

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 11 – NO. 38

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JULY 11, 2013

## Erving Engulfed By Fire Chief Controversy

By KATIE NOLAN

After listening to hostile questions and angry comments from a crowd that filled the town offices meeting room on July 1, the Erving selectboard extended Almon “Bud” Meattey’s appointment as fire chief for two months and appointed two additional members to the fire chief selection committee. Allegations of bias and questions of conflicts of interest have led one selectboard member to recuse himself from all discussion of the position, and prompted a call by citizens for a bylaw that would allow them to recall town officials. Whether a special town meeting will be called to pass such a bylaw has yet to be seen.

Meattey, who has been fire chief for many years, was re-appointed in 2010 for a 3-year term that ended June 30. Earlier in June, the se-



Almon “Bud” Meattey

lectboard advertised for applicants to the chief position and on June 10 they appointed a hiring committee consisting of Joseph Newton of River Road, William Bembury, Jr. of Church Street, water superintendent Peter Sanders, Lenny Clark, Jr. of West Main Street, police chief Chris Blair, selectboard member Margaret Sullivan, and Mike Hastings of Gill. Hastings, an experienced firefighter, was recommended by selectboard member Eugene Klepadlo. Meattey is one of the three applicants for the fire chief appointment.

A petition with over 100 signatures identified as from residents of Erving recommended that Meattey be retained as fire chief. Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin told the crowd that the board had received the citizen petition and appreciated people’s involvement. He explained

see MEATTEY pg 5

## Montague Swamped By Sewer Snafu



Two portable pumps transfer sewage from the broken line under Industrial Boulevard in Turners Falls

By PATRICIA PRUITT and JOSEPH PARZYCH

Sewer problems just won’t go away in Turners Falls. At their July 8 meeting, The Montague Selectboard was sorely tried having to face the sad news of further disintegration in the underground transite piping at the intersection of Industrial Boulevard and Millers Falls Road, the very piping responsible some weeks ago for the failure in the force main which led to further problems such as sand plugging

in the line and ground water build up leading to still more crumbling of the almost 70 year old transite pipes.

Highway Department Superintendent Tom Bergeron brought the board a few specimens of transite breakage showing the degree of erosion in the pipe and its crumbling condition. Paul Gilbert of Camp, Dresser, McKee and Smith, the Town’s consultants on engineering problems, had the unhappy job of explaining what had been done thus far to repair the original prob-

lem and what further complications had developed as recently as 5 p.m. on the day of the meeting, a mere two hours before he came before the board of selectmen.

Gilbert explained that a few situations had developed that were not planned: First, and for reasons still not clear, the original excavation to lay new PVC pipe bypassing the transite pipe in the road did not measure at the expected depth of grade once completed. Grade is important in order to maintain a

see PIPES pg 6

## Gardner Leaving as TFHS Principal

By CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

**TURNER FALLS HIGH SCHOOL**—Principal Patricia Gardner announced last week that she is leaving the district to take an assistant superintendent’s position at Southbridge Public Schools in Worcester County.

In her resignation letter to the superintendent, staff and the GMRSD school committee she said: “I love Turners and the students.... However, my sights have been on leading a district and this opportunity is a step in that direction allowing me to work with one of the Commonwealth’s most successful and respected master superintendents.”

Gardner has only been at the high school for two years. She was initially hired in 2011 as assistant principal; in 2012 she became principal. This year, Gardner applied for the position of superintendent, and was the only internal candidate considered for the final selection. She came very close to being appointed but in a 5-4 vote lost out to Michael Sullivan of Longmeadow. Gardner was also a finalist this past spring for superintendent of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

In her letter she thanked all of those who had contributed to the district: “Each of you were vital to the work that we have done over the past two school years. What I have truly appreciated is that we worked hard and laughed

a lot!! I have been sincere and continue to feel that you are the best group of educators that I have worked with. From those of you that have weathered the many storms to the new staff this year, we have made great strides and I see the high school pulling the district out of Level 4.”

Martin Espinola, Director of Teaching and Learning, and former interim GMRSD superintendent, who worked with Gardner from the time she was hired, remarked:



Pat Gardner

“During her time with us Ms. Gardner has been dedicated to meeting the needs of all students. The significant reduction in the drop-out rate is due in large part to her good work. I wish her the very best in her new position.”

According to new superintendent Michael Sullivan, who took over on July 1, the position for Gardner’s replacement is being advertised in *SchoolSpring* from July

3-17. To date, 16 applicants have responded. In consultation with Joyce Phillips, GMRSD school committee chair, Sullivan is forming a search committee.

By July 15 Sullivan and Phillips hope to have in place a committee consisting of three teachers (academic, arts/athletics, and special education), two parents, one student, two administrators (of whom superintendent Sullivan is one) and two school committee members.

By Wednesday, July 17 the search committee members will review the candidates’ application packets that have been submitted electronically, and recommend their top five candidates for interviews (in order of their preferences). The superintendent will then tally this data and contact the top four or five candidates for interviews.

On Monday morning, July 22, the search committee will meet in the morning to develop interview questions and review the interview process. That afternoon the committee will interview the selected candidates for approximately 45 minutes each.

Following the interviews, the committee will then discuss the candidates and recommend two or three finalists who will then be interviewed by the superintendent. A final decision is expected by July 25.

The next issue of *The Reporter* will feature an interview with Patricia Gardner.

## Detour to a Cornfield

By DAVID DETMOLD

**GILL**—Brian Piela found a bumper crop of beer-drinking teenagers accidentally detoured and up to their axles in mud in his cornfield off Main Road in the wee hours of Sunday morning, June 30. He kept them there – all 38 of them – until the state police arrived. Some had to be towed out of there; one walked home to Center Road. Piela said he listened as the state police took their names and learned that all but two of them were under 21. Most were from out of town.

Piela speculated that the young people had been following their GPS devices to a party at the home of a recent high school graduate whose parents were away from home that weekend, and had gotten sidetracked

down a dirt road about a mile north of the Slate Library and wound up stuck in his cornfield.

He said the sounds of the party were clearly audible coming from a house above the cornfield. After checking on the party at the nearby residence, Piela found forty cars in the driveway and estimated there were hundreds of teenagers at the party, until all hours on that summer night.

Piela said he suffered an unspecified amount of damage to his corn, but was philosophical about the loss.

Of the recent high school graduates he found turning circles in his field that night, and their friends at the house party above the field, Piela said, “This is their last summer together before going off to college. They’ll have some good times. But some

of them could get steered wrong during this time.”

On Monday, July 1, Piela said he wanted to bring the problem of underage drinking and partying in town to the selectboard’s attention. He was concerned that the local police were not on duty late on a summer Saturday night, early Sunday morning, and said, “The local police would have done better to educate the youths and citizens about the dangers of drinking and driving.”

He said the state police had told him that the “No Trespassing” sign he had posted, given that the dirt road is dark at night, would not provide sufficient warning of a private property line to hold up in court if the police charged the young people with trespassing. The

see GILL pg 5



Brian Piela pauses from his labors to catch his breath. Piela works seven days a week, sometimes 20 hour days, which accounts for his being up at 2 a.m. when he heard cars doing donuts near his house.



## Pet of the Week An Energetic Pup



### “Maya”

Am I not the cutest fluffy pup you've ever seen? I am an active young dog looking for an active family.

I have a lot of energy. I do enjoy playing and going for nice long walks. I will need a family that is willing to train me on how to have good manners and work with me on housetraining.

The nice thing about my adoption is there is a discount for Dakin classes here in Springfield or in Hadley. If you'd like to know more about me or meet me in person, ask a staff member!

For more information on adopting me, contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.

