

King fielded a call from Firestone Rubber, seeking a number of recent graduates who might be willing to hop a plane for Liberia, where Firestone was ramping up operations at its huge rubber tree plantation to supply latex for the war effort. The Japanese were beginning to advance in the Pacific, soon taking one island after another where rubber was grown, and cutting off the Allies' supply of liquid latex.

Firestone had leveraged a deal with the government of Liberia in the 1920s granting the U.S. corporation unprecedented, tax free power over one tenth of the arable land in that country for 99 years, in exchange for a \$5 million loan that kept the Liberian government indebted to the corporation. Allegations of forced labor and child labor have dogged Firestone at its one million acre reserve in Liberia down to the present day.

Along with 16 other Michigan State arboriculture grads, King went to work for Firestone in Liberia in 1941. He supervised the planting and tapping of *Hevea Brasiliensis* - common name, rubber tree - in one of 50 100,000 acre divisions near the coast of that tropical country for four years.

He met his first wife, Frances, there. She was a missionary for the Episcopal Church. Fluent in the native languages, she was also involved, in some way King still prefers not to talk about, in gathering wartime intelligence for the US government.

He hinted at tales of intrigue about Dutch and Syrian traders, and Germans opening

up hospitals in the African interior where medicine was doled out as enemy movements were monitored, like an outtake from an old Humphrey Bogart, Katherine Hepburn movie.

On the plantation, King lived without electricity, using kerosene for refrigeration, lights, and cooking. But he left Africa and came back to the States with a simple conviction. "I wanted to work in municipal tree care."

That's what he did. He was recruited by UMass Amherst in 1950 and stayed there for 33 years, expanding their department of urban forestry into a four-year masters and Phd program, which he went on the chair.

"It was like a long vacation for me," said King.

His department catalogued and cared for all the trees on campus, a sprawling arboretum, putting up plaques detailing each specimen's genera and species, an effort that since his retirement has been allowed to lapse. He employed students in the care of campus trees. He established regular meetings with county tree wardens, part of a statewide effort to disseminate knowledge about urban arboriculture from the university to the local level. And he took an active role in nurturing the love of nature in Leverett, leading a boy scout troop that preserved the 4-H Forest on Shutesbury Road, where a campground and Christmas tree farm provided a learning environment and fundraising opportunity for the scouts. He donated some of his own land to the town, 69 acres, permanently conserved as the

Gordon King Life Estate, now part of the East Leverett Trails network.

He also worked to clear the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail when it was first blazed through Leverett, and helped build cabins for campers along the way.

King looks back on his 23 years as Leverett fire chief as a time when the department trained regularly, with help from the Greenfield fire chief, worked with "the best of equipment," and lost only a few houses.

"But we had a few brush fires get away," he added ruefully.

John Moruzzi, the current fire chief, was a new recruit when King was nearing retirement. King used a botanical metaphor to describe Moruzzi's progress at the fire department: "He took hold and did well."

King, a founding member of the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, was instrumental with Dave Field in starting the bottle and can recycling program to raise funds for the RGT and the Leverett fire department, five cents at a time. Instead of tossing out their deposit containers, residents dropped them off at King's barn. Once they piled up to a big enough heap, he organized volunteers to drive them to redemption centers around the Valley.

By 2010, these five cent containers had added up to more than a million bottles and cans and \$50,000 for the Trust to purchase conservation land in Leverett. On June 27th of last year, the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust dubbed Gordon see **KING** pg 14

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. Are older people at greater risk of getting food poisoning?

The people at highest risk for suffering from food poisoning are seniors, pregnant women, young children, and those with chronic diseases.

When you age, your immune system may not respond as well to infectious organisms as it did when you were younger. During pregnancy, changes in metabolism and circulation can increase poisoning risk. The immune systems of infants and young children are not fully developed. A chronic disease reduces your immune response.

Food poisoning is caused by

eating food contaminated by organisms such as bacteria, viruses and parasites. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and fever. The onset of symptoms can occur hours after consumption of the tainted food. However, symptoms can begin to show up in days and sometimes weeks.

The following—in alphabetical order—are some possible food contaminants: campylobacter, clostridium botulinum, clostridium perfringens, escherichia coli (E. coli), giardia lamblia, hepatitis A, listeria, noroviruses, rotavirus, salmonella, shigella, staphylococcus aureus, and vibrio vulnificus.