## Montague Libraries

### Puppets At Peskeomskut

The No String Marionette Company will perform *Treasure Hunt* on Wednesday, July 17th at 10 a.m. The puppet show will be performed in Peskeomskut Park across the street from Aubuchon's. The rain location is the Carnegie Library.

All aboard this swashbuckling hunt for treasure where Jim is lured out to sea in search of adventure and excitement. Little does he realize the unusual experience about to unfold. While sailing with Mike, a crusty ol' sea captain, a wild ocean storm hits. Jim is thrown overboard, and his under-water odyssey begins.

With an enchanted kiss from Jewel, a young mermaid, Jim is

able to breathe under water. In no time, this dry-lander is faced with peculiar difficulties. These include a giant clam, a fish that swallows him whole, an electric eel and an angry octopus guarding his treasure. Jewel and Jim encounter King Neptune and discover that his domain, and all its under-water inhabitants are threatened by pollution poured into the water from above. Jim must find what is lost and convince his people to take better care of their lakes and oceans so that creatures above and below the water can live in harmony.

For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

### Quality of Care. Quality of Life.

Are you looking to be part of a great team of dedicated volunteers? Join the Long Term Care Ombudsmen program at Franklin County Home Care Corp.

Long Term Care Ombudsmen visit residents living in rest homes and nursing homes and listen to their concerns. Ombudsmen receive resident complaints, and work with facility staff to resolve issues. Ombudsmen also empower residents to independently address their concerns with facility staff.

Volunteers are provided with

comprehensive training through the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, and ongoing support from their local program director.

Training will be offered in Western Massachusetts on August 20, 21, and 23, 2013.

Interested parties may contact Trevor Boeding, Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Director, at (413) 773.5555, Ext. 2241 or tboeding@fchcc.org to request more information and a volunteer application. CORI required. Are you ready to make a difference?



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

By FRED CICETTI

*Q. Is there anything I can do about all these wrinkles?*

The common causes of wrinkles include genetic influences, normal aging, sun exposure and smoking.

People who smoke tend to have more wrinkles than nonsmokers of the same age, complexion, and history of sun exposure. Cigarette smoking causes biochemical changes in our bodies that accelerate aging.

Here's some advice from the American Academy of Dermatology about reducing the signs of aging:

\* Wear sunscreen every day because the sun's rays can accelerate signs of aging. Use a sunscreen or facial moisturizer that offers broad-spectrum protection and has an SPF of at least 30.

Be sure to apply sunscreen to all skin that is not covered by clothing.

\* Do not tan. Getting a tan from the sun or a tanning bed exposes you to harmful UV rays that can accelerate aging, causing wrinkles, age spots, a blotchy complexion and even skin cancer.

\* Moisturize. Moisturizing traps water in the skin, which can help reduce the appearance of some fine lines and make your complexion look brighter and younger.

\* Test products, even those labeled *hypoallergenic*. To test, dab a small amount of the product on your inner forearm twice a day for four to five days. If you do not have a reaction, it is probably safe to apply to your face.

\* Use products as directed. Active ingredients can do more harm than good when too much is used. Applying more than directed can cause clogged pores, a blotchy complexion, or other unwanted effects.

\* Stop using products that sting or burn unless prescribed by a dermatologist. Irritating the skin makes signs of aging more noticeable.

## Senior Center Activities – July 15 to July 19

### GILL-MONTAGUE

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

All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.

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

### Monday 7/15

10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:55 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

### Tuesday 7/16

10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga  
12 p.m. Lunch  
COA Picnic Postponed  
**Wednesday 7/17**  
10 a.m. Aerobics  
12 p.m. Lunch  
12:45 p.m. Bingo

### Thursday 7/18

9 a.m. Tai Chi  
12 p.m. Lunch  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday 7/19**  
10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

### ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals.

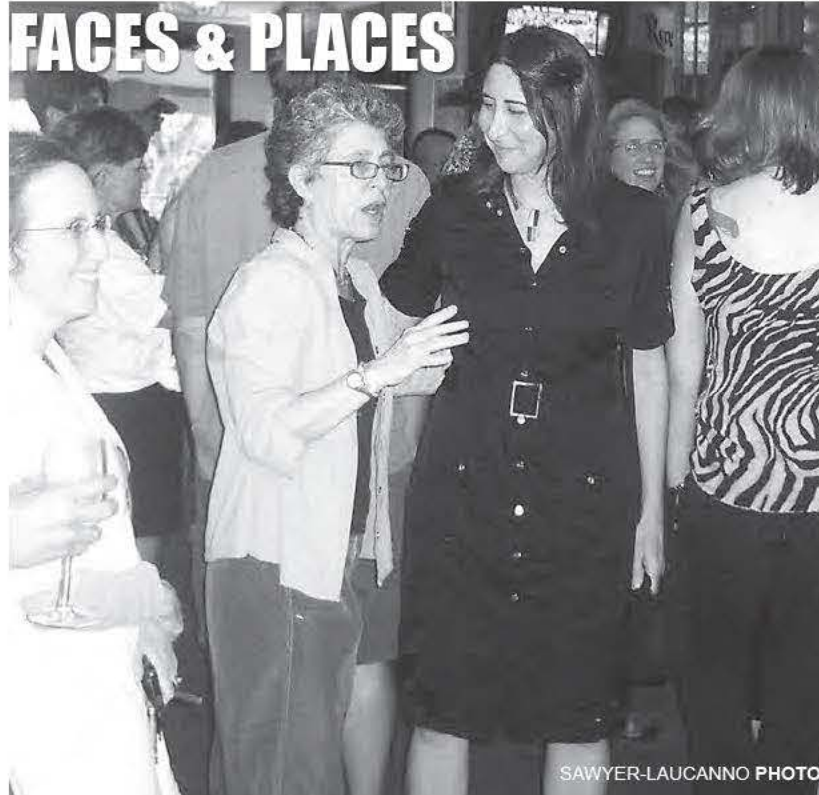
Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at (413) 423-3308, for meal information and reservations.

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

### Monday 7/15

9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10 a.m. Osteo-Exercise  
12:30 p.m. Movie- TBA  
**Tuesday 7/16**

## FACES & PLACES



SAWYER-LAUCANNO PHOTO

Anne Jemas (L) talks to outgoing Turners Falls RiverCulture director Lisa Davol (R) at a sendoff for Lisa at the Rendezvous last Tuesday. Hats off to Lisa for her 7 years of steadfast and creative service to Turners Falls!

## Brick House Seeks Business Manager

Duties include bookkeeping, accounts payable/receivable, budget oversight, payroll oversight, financial reporting. Good computer skills required, including fluency with PeachTree Accounting software. This position is 10-12 hours per week, with a flexible schedule. Pay is \$18-20/hr with prorated benefits.

Visit [www.brickhousecommunity.org](http://www.brickhousecommunity.org) for organizational info.

Please send a cover letter and resume to: Business Manager Search Committee, The Brick House Community Resource Center, P.O. Box 135, Turners Falls, MA 01376, or email [director@brickhousecommunity.org](mailto:director@brickhousecommunity.org). No phone calls please.

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

### Wrinkles in Time

\* Limit the number of skin products that you use. Using too many products on your skin, especially more than one anti-aging product, tends to irritate the skin. This often makes signs of aging more noticeable.

\* Shop smart. People often think that the more expensive a product is, the more effective it will be. This is not always the case. There are some very effective, affordable products in the skin care aisles of your local stores.

\* Give products time to work. While a moisturizer can immediately plump up fine lines, most products take at least six weeks to work. Sometimes it can take three months.