And here are some of the sources: meat and poultry soiled by animal feces during processing, foods kept warm for too long, unpasteurized milk and apple cider, raw produce, contaminated water, improperly canned commercial foods, smoked or salted fish, cream sauces, undercooked ground beef, alfalfa sprouts, raw or undercooked shellfish, raw eggs,

prepared salads, and cream-filled pastries.

The symptoms of food poisoning usually diminish without help in about two days. However, some cases need treatment.

The treatment for food poisoning varies according to the source. For example, antibiotics are used to combat bacterial food poisoning.

Dehydration, which can be fatal, is the major complication of food poisoning because you lose fluids from vomiting and diarrhea. Older people and others with inadequate immune systems can become extremely dehydrated. Hospitalization for intravenous hydration may be necessary.

Diarrhea can be much more than an inconvenience. Diarrhea can be lethal to older people. With the fluid you lose from diarrhea, you also lose salts that your body needs. Diarrhea can make a victim pass more than a quart of watery stools a day.

Dehydration symptoms include thirst, reduced urination, dark urine, dry skin, fatigue,

dizziness, fainting.

You should see a doctor if your diarrhea lasts more than three days, or if you have dehydration symptoms, severe abdominal or rectal pain, a fever of 102°F or higher, or blood in your stools.

In many cases of diarrhea, the only treatment needed is replacing lost fluid and salts.

Adults should consume broth, non-citrus fruit juices, flat ginger ale and ice pops.

As your condition improves, you can start eating bananas, plain rice, boiled potatoes, toast, crackers, cooked carrots. Smaller meals are recommended because they're easier to digest.

Here are some tips to prevent food poisoning:

- Wash your hands, utensils and kitchen counters often.
- Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods.
- Kill contaminants by cooking at a safe temperature. Use a thermometer to check. For example, fish is done at 145 degrees

Fahrenheit, but ground beef should reach 160 degrees.

- Refrigerate or freeze perishable foods within two hours of purchasing or preparing them.

- Do not thaw foods at room temperature. Defrost foods in the refrigerator or microwave.

- Wash all raw fruits, vegetables, and herbs with cold, running water

- Cook eggs until they are solid.

- When cooking meat or fish, don't reuse the plate that held them when they were raw.

- When in doubt, throw it out.

If you are worried about food poisoning, you might consider avoiding the following foods: anything that contains raw eggs such as cookie dough or hollandaise sauce, packaged foods with broken seals or cans that are bulging or dented, honey that hasn't been heat-treated, soft cheeses, alfalfa sprouts, raw ground beef or fish.

If you have questions, write to fred@healthygeezer.com.

LEVERETT from page 6

increase in Chapter 70 aid will go entirely to the roughly one third of school districts across the state that are currently not being funded to the baseline foundation level, regarded as the minimum necessary to educate students.

The Amherst Regional School District is not slated to receive any increase in Chapter 70 aid, knocking \$182,000 out of the region's projected FY'13 budget.

Hajir said if the governor's budget is upheld by the legislature, Amherst superintendent Maria Geryk has indicated she will seek programmatic cuts rather than increase assessments to the towns.

Hajir said he was worried about where those cuts would fall, after a number of years of budget cutting at the regional schools.

"We're draining money from regular education," said Hajir, who noted that state mandates for

special education make it likely that the regular student population would feel the brunt of further program cuts.

"It's time for the school committee to get proactive," added Hajir. "It's no longer acceptable not to change the Chapter 70 funding formula."

A hearing for the elementary school budget was tentatively scheduled for March 12th.

Union 28

When the discussion turned to the Union 28 report, Wickman said the Swift River School committee is considering relinquishing its role as fiscal agent for the school union. This decision is coming about as a result of the town of Leverett's refusal to pay benefits to U-28 central office staff above the level of the benefits the town

provides to its own employees, a stand which has caused Swift River, as the union's bill paying fiscal agent, to face a \$4,000 deficit in FY'12.

Selectboard member Julie Shively, who was in attendance, said she was hopeful that special legislation would soon be approved by the legislature to allow all the towns in the union to pay central office employee benefits at the same level the towns pay their own employee benefits. "It's not right to have our employees and our teachers get a lower benefit rate."