*Q. How about wrinkle creams?*

Research suggests that some wrinkle creams contain ingredients that may improve the appearance of wrinkles. But many of these ingredients haven't undergone scientific research to prove this benefit. The American Academy of Dermatology says that over-the-counter wrinkle creams do little or nothing to reverse wrinkles.

However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved

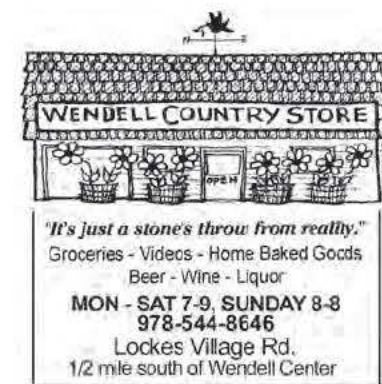
prescription tretinoin cream to treat aging skin. In addition, the FDA has also approved lasers for skin treatment.

Tretinoin cream, which is a vitamin A derivative, is sold under the brand names such as Atralin, Avita, Renova, Retin-A and Tretin-X.

Tretinoin cream is approved for reducing the appearance of fine wrinkles, roughness and dark spots. It will not eliminate wrinkles. It will not restore skin.

Lasers remove layers of skin. Laser therapy is an outpatient treatment requiring anesthesia.

Send your questions to [fred@healthygeezers.com](mailto:fred@healthygeezers.com)



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## RECYCLE

### PAPER

Week of July 15th  
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more info? call: 863-2054

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## LOCAL BRIEFS

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

Come learn about the story of fire on the **Montague Sand Plains** on Saturday, July 13, from noon to 2 p.m. Explore a unique habitat designed by fire, ice, and sand. Find: sand dunes, scrub oak, pitch pine, and blueberries. Join a DCR interpreter for an introduction to this amazing, threatened habitat.

The hike is easy to intermediate difficulty. Don't forget water, bug repellent, and sun screen. Please arrive at the Great Falls Discovery Center by 11:30 a.m. for carpooling to the site. For more activities visit [www.greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org](http://www.greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org).

The **Gill/Montague School Partnership BBQ** is Wednesday, July 17, from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the tables by the river at Unity Park. Everyone is invited. Bring your friends and family along with a side dish or beverages to share, if you can. The partnership will supply the rest.

The **Quinnikutuk II** has begun another season. Take a relaxing cruise through the French King Gorge and learn about the fascinating natural,

geological and cultural history of this stretch of the Connecticut River.

There are a few things you might need to know: It is important that you call ahead to reserve your seats, 1 (800) 859-2960, days of operation are Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Cruises are sometimes canceled because of high water and flooding conditions. The season runs until October 20.

Bring your binoculars and interest in wildlife on board the Quinnikutuk Riverboat for this special cruise on Saturday, July 20, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.. Ralph Taylor, Mass Wildlife's Connecticut Valley District Manager, will be on board to answer questions and share an update on the **status of bald eagles and other species of interest.**

How is the river important as a migratory corridor for waterfowl and fish? What kinds of fish inhabit this stretch of the river? What is happening to wildlife populations both in the river and along its shores? Learn about the success of the Bald

Eagle Restoration Project, evident in restored breeding populations along the river, in Massachusetts and in surrounding states.

Mr. Taylor will also give an update on populations of Connecticut Valley residents such as black bear, deer and moose. Bring your questions and sign up for this special cruise along a scenic six mile stretch of the Connecticut, as we explore the French King Gorge, the "narrows" and Barton Cove.

Sacred Heart / White Eagle Society will host their annual **Polka Mass, Chicken Barbeque, and Dance** on Sunday, July 21, at the White Eagle Picnic Grounds located on Plain Road in Greenfield.

Mass begins at 11:30 a.m. at the picnic grounds and is officiated by Father Stan from Our Lady of Peace Church. The chicken barbeque starts at 1 p.m., followed by music and dancing from 2 to 6 p.m. The Eddie Forman Orchestra from Hadley will provide the music.

Tickets to the event must be purchased in advance by Thursday, July 18th from Society officers or at Butynski Farm Stand on Colrain Road in Greenfield. The cost is \$12 per person. For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Dottie at (413) 774-4749.

Don't forget the **Turners Falls Block Party** on Saturday, August 10, in downtown Turners Falls.

There will be a Block Party Trivia Night fundraiser on Thursday, July 25, at Jake's Tavern, Avenue A. in Turners Falls from 8 to 10 p.m., \$10 per person to play. Winner will get a basket of goodies donated by local businesses. There will also be a raffle. The block party organizers are still looking for more vendors. Please contact Colleen at [cacampbell31@gmail.com](mailto:cacampbell31@gmail.com).

Greenfield Public Library has **free passes** for local attractions that may be borrowed for the day by patrons with library cards. Attractions include The Eric Carle Museum, the Springfield Museums, Magic Wings Butterfly Conservatory, and more. For more information or to reserve a pass, visit [www.greenfieldpubliclibrary.com](http://www.greenfieldpubliclibrary.com) and click on the link for Museum Passes.

The **Museum of Our Industrial Heritage**, located at #2 Mead Street in Greenfield, is open for the summer season every Saturday and Sunday afternoon from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. until September 1. The Museum's collection of artifacts, archival material, and historic photos represents nearly all of Franklin County's 26 towns as well as Athol. New this summer, a Jacquard loom made by Smith College students will be on exhibit, with the textile industry a special focus. Admission is free, with donations appreciated. For information, please visit [www.industrialhistory.org](http://www.industrialhistory.org).

Christopher Sawyer-Laumanno,  
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**PRE-REGISTRATION** is now being offered for children in **grades K-2** at **Our Lady of Peace Church.**

In addition to the educational components, **students are gradually introduced to service opportunities and participation in prayer through monthly children's Masses.**

For registration or further information contact Carol Holubecki, Director of Religious Education at 413-863-2585 or [1952gary@comcast.net](mailto:1952gary@comcast.net).

## Brick House Summer Workshop Series Begins

By ANNE HARDING

All summer long the Brick House will offer free workshops facilitated by community friends and neighbors. Funded once again by the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts with additional support from Greenfield Savings Bank, 2013 marks the third year of skill-sharing by community members.

The program started in 2011 with a collective of volunteers who planned, promoted, organized and taught a series of workshops. There were spring and summer workshops offered in 2012 that grew out of requests from the Turners Falls Parent Council and The Brick House Teen Center. This year features many original presenters and organizers, added training for facilitators, and a series of Parent/Educator Workshops.

The 2013 season started off with a kick-off barbecue on Saturday, June 28 and the workshops started this week with Kids Gardening where children age 3 and up will be planting, caring for and harvesting vegetables from the Brick House

Snack Garden. It's not too late to sign up as this workshop will be held every Tuesday through the end of August. Other participatory workshops for young children include: making butter, making ice cream and a special visit by Linda Hickman with "Mother Goose on the Loose" on July 12.

Workshops targeted to youth include "Build-a-Bench" where participants will actually design and construct a community bench for the Brick House with Joe Landry and Tyanna Normandin. There will also be workshops on how computers work and what the guts of the computer look like along with basic bicycle maintenance (bicycle maintenance to be taught in English with Spanish translation).

A fun focus this summer is a cooking series most of which will be taught in English with a Spanish translator. Topics include Vegetable Fermentation and Vinegar Pickles with Corrin Meise-Munns; and Jellies and Jams from Scratch as well as Tomato Sauce from Scratch with Candace Sutton. It will be a real treat to travel to Undergrowth Farm

and see artisan Mexican tortillamaker Lidia Ovalle lead participants through the traditional grinding of blue corn maize to the cooking and eating of the blue corn tortilla! This workshop will be taught in Spanish and translated to English.

General audience workshops include a Spanish only first aid certification facilitated by Erin Ibrahim and an English CPR certification course. Jared Libby will lead a training on Sound Recording in the PowerTown Style while Ana Keck will teach Print-making and Color Theory. Adults of all ages are also welcome to attend the computer and bicycle workshops in the youth category.

For the full program listing please visit the Brick House Community Resource Center or see the website for more information [www.workshopseries.info](http://www.workshopseries.info) Registration forms can be found at Suzee's Third Street Laundry, the Brick House, Turners Falls Women's Resource Center, Montague Catholic Social Ministries Playgroup, Turners Falls Senior Center and the Rendezvous.

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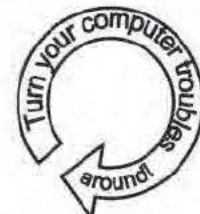
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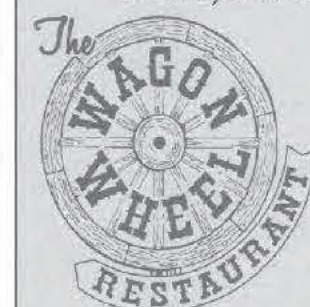
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# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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## Claim No Easy Victories

Last fall, when nightly break-ins were occurring on almost a daily basis in downtown Turners Falls, the *Reporter* pounced on the story and on the arrest of two individuals: Lance Rice and Terrence Carter. We prominently displayed their mug shots in the paper; twice more we ran the same mug shot of Lance.

Then, in early April, Tammy Johnson, Lance's mother, showed up at the *Reporter's* office. "Stop running photos of my son," she said. "He's not who you think he is. Yes, he used drugs and I don't defend that. But he's not really a bad kid."

We talked with Tammy. We learned more about Lance, and about her and her family. The more we listened, the more we learned. The editor asked Tammy if she thought Lance would like to tell us his side of the story, a dark story of addiction and decline. She was somewhat surprised. "Yes," she said. "And he loves to write. Maybe he could write about his experiences."

The editor asked to meet Lance. The next day, when he showed up at our office, he and the editor talked for an hour or so. By the end of the conversation, Lance had been engaged to write his story. Many of you read his account that we published over two issues, May 9 and May 16. His story brought him into dialogue with Nina Rossi, proprietor of Nina's Nook, and a victim of one of his break-ins.

Others took note, including Karen Brown, a New England Public Radio journalist who also contributes to *The Boston Globe*. She rang up the paper and wondered if we could put her in touch with Lance because she had been so moved by his story. We did. On July 1, her piece on Lance, Nina, and drug addiction here in Turners was published in the *Globe*.

Lance is now in New Bedford, in a hard-as-nails rehab center. He's kicked his habit, and is learning bit by bit how to put his life back together. Since we know Lance, we feel pretty confident that he'll succeed. We also know that Lance is lucky. He's just 23; he wants to get clean; he is as aware as anyone that drugs can completely alter your existence.

But drugs, particularly heroin, are still very much a part of life for a good many in downtown Turners. Most nights in the alleys and side streets off the avenue drug dealing and drug taking are still

visible. The drugs generally come from elsewhere; but Turners has become not just a dumping ground but also a buying ground for users from other towns.

The gutting of community police funds in 2010 began seriously eroding a police presence in the downtown. Since then, the situation has worsened. Some downtown residents also argue that the move of the police station to the hill has also drastically altered patrols in Turners.

This situation, compounded with "cheap heroin," has led to what Sheriff Chris Donelan has termed an "epidemic." In response to the situation Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan has implemented the Northwestern District Anti-Crime Task Force to assist local law enforcement. Since April the task force has made over 15 arrests for illegal narcotics.

Arrests may be necessary, but so is a solution to the core problem. As we know from Lance, and as the police are very well aware, criminal activity, such as burglaries, is often directly the result of addiction.

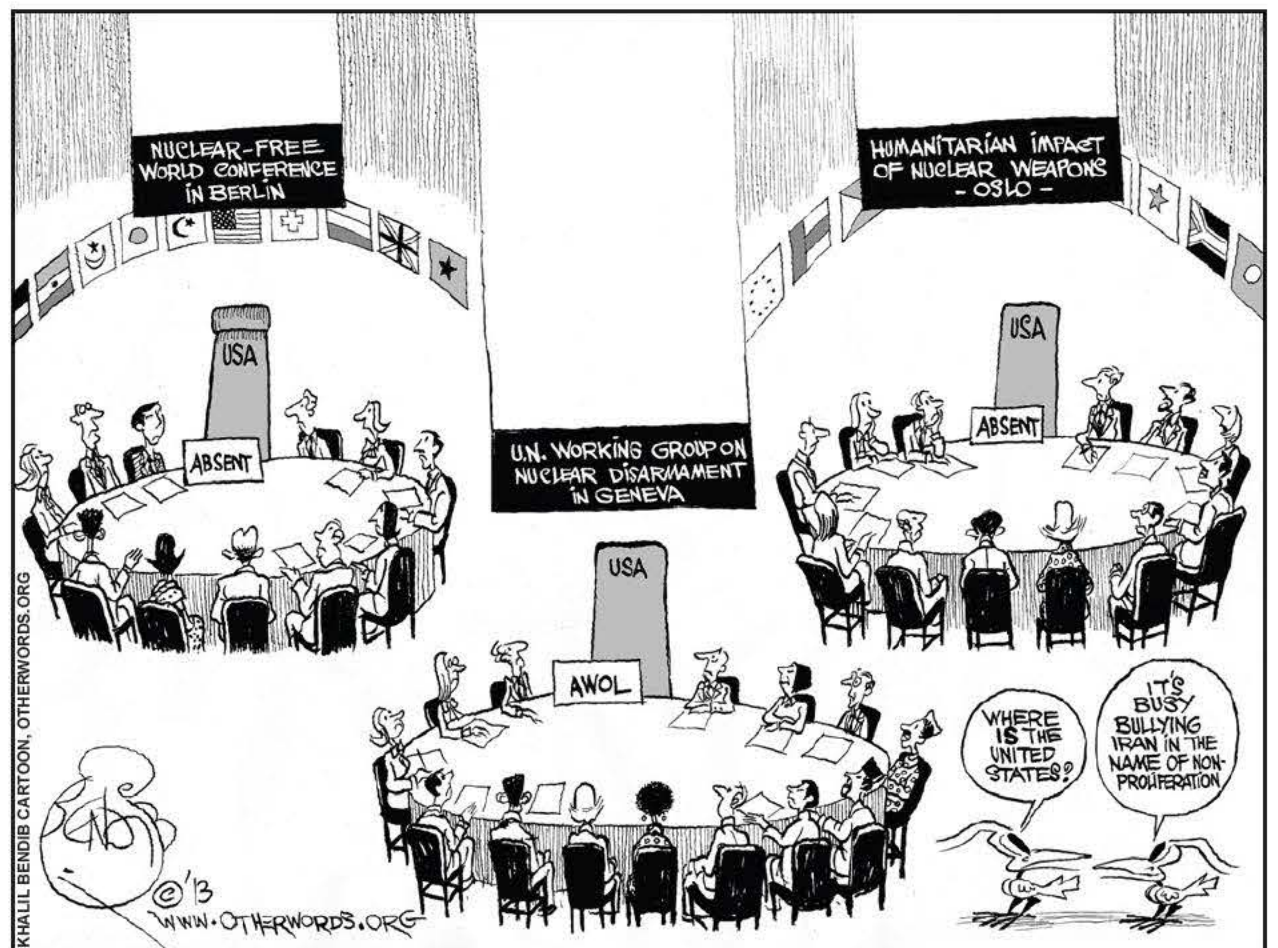
We must become more proactive as a community in dealing with the use of illegal drugs. The state and feds must kick in more money for drug counseling and rehabilitation. More important even are opportunities for young people – jobs, schooling, and training.