Hajir added, "I'm kind of

unhappy that our own situation seems indeterminate. New Salem / Wendell is neither a union nor a regional school, but it sends six people to the U-28 joint supervisory committee. So the towns with the lowest number of students in the union, outweigh the other three towns," which each send three members to the supervisory committee.

Hajir pointed out that Leverett actually has one more elementary student enrolled than Erving does, which would suggest that Leverett should now be the lead town in the union, setting the level of benefits for central office

staff (Leverett has the lowest benefit package for town employees of all the towns in the union). Except that Erving is also allowed to count its upper school students, who are tuitioned in to various high schools since Erving is not a member of an upper school district, as 1/10th of an elementary school student, for the purpose of determining which town in the elementary union has the highest percentage of students enrolled.

"We need to do some more work on our structure and bylaws," Hajir concluded.



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Ferry Meadow Farm - part XXVI

Turners Falls 2017

BY ELOISE MICHAEL - I hear the footsteps as the federal agent walks on the roof above my head. I am glad Agent Walsh is not talking to me in the bedroom. He seems to be listening for sounds outside.

I hold my breath. The body on the roof needs to be as quiet as possible, and the body in the bedroom is too nervous to breathe.

The detective outside is standing directly over me now. He shines a flashlight into the trees behind the house and around the yard. The beam of light passes over me as he inspects the edges of the lower roof.

"She could have jumped from here," the detective calls

up to the window. Now he is walking back over the roof. He climbs in the window.

"I want to take a look outside," he says to his partner.

I follow them downstairs. "Good night, Ms. Marconi. Thank you for your time," the shorter detective says to me.

"OK, good night," I say. As soon as they are out the door, I run upstairs, shutting off lights as I go.

I dive into bed and close my eyes. The body on the roof will need to concentrate.

I hear them coming around the house and press myself as close to the wall as I can, feeling very exposed. The beams of their flashlights cross and recross the yard, illuminating

the trees and the sides of my neighbors' houses, but they don't think to look for me on the roof.

They seem to decide that I am in the woods and head that way, shining their lights in all directions. I know I need to hide but am not sure where to go.

I wait until they are in the woods and making enough noise that I am no longer afraid to move. I slide my feet to the edge of the roof, then over it. When most of my body is hanging over the edge I drop and land clumsily in a flower bed, crushing the peonies.

I duck into the darkest place, which is behind a rhododendron, and freeze, holding my breath to listen.

I can still hear the two FBI

agents crashing around in the woods, but faintly. After a while the noise is louder, and then they are back in my yard, talking quietly. I hear them get into their cars and drive away.

I have a feeling they are coming back or at least watching the house and am afraid to go inside. So I slip through the trees behind my house, along the edge of a neighbor's yard and into the woods by the river.

I can't see much, but head downhill toward the water.

Along the way I walk into many branches. I am moving slowly, trying not to make too much noise, so I only trip and fall once. Soon I can see the river reflecting the moonlight.

The ground drops in front of me, and I have to scramble down, hanging from small trees and roots with my hands while I look for a foothold. There are paths here, but in the dark I

can't find them.

Soon, the way becomes less steep, and I am out on the loose rocks by the river. They are pale gray in the moonlight and difficult to walk on.

I stay close to the edge of the trees, so I will be hidden, and start to make my way upstream.

The rocks are flat in places, but at a slant, tipping toward the water. I keep to those flat stretches when I can, because it's possible to walk more easily. Still I stumble, and sometimes I am forced back onto loose stones, which make noise as they shift under my feet. I feel like I am on a huge rocky stage with the moon as a spotlight.

Twice I get so paranoid I hide under the edge of a bush and just listen. There's no one out here but me.

— Continued Next Issue

KING from page 12

the 'King of a Million Cans.'

"To put this achievement in perspective," wrote Brooke Thomas at the time, "stacked vertically these bottles and cans would reach 23 times the height of Mt. Everest (29,028 feet of elevation), or laid out horizontally would go from Leverett's transfer station to the Atlantic Ocean. Considering it takes 95% less energy to recycle an aluminum can than to make a new one, and to make a twelve ounce can takes a cup of gas, then almost 60,000 gallons of gas have been saved."

That is just one more feather in the cap of a man who has done much to preserve the land, the trees, and the fabric of his community over decades

of careful, prudent work.

What advice does King have for tree wardens in these days of changing climate, invasive species, pests like the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, and the recurrent threat of blights and fungal infection?

"Don't plant more than ten percent of any one species and you'll be OK," said King.