Self esteem is in short supply among many of the young people caught up in a cycle of poverty and seeming dead-endedness. Breaking this cycle through constructive opportunities – maybe even a skate park would help – is one way to change a culture of desperation and despair.

As an addict, a cop, a drug counselor or a probation officer will tell you, drug use is complex. And there is no single remedy. But without addressing the root causes of the issue, it will not disappear.

Turners has made enormous strides in recent years and we have absolute faith that the positive changes will continue. We are thrilled by the revitalization we see along the avenue with new shops opening, with existing businesses continuing to build customers. The Block Party, the ongoing Third Thursdays, the Livability Study, Pumpkinfest and other activities are major gains and are transforming downtown.

But we cannot ignore the problem that still exists in the shadows.



## Letter to the Editor

### Thanks for Unity Park Improvements

My family and I extend great thanks to the Montague Parks and Rec department and all involved in the impressive renovations of Unity Park in Turners Falls.

The playground is now safer and more interesting, with a diverse array of equipment on which children can balance, climb, hang, spin, explore,

play, and grow.

The community garden raised beds and handicapped-accessible planters are a welcome addition, and I commend the park planners for including them.

I have already seen how the park's renewal has helped to make Turners Falls a destination for

families throughout our area.

We are thrilled to have this great resource right across the bridge, and are proud of our neighbors in Montague for making it happen.

— Joanna Frankel  
Riverside, Gill

## GUEST EDITORIAL

By KARL MEYER

On June 28, 2013, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Director of Energy Projects Jeff C. Wright ruled against the US Fish & Wildlife Service as it sought two extra weeks to review hundreds of pages of just-released Proposed Study Plans for the relicensing of five Connecticut River hydro projects. "The request for a 15-day EOT to file comments on the licensee's proposed study plans is denied." EOT is FERC-speak for "extension of time."

Those studies will impact this four-state river for the next 20 to 40 years. Agencies joining that request included the National Marine Fisheries Service, MA Div. of Fish & Wildlife, The Connecticut River Watershed Council, The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, NH Dept. of Environmental Service and The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.

One big reason for that request was the difficulties in evaluating the impacts of FirstLight's Northfield Mountain/Turners Falls hydro operations on the entire Connecticut River ecosystem. Beginning last fall, FERC begun deviating from its standardized relicensing model when it scheduled public site visits to FirstLight sites weeks before the company released a publicly-required 500-page Pre-Application Document describing its complex pumped storage operations and machinery.

This spring FERC also supported FirstLight's expedited-request to conduct a series of complicated

river flow studies this summer – an allowance falling well outside FERC's strict licensing timelines. In doing so they let the company schedule three days of river visits by fed/state agencies smack in the middle of their deadline to comment on FirstLight's 434-page Updated Proposed Study Plan. FirstLight released that document June 28; comments to FERC are due July 15, 2013.

Even after nine meetings with the power company and FERC, many agency representatives continued to decry the lack of critical scientific detail provided in FirstLight's documents. Those were put together by its team of five consulting firms. Ironically, those handpicked FirstLight firms will conduct the next two years of river studies – the ones meant to protect the river.

A fox and chicken coop analogy applies. FERC is employing a legal double standard here on the Connecticut. If you are a public agency or citizen seeking protections for the ecosystem – well, even little rules are THE RULES. At the same time it appears corporations can continuously and sometimes massively ignore federal license requirements with impunity.

In FERC's own words, the Commission "enforces the conditions of each license for the duration of its term, and conducts project safety and environmental inspections." Yet today Holyoke Gas & Electric is half a decade – and counting, in violation of its 2002 agreement to construct facilities to end the evisceration of federally endangered shortnose sturgeon and other "federal trust" fish migrating downstream at their Holyoke Dam facility.

So, why have a license at all? Upstream in 2010 GDF-Suez FirstLight dumped some 45,000 cubic square yards of reservoir sludge directly into the Connecticut at Northfield Mountain over a 90-day period – the equivalent of 40 dump truck loads of muck per day, smack in the middle of fish migration season. Yet in current documents FERC states their inspections have never found FirstLight in violation of its license.

The US EPA found FirstLight in violation of the Clean Water Act in August of 2010, and ordered a

massive clean-up, though the ecosystem damage was already done. In an August 4, 2010 letter EPA sanctioned FirstLight for violating "FERC License No. 2485" and polluting the "navigable waters of the United States."

A subsequent letter dated August 10, 2013 from FERC's Biological Resources Branch Chief Steve Hocking to FirstLight Manager John Howard specifically referenced the EPA's sanctions, directing him to "article 20 of your license." Yet there is virtually no FERC mention of that egregious violation in current relicensing documents.

That's the standard that for-profit companies are held to here. It rivals the Pirate Code. Currently there is no watchdog entity on this river willing to go to the mat to protect the ecosystem.

If, like on the Hudson, there were an organization like Riverkeeper – which cites "enforcement" as one of its main responsibilities, these egregious injuries to the Connecticut would not likely stand. Holyoke Gas & Electric would have been in court long ago for killing endangered sturgeon; and the full range of FirstLight's lethal impacts on the Connecticut's migratory fish when all are diverted into their turbine-filled power canal would've been fully investigated.

FERC's inaction is a disgrace. FERC Director Wright requested that questions regarding that EOT denial go to Ken Hogan at: 202-502-8434, or [Kenneth.Hogan@ferc.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Hogan@ferc.gov). Ken has presided over the CT River relicensing hearings.

Also, you can find FirstLight's 434-page "Updated Proposed Study Plan" at: [www.northfieldrelicensing.com](http://www.northfieldrelicensing.com) under Documents. The public has until July 15, 2013 to send comments on that plan to FERC. You do that at: [www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp](http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp). You must cite FirstLight's project numbers, P-2485 and P-1889, and be sure to note that you are commenting on the "Updated Proposed Study Plan."

Karl Meyer is a member of the Society of Environmental Journalists. He lives in Greenfield, MA. Read more at: [www.karlmeyerwriting.com](http://www.karlmeyerwriting.com)

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## WE WELCOME

## YOUR LETTERS!

Montague Reporter

58 4th St Turners, 01376

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## GILL from page 1

state police let all the youngsters go, and many drove off, in Piela's estimation, still under the influence of alcohol.

He said that when he first arrived at the cornfield, after his wife heard the sound of tires squealing and cars racing past their home near River Road and woke him up, he called 911 and blocked the access road to the field with his own vehicle, keeping the young people penned in until the state police arrived. Some of the teenagers, "who appeared to be drunk," according to Piela, approached him with beer bottles in hand in a manner he regarded as threatening.

"A local cop could have made it there easily," said Piela. "The state police cover a vast territory." He also said the local police would have been less likely to release the young people, "drunk and driving," that night.

The selectboard called Police Chief David Hastings in to explain why there was

no local coverage that night. Hastings said he had worked from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday, June 29, at which point he went off duty until 4:30 the next morning. He met the state police on the Gill-Montague bridge after they finished processing the young people, at about 5:30 in the morning, and they informed him of the incident.

Selectboard member Ann Banash told Piela, "Things like this don't happen every night. It's always a dilemma in town: 'How much coverage do you need?'"

Hastings said he is short-staffed while Sergeant Chris Redmond has been taking earned vacation time, and all five of his part time officers are busy working fulltime in nearby towns. Even so, Hastings said, he changes up the hours of local coverage, so as not to give potential law-breakers advanced warning of when local police are on- or off-duty.

Piela said both the parents and daughter of the home that

hosted the large party called him to apologize for the incident. He said he thought the daughter was brave to do so, and she also offered to work off the damages.

Hastings said the state police had agreed to make the list of names of the 38 young people found in the cornfield available to him, and he planned to share the names with the parents of the young woman who hosted the all hours party. The father of that household wants to contact the parents of the young people who were found in the cornfield, to let them know about the incident.

"Maybe they shouldn't get arrested," said Piela. "Maybe pulling weeds and painting buildings would teach them not to drink and drive."

He added, "I would have appreciated my loss more if they were taught a lesson. Maybe they would find another town, or another spot in town next weekend."



## Governor Signs State Budget With No Local Aid Surprises

By JEFF SINGLETON

**MONTAGUE** — On Sunday, July 7 Governor Deval Patrick signed a Fiscal Year 2014 state budget of over \$32 billion. Patrick, noting a reporter's "sour expression" at being required to attend the event on a Sunday, declared "Ten Days... we need every day." The Governor's comment apparently was a reference to the fact that he had reached the legal ten day limit allowed before taking action on a budget bill passed by the legislature.

The Governor's jovial demeanor may have hid disappointment that his original highly ambitious "legacy budget," which included major initiatives in education and transportation, had been severely clipped by the legislature. That budget, proposed in January, was funded in part by a

significant increase in the state income tax, a proposal which was essentially dead on arrival at Beacon Hill. The legislature substituted a motley mix of tax, fee increases and optimistic revenue projections, as well as significantly reducing the scope of the Governor's education initiatives.

For example, while the final budget proposal includes an increase in Chapter 70 local school aid of over 3.5%, or over \$120 million, the original Governor's proposal had increased school aid by nearly \$210 million. This increase greatly expanded state funding for early childhood education (eliminating the "cap" on pre-kindergarten enrollment) and fully funded the transition to the "new" formula for determining local education contributions, originally passed into law in 2007.

On the other hand, the legislature increased "general aid" to cities and towns by \$20 million over the governor's proposal and increased transportation aid to regional school districts by nearly 20%.

A key element of the FY 14 budget is an across-the-board fifty percent increase in local road and bridge repair aid, know as "Chapter 90." The program allocates total amounts to individual cities and towns at the beginning of the fiscal year and then reimburses them out of these funds for specific approved projects. The big increase in the program was a key part of Governor Patrick's infrastructure initiative.

The legislature approved the total amount, \$300 million, in a separate "Chapter 90 bill" in the spring. However, the

see FY'14 page 12

## MEATTEY from page 1

that the board would not be able to talk about items in Meattey's personnel file or issues discussed in executive session. An employee's personnel records are confidential under state law and can only be discussed publicly if the employee agrees to opening the file.

Goodwin and selectboard member Margaret Sullivan were present at the July 1 meeting. The third selectboard member, Eugene Klepadlo, who resigned as fire department first lieutenant in August 2012, citing the conflict between his work on the selectboard and as fire department member, was not at the meeting. Klepadlo informed the board at the June 24 meeting that he would not be able to attend on July 1.

The crowd of approximately 40 people was angry and unruly at times. Mutters and grumbling were heard often during the meeting, and some people called out comments without being recognized.

One resident asked, "Why all of a sudden has a committee been formed? Why was the decision made to form a hiring committee?" Citing the confidentiality of personnel records, Goodwin replied, "We can't answer." Antonio Rubinaccio of State Road asked, "Is there something wrong? Why did he get fired?" Town counsel Donna MacNicol answered, "The issues discussed in executive session cannot be discussed openly." Rubinaccio said to the selectboard, "We are paying you, the taxpayers own the town. Why are you willing to make this decision?"

One woman said, "Bud Meattey has been involved in the fire department since he was this high, and has been involved in many fires. The safety of the fire department is the safety of the town." Another resident called out, "What will it cost the town when a firefighter gets

hurt?"

Goodwin told the residents, "We have to make a decision in a few weeks time, and we'll be listening to the input of many people. We can't talk about the past. The decision will be made in open session. Hold me accountable."

Speakers suggested that the decision not to reappoint Meattey was the result of "personal issues" against him, called the action "rail-roading", or that it was a matter of "trumped-up charges" against him. One man asked sarcastically "Did he kill anyone? Is he a sex offender?" Singling out selectboard member Margaret Sullivan, several speakers suggested that she instigated the search for a new chief. One man commented, "We should ask for Margaret's resignation."

Sharon Porlier of North Street was applauded when she told the board, "I support Bud. I have just heard rumors [about him]. From what I have seen and heard in town meetings, he has my support."

### Speakers suggested that the decision not to reappoint Meattey was the result of "personal issues" against him.

Noting that his appointment ended on June 30, Meattey asked, "Who is your chief right now?" He added that he had put in an application earlier in the day for a 1-year term and asked, "Would you be willing to act on that right now?" Met with silence from the selectboard, he asked, "6 months?" When this was not answered, one of the crowd called out, "We need a new selectman." Goodwin made a motion to appoint Meattey as interim chief for

3 months. Sullivan did not second the motion, so it died.

"The other selectboard member [Klepadlo] supports me," Meattey commented.

Asked who would act as chief until the appointment is filled, Sullivan said that the two deputy chiefs would take over.

Another man asked, "Has there ever been any written formal complaint against this man?" Meattey commented, "I've never seen any written complaints." Town counsel Donna MacNicol asked, "Are you opening up your personnel file? It would be in your file." Meattey answered, "You know it ain't that bad, Donna." MacNicol persisted, saying "I have a copy of your personnel file right here..." as she picked a manila file folder up from the table.

One woman said, "I support Bud, I don't care what's in his personnel file. I feel safe with him as fire chief."

One man asked, "Who pays the fire chief?" When Goodwin answered that the taxpayers did, the man continued, "Then I get a chance to vote on it, because I pay taxes. He's my employee." Goodwin explained "that's not the process that's in place, that's not how hiring is done... You put trust in the selectmen that you elected."

Another person said that the selectboard was supposed to do what the townspeople want. MacNicol answered the the selectboard is the chief executive officer of the town, with specified rights, duties, and responsibilities, "required to represent the best interests of the town, not just what you want."

Goodwin then moved to appoint Meattey as interim chief for two months, and Sullivan seconded the motion and the two selectboard members voted to approve the interim appointment.

Responding to the angry atmo-

sphere in the meeting, Rebecca Hubbard of Gary Street said she had not heard the rumors about Meattey, but "We elected the selectboard to do the best for the town." She suggested that people show their support for Meattey by writing letters to the selectboard — "I know they have the best interests of the town at heart," she said. "I don't know that," a voice called out.

### According to the state ethics commission, Klepadlo would have an ethical conflict in voting on the appointment.

Several residents speculated that the fire chief selection committee was not unbiased because it includes Sullivan and former town employees or their relatives — "No one on the committee is just a plain resident." Goodwin replied that Sullivan was appointed to the selection committee in an open meeting.

Winnifred Stone of State Road commented that "The perception is not good," about the committee, because Sullivan and Goodwin are the two selectboard members who will vote on the fire chief appointment. According to the state ethics commission, Klepadlo would have an ethical conflict in voting on the appointment, because his son is a firefighter in the department.

With Sullivan on the selection committee, "she's recommending candidates to herself," Stone said. Another commenter said, "Margaret should be removed from the committee, because she's biased, and she's seen his personnel file." Goodwin answered that Sullivan is part of the hiring management team and that including a selectboard

member on a hiring committee is standard practice.