He faulted cities and towns for going too far in lining their streets uniformly with maples, or elms, practically inviting the declines and diseases that laid large swaths of urban landscapes bare in decades past.

King helped towns start their own nurseries, or advised

them to establish cooperative relationships with existing commercial nurseries, in order to replant when dead, dying or diseased trees have to be taken down.

Trees help an urban landscape in many ways, King said, giving shade and cooling in the summer, allowing a concrete streetscape to breathe.

King has left a verdant legacy behind, not just in his home town, but throughout this green and pleasant Valley.

He will be honored in Leverett on Friday, and across our region for many years to come.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG Criminal Applications

Tuesday, 1/31

9:15 a.m. Assisted dump truck with flat tire on Route 2.

11:40 a.m. Report of car off the road on Dorsey Road. Located same. Road not maintained in winter. Motor vehicle towed and DPW put up barricades.

3:55 p.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration and without insurance on Route 2.

Wednesday, 2/1

1:45 p.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license and for speeding on North Street.

Thursday, 2/2

12 a.m. Arrested [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for defective equipment and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license on Route 2.

4:50 p.m. Motor vehicle crash on Northfield Road, Route 63. Report taken. No injuries.

6:35 p.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for operating a motor vehicle after revocation of registration and no insurance.

Friday, 2/3

12 a.m. Arrested [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for operating a vehicle with a suspended license and a warrant arrest from Greenfield District Court, on Northfield Road.

8:30 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle reported at railroad track area of Moore Street. Gone upon arrival.

1:45 p.m. Walk-in reporting harassment issue. Report taken and subject advised of options.

3 p.m. Report of vehicle off road on Laurel Lake Road. Tow truck called. Road not maintained by

DCR in the winter months.

Friday, 2/4

1 a.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for inspection sticker, revoked registration and operating a motor vehicle without insurance on Route 2.

Saturday, 2/5

10:15 a.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license and a number plate violation

9:55 p.m. Assisted Montague police with domestic disturbance at Bridge Street.

Sunday, 2/6

2 p.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration, no insurance and no registration on Lester Street.

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

EVERY FRIDAY
Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Song Shop Open Mic*, 8 p.m.

FRIDAYS and SATURDAYS
Montague Inn: *TNT Karaoke*.

NOW through MARCH 10th
Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Sensual, Sexual, Smut: Erotic Art by Local Artists*.

NOW through FEBRUARY 27th
Salmon Falls Artisans Showroom, Shelburne Falls: *Celebrate Black History Month and Valentine's Day with The Fetish of Love: works inspired by West African Fetish Dolls by Belinda Lyons Zucker in Gallery Two*.

NOW through FEBRUARY 29th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *paintings in the great hall by Camilla Roberts*.

NOW through FEBRUARY 17th
Artspace Community Arts Center,

Greenfield: *The Annual Teen Art Exhibit*, featuring work from local high schools.

NOW through February 29th
Wendell Free Library: Wendell resident *Christine Texiera*, presents *Asana*, oil on paper drawings.



Austin and Elliott play the Great Falls Coffeehouse at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Friday, February 10th at 7 p.m.

NOW through FEBRUARY 26th
Vermont Center for Photography, Brattleboro: *After Chernobyl*, Photographs by Michael Forster Rothbart.

NOW through APRIL 1st
Gallery at Hallmark, Turners Falls: *Imitating Art*, a student photographic exhibition featuring attempts to photographically reproduce an original work of art.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9th
Swift River Elementary School, New Salem: *Celebrate Diversity Potluck and Performance*. Abdou Sarr of Wendell will share his native Senegalese dancing and drumming, Africa inspired art, bring a dish, all welcome, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *TNT Karaoke*, 8 - 10:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Coffeehouse series featuring Austin and Elliott*, 7 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Jamie Lynn Hart*, pop rock, with special guest *Frank Viele*, funk/pop/rock, 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Richard Chase Group*, 9 to 11 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Nobody's Fat*, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Tracy & Company*, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Track Investigation Walk*, Dress warm, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Lenny's Lounge*, 7 p.m. Free.

Wendell Town Hall: Full Moon Coffeehouse presents *Girl Howdy*, 7:30 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Heavy Metal Night* at the Rojo. *Matt Demon* from Springfield, VT, *My Pet Carcass* from Westfield, MA, *As The Dead Rise* from Turners Falls, MA, and *People Eating People* from Montague, MA, Free, 8 to 11 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Dedicated to Delilah*, 9 - 12 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rhythm Inc.*, jazz, funk, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Mark Manley Band*, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12th
Montague Grange: *Vintage + Antiques Market*, Quality vintage & antiques vendors bring their wares to the Grange for four winter sales. 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Greenfield Grille: *Valentine Reading - Love and Heartbreak*, open mic, writers, musicians, and vendors, 5 minute slots, food and beverages, 1 to 5 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Game On! Boggle, Twister, Jenga ... all ages!* 4 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Joe Fitzpatrick*, Acoustic Trio - Warped Americana, 7:30 to 10 p.m.

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

Montague Bookmill: *Free Films for the Frozen* presents, *The Slums of Beverly Hills*, 1998, written and directed by Tamara Jenkins. 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14th
Brick House, Turners Falls: *Phantom Erratic #4: Deep listening for lovers*,

Mary Halvorson & Jessica Pavone, Chris Weisman, Ruth Garbus, 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quiz Nite! with Quizmaster Alex!* 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Goji berries!* Rachel Levin from the Department of Biology at Amherst explores goji berries, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *St. Valentine's Aphrodisiac Extravaganza* - games, raffles, prizes from Oh My! DJ Bex! Benefit for NELCWIT (donations welcome, but also free), 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Tommy Filiault and Friends*, 8 - 10 p.m.

FEBRUARY 16, 17, 18
Academy of Music Theater, Northampton: premiere of *Truth*, a new folk opera about the life of Sojourner Truth, full orchestra under conductor, Hugh Keelan, music direction by Jerry Noble, 7:30 p.m. Almost sold out.

FEBRUARY 17th, 23rd, 24th at 7 p.m.
FEBRUARY 18th, 19th, 25th, 26th at 2 p.m.
Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *New Renaissance Players* presents *Treasure Island*.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & The Mud, Blood & Beer Band*, 9 - 11 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jones Trio*, jazz that thumps, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Flabbergaster & Loomis Band*, 9:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17th and SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th
Montague Bookmill: *Darlingside*, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Nexus*, Eclectic Harmonic Rock, 9-11 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Stone Coyotes*, 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rockit Queer with DJ Greg2000*, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Cooper Jones Band*, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sunday Locals: Michael Metivier, Brook Brown-Saracino & Friends*, 6 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *John Sheldon*, 8-10 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *Free Films for the Frozen* presents, *The Long Goodbye*, 1973, directed by Robert Altman, written by Leigh Brackett. Based on the

novel by Raymond Chandler. Featuring Elliott Gould. 7 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo*, 8 p.m. Free. (prizes)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Peter Siegel & Friends*, 8 p.m.



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On Books:**StoneOak: One Couple's Canvas and Compass**

By Pam Richardson and Peter Gallant
Reviewed by Susan Blauner



WENDELL - If you long for sustainability deep in the wilderness, off the grid, *StoneOak: One Couple's Canvas and Compass*, is a gateway to personal heaven.

Authors Pam Richardson and Peter Gallant live a passionate life. They met, fell in love, and moved in together within a matter of weeks, 32 years ago. Impassioned by the concept of 'island,' they sought and ultimately found one of their own in 1996: a hand-built home of stone and oak set on a 60-acre woodlot, surrounded by 8,000 acres of the Wendell State Forest.

When Richardson and Gallant first saw StoneOak, their island among the trees, they knew they had entered a "magical realm."

StoneOak is their tribute to this sanctuary. It is a love story between two people and their land and home.

To some, this intimate relationship with nature might seem absurd: a solar shower in the vegetable garden? Cleaning laundry in a 1940s wringer washing machine? Cooking year-round on a woodstove,

using water hand-pumped from a dug well?

But to those of us wanting a slower, quieter, more meditative life, this realm seems sublime, albeit a lot of work, devotion, and exquisite respect for the land. A symbiotic evolution spirals day to night and night to day, opening literal and figurative pathways into the heart of the wild.

The book is compact and lush, much like the place it represents. The first eight pages of prose evokes such beauty and fantastical delight, it's hard to resist the urge to flip through the 64 pages of beautiful photos in section two.