Goodwin and Sullivan voted to add Stone and Porlier to the fire chief selection committee.

Meattey thanked the assembled citizens for their support and thanked the board for the two-month appointment. In closing, he suggested, "Why not have the fire department elect the chief? It's something to think about."

An extra selectboard meeting was held on July 8. "If I choose to vote for someone other than Buddy Meattey, there is the appearance that because he owes me money I could be biased against him. Even if I vote for the most qualified person," selectboard member Margaret Sullivan wrote on the Disclosure of Appearance of Conflict of Interest form she presented to the July 8 selectboard meeting. Sullivan told the board that she had consulted the state ethics commission and town counsel Donna MacNicol, and was advised to disclose the appearance of conflict of interest in the selection of fire chief for the town.

She explained that she had rented an apartment to Meattey and Sonya Patterson from 2004 to 2006. In copies of letters accompanying the disclosure form, she wrote that Meattey and Patterson moved out of the apartment owing her \$1,450 in back rent, \$100 for a bounced check charge, and \$495 for fuel oil. According to Sullivan's documentation, several attempts were made in 2006 and 2011 to collect the back rent money, without success. Sullivan wrote on the disclosure form that she has not and will not make other attempts to collect the money and had written the debt off. On the form, Sullivan checked a box to confirm the statement, "Taking into account the facts that I have disclosed above, I feel that I can perform my

see MEATTEY page 7

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## PIPES from page 1

downhill slope to keep the sewer flowing.

Baltazar apparently installed the manhole lower than specified because the existing sewer pipes coming into the manhole were two and a half feet lower than the invert of the new manhole. Baltazar's crew tried to mitigate problems by setting the manhole a foot lower, but it still wasn't low enough by a foot and a half, according to Bergeron.

Second, after repairing manhole #1, and with the Montague Highway department geared to repave the road when work on the manhole had finished, Bergeron discovered a sinkhole around 5 p.m. on Monday. This would be the second or third occurrence of a sinkhole in the vicinity of collapsed piping.

This sinkhole escalates the project again into a public safety concern.

Gilbert has suggested that manhole #1 and the sinkhole repair become a change order to the original project. Abbondanzio is exploring that option with the Department of Revenue which had authorized the first expenditure of up to \$500,000 at the outset of this crumbling pipe situation.

Third, there remain two other manholes to connect to the newly laid PVC pipe; these are known as manholes #2 and #3. Foresight Land Services is now beginning to survey the sewer and the laterals coming into the sewer main from buildings along Industrial Boulevard. These laterals, however, are higher than a proposed sewer main that needs to be installed up to the third manhole

on Industrial Boulevard.

The plumbing of the buildings along that section will, in turn, need to have both their laterals as well as interior plumbing raised up in order to drain into the new higher sewer, or they will need to install sewer pumps.

The sewer main from the manhole, at the intersection of Millers Falls Road and Industrial Boulevard, up to the manhole at the intersection of the entrance to the Mobil Home Park will also need to be elevated in order to drain into the new sewer manhole and connecting sewer.

CM Smith has made two suggestions as to how this larger and complex connection might be done. One or both will come before town meeting in late August or early September, once the town has firm fig-



Montague DPW Director Tom Bergeron, Foresight Land Services Field Supervisor Daniel R. Brown, and assistant Shilo Majoy pore over CDM Smith's plans as they ponder how to re-grade the sewer.

ures concerning costs. The two suggestions or options for solving the transite problem are known as the orange option and the red option.

The orange is tentatively projected at \$485,000; the red at \$920,000.



## Greenfield Road Hearing Draws Impassioned Crowd

By CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

**MONTAGUE** – It was a full week before the Fourth of July but there were plenty of fireworks at the June 28 public hearing regarding proposed changes to Greenfield Road. Nearly 40 Montague residents, many of them Greenfield Road abutters, crowded into the second-floor meeting room at town hall to express their opinions about the major road reconstruction project slated to begin in 2014. According to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation officials, who were on hand to present information to the public, the purpose of the hearing was to inform the public about the final design plan for the road.

The meeting began with Tracy Wu, the Boston-based MassDOT project manager, explaining that this hearing was to discuss only the first of three reconstruction projects in the works for Greenfield Road: the section beginning 75 feet from the Canalside Bike Path to 25 feet beyond the intersection with Hatchery Road.

Besides Wu, those also present from MassDOT were Karen Axtell, right-of-way compliance manager, and Rich Masse and Jeffrey Moynoski from MassDOT District 2. Also in attendance were Geoffrey Howie and Mark Elder, consultants on the project from Greeman-Pedersen, Inc., and from the town, Walter Ramsey, town planner and Frank Abbondanzio, town administrator.

Wu and Howie explained that the major work was to excavate and replace the existing pot-hole ridden pavement, in the process widening the lanes from their present 10-11 feet plus one-foot shoulder to 11 feet plus four-foot shoulder/bike lane. In addition to the lane widening, the plan calls for intersection improvements, replacement of existing drainage culverts, construction of retaining walls, installation of new highway guard, and installation of new signs and pavement markings.

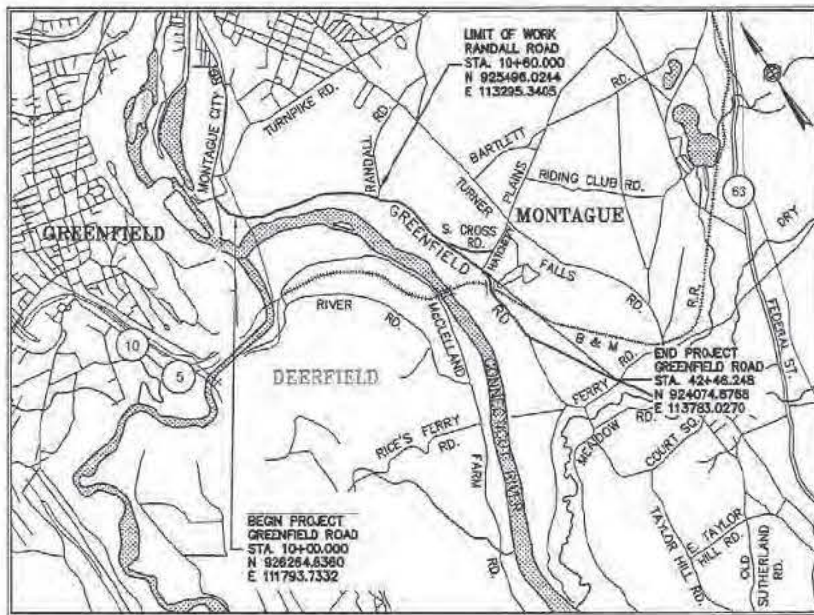
"A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project," said Wu. She

further explained that this would require a small amount of land acquisition, as well as temporary and permanent easements. She noted that the Town of Montague was responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. The estimated cost for the program is \$5.8 million and will be funded entirely by a combination of federal and state appropriations.

Wu and Howie could barely get through their introductory remarks before ZBA member but non-abut-

placing hay bales to prevent erosion and trimming trees to improve sight lines. She did, however, note that because of the need to build several retaining walls, these easements would be "more than temporary." In response to a question whether an abutter had the right to refuse, she said that refusal was an option. But she added that the town did have the right through "eminent domain" to acquire what was necessary to ensure the success of the project.

Rewa wanted to know if there



The proposed Greenfield Road project plans for the first phase of reconstruction (map courtesy of the Montague Planning Department)

ter, John Burek, of 4 Burek Road, began clamoring to be heard. Standing, and waving a sheaf of documents that he said represented plans for Greenfield Road dating back to 1980, he stated quite clearly his feelings: "Kill the funding. This is not a good project!"