Resist the urge. The words prime the mental canvas for a deeper, more visceral experience of the pictures: page after page of still lifes and landscapes that seem too good to be true — as if staged and stylized on a movie set. Taken by a range of photographers, reflecting a range of perspectives and artistic sensibilities, the photos are evocative echoes of the text.

I enjoyed the contemplative quotes interspersed with the

photos, still I wanted more details. What is that huge, foot-wide mushroom-like creation? How does the hot water make it to the shower head? Are there two hearths, one the cast iron Fairmount Royal stove, and the other the wood-fired stone range? Perhaps these information gaps are intentional. They leave room for curiosity and imagination.

StoneOak is a book to sit with, take in, and savor. It is the perfect gift for environmental enthusiasts, gardeners, artists and visionaries. It's also an inspirational love story for couples of any kind. As co-therapists, Richardson and Gallant used to lead two-day couple's retreats on their land. Clients left "infused with ... a much larger sense of the possible."

As a reader, you'll feel the same. I know I did.

StoneOak is available for purchase at *World Eye Books* in Greenfield, *Boswell Books* in Shelburne Falls, and *Wendell Country Store*. For more info, contact the authors at stoneoak2003@yahoo.com.

Dakin Expands Shelter

BY LEE WICKS

LEVERETT - The renovation of the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society (DPVHS) facility in Leverett is slated for completion this June, and the animals awaiting adoption there, as well as the staff and volunteers, will enjoy an improved space that is less noisy, warmer in winter and cooler in summer. Plus, there will be a separate wing for the cats!

Animals will still be available for adoption in Leverett throughout the project's duration. But they were removed this week for a few days during the roof work on the new addition, so the animals would not be frightened by the noise of the nail guns.

DPVHS director Leslie Harris said, "A better environment is what we're going for. We need to make improvements to the physical plant of the aging building, and we need to create a space that is more comfortable and welcoming for our two- and four-legged clientele. We do not currently fill our nine dog kennels, so we have reduced the number of kennels in this new plan to five, with an eye toward making a more comfortable space where noise is reduced. The new addition to the north end of the existing building will now house all of our cats, thus separating them from the dogs completely." A purrfect solution.

Dakin's administrative staff will work from the building in Springfield. But Leverett has its own manager and volunteer corps, and the renovation will allow the organization to offer on-site meetings, volunteer welcome sessions, and dog training classes in Leverett.

The Leverett facility was built in 1982 as the Arundel Ranch boarding kennel. Friends of Amherst's Stray Animals bought it in 1994 and opened the Dakin Animal Shelter in 1995. The name changed to Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society in 2006 when the organization merged with Greenfield's PVHS. No renovations have been made to the building since 1999 when the new lobby was added. The shelter has worn down over time, and there were plans to buy land and build a new center. But after careful consideration, the board

decided to renovate the Leverett facility instead.

According to Harris, the community response has been terrific. "Dakin's Leverett Adoption Center is a favorite visiting place for many families and the alumnus mater to more than 15,000 animals out there in the community."

Harris said the renovation, "represents Dakin's commitment to continuing to provide necessary services to the animals and people of the upper Pioneer Valley. Many of our most important outreach programs touch all corners of the Pioneer Valley — our pet food aid programs, for instance, delivered more than 40,000 pounds of pet food to needy families in Hampshire and Franklin counties in 2011. While a bricks and mortar animal shelter is a valuable safe haven and enormously meaningful to the individual animals it helps, the best shelter isn't a shelter at all — it's a humane community."

Maintaining that commitment to a humane community has also created collaboration between Dakin and the animal control shelter in Montague. Harris said, "I was glad to hear of changes at the animal control shelter in Montague. While we are not directly involved in the renovations, I have exchanged emails with a representative from the Franklin COG to lend advice about equipment and necessities. I have offered Dakin's expertise in working out protocols and procedures for animal care and kennel keeping, as well as some surplus supplies we regularly contribute to animal control agencies or other rescue groups."

At Dakin, the \$650,000 project, for which \$450,000 has already been raised or pledged, will include more efficient heating, insulation, a new roof on the old building as well as the new addition. DPVHS is still seeking support for the project, and anyone who wants to contribute should contact Pat Yurkunas at Dakin at 413-781-4000 x 121 or pyurkunas@dpvhs.org.

You can also mail in a donation (PO Box 6307, Springfield, MA 01101) or give online at www.dpvhs.org. Be sure to earmark the gift "Leverett renovation."

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