Andy Rewa, who owns several parcels abutting Greenfield Road, was also quite adamant in his opposition to any proposed reconstruction: "You don't live here," he said. "Nobody's taking your land but you want to take ours." Rewa's remarks opened up a lengthy discussion regarding right-of-way issues and the easements necessary for the project.

Karen Axtell, from MassDOT, explained that most of the temporary easements were simply for protecting the environment such as

would be compensation. The answer was yes, but she made it clear that it was up to the town to negotiate with all abutters for all types of easements and acquisitions. John Burek piped up: "These are not temporary. They are permanent easements. The town should be responsible for maintenance." Ramsey agreed, and said this was an issue that would be settled.

Other issues that concerned those living along Greenfield Road generally involved safety. Among others, Diana Souza, an abutter, noted that speeding was a major problem and that the road was far from safe. She also said that the curve near Randall Road was a serious hazard. "Why not straighten out the road?" asked one audience member. The consultants agreed that this would help al-

leviate a major problem but noted that this was impossible because the flanking land was designated APR (Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program) which impedes any construction.

Montague Police Chief Charles (Chip) Dodge, seated in the audience, stated that he was very well aware of the speeding problem on Greenfield Road, and agreed that the curve near Randall Road was dangerous. "Frankly," he said, "we don't have enough cops to enforce the speed limit. That said, we will do what we can. Safety is my job." He likened speeders to gamblers. "Speeders gamble that they aren't going to get caught. Eventually, though, their luck will run out." He also added that he fully supports the project.

Not everyone in attendance was opposed to the project. Abutters Pat and Mark Allen said they were definitely in favor of the project. Pat Allen noted that creating wider shoulders would greatly enhance safety for bicyclists and walkers.

Newly-elected selectman, Michael Nelson, who also lives on Greenfield Road, said that although he was also going to lose a small amount of land, he was absolutely supportive of the project. "Improving the road will also improve safety." He added that a family member had suffered a serious accident on Greenfield Road, and that safety was paramount in his thinking, as well. He also requested that new signage be installed to direct those unfamiliar with the road both to its hazards and to the fact that the road ended effectively at Hatchery Road. Ramsey assured Nelson that this was part of the plan.

Peter Hudyma, also an abutter, said that he, too, supported repaving the road, improving sight lines, clearing trees and creating reasonably-sized bike paths.

Despite the sometimes raucous back-and-forth many in the audience felt that most of their questions had at least begun to be answered. It also seemed clear to most that since the project wasn't costing the town any money it would and should go forward. There will be further hearings. The dates have yet to be set.



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### Town of Montague Semi-Annual Preliminary Tax Bills Mailed

Fiscal 2014 Real Estate and District semi-annual preliminary tax bills were mailed, June 27, 2013. Also mailed were the 2014 preliminary personal property bills, according to Patricia Dion, Tax Collector. These bills are based on the adjusted net tax owed on your property for the prior fiscal year, and as a general rule will be no more than half (50%) of that amount. Payment for the preliminary bill is due on or before October 1, 2013.

To obtain a receipted bill, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope and both copies of the bill with your payments. Any new owner not in receipt of a tax bill should contact the Tax Collectors' office at 863-3200, ext 202.

For the convenience of the Town of Montague residents, you may pay all real estate, district, and personal property bills online. To pay a bill online, visit our website at [www.montague.net](http://www.montague.net), click on online tax payments under quick links, and complete each screen to process your payment. We now accept credit cards for online payments. Please refer to the fee schedule before completing your transaction. It's convenient, fast and secure.

Barrel stickers for the trash pick-up are available in the Collector/Treasurer's office. The cost for a sticker is \$78.00. This sticker will cover the period of July 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013.

The office is open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 8:30 – 5:30, and Wednesdays 8:30 – 6:30. The Town Hall is closed on Fridays.

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MEATTEY from pg 5

official duties objectively and fairly.”

Selectboard member Eugene Klepadlo read aloud a letter, written after consulting his own lawyer and MacNicol, saying he had had discussions with Meattey and with at least one of the other applicants for the position and had reviewed “some of the positive things that he has done in his tenure as chief.” However, Klepadlo said that the statement made at the July 1 meeting that he supports Meattey’s appointment as fire chief was incorrect. He wrote that, because of his conflict of interest because his son is an Erving firefighter, “I do not support Chief Meattey or any other candidate over the other.”

Klepadlo wrote that he must be removed from all discussions dealing with the fire chief appointment. He asked selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin to move the issue of the fire chief to the end of the meeting agendas, so he can leave the room during the discussions.

In a plea for resolution of the contention the appointment has caused, he wrote: “I hope that my colleagues can set aside their differences on this issue, agree to disagree and come up with a solution that best serves the town. There are 3 members on this board so that there may be 3 opinions that can be discussed in a healthy manner.

“Margaret Sullivan has served this town for many years in many different capacities with its best interest at stake; Andrew Goodwin has also served the town with its best interest at stake. I have read that in a couple of different places that the face of the

board of selectmen should change, yet I ran unopposed in this year’s election, as did many others that ran for the various offices and boards. I hope that all parties involved will take a step back and let things cool off and let this board do the job that needs to be done.”

Noting a group of approximately ten interested residents at the meeting, selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin moved ahead on the agenda to the special town meeting item. Saying he had been approached by several residents, he asked the board to consider calling a special town meeting to vote on a town bylaw setting a recall procedure for elected officials. Currently, Erving does not have a provision allowing the recall of elected officials. He presented the 2012 recall bylaw passed by Northfield as an example.

Goodwin said that a recall bylaw would allow voters to hold elected officials accountable for their actions. He said the process was generic and not aimed specifically at any one person. Sullivan asked, “Did you suggest this to anyone prior to last Monday’s meeting?” Goodwin said, “No.” Sullivan said that she understood that town administrator Tom Sharp had been asked to research recall bylaws. She commented, “I think it is a gross misuse of taxpayer funds for Tom to do this.” She said she told Sharp not to do the research. Goodwin said that after Sullivan’s objection, he had researched recall procedures.

Klepadlo said, “I think this is an annual town meeting issue.” He cited the lack of participation in May’s town election, with less than 80 votes

cast and the greater number of people who attended the annual town meeting. Goodwin asked if the board would be willing to call a special town meeting with a recall bylaw on the warrant. Both Klepadlo and Sullivan said they would not, preferring annual town meeting consideration of the issue. Goodwin noted that citizens can bypass the selectboard and petition the town to hold a special town meeting and can place items on the warrant by petition. He suggested that the attendees consult with the town clerk to find out the procedure. The majority of the attendees left the selectboard meeting after this suggestion.

Interviewed after the selectboard meeting, town clerk Richard Newton said he had been approached by a group of citizens about petitioning for a special town meeting and that he told them he did not know the procedure, but would research it and give them the information.

The board decided to meet July 22, and August 5 and 26, with August 15 as a backup date if decisions need to be made before August 26. The board decided that the fire chief appointment will be placed on the agenda for each of the meetings, at the end of the agenda, so that Klepadlo will be able to leave the meeting during the discussion. They decided that they will make the appointment by the August 26 meeting, or at an earlier meeting if the fire chief selection committee has made a recommendation and the recommendation has been discussed by the board.

Meattey’s interim appointment, made July 1, ends August 31.



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

The Rest of the Business

Much of the July 1 and July 8 selectboard meetings were spent discussing the fire chief’s position, and discussing the possibility of recalling elected officials (see article, page 1).

Chief Almon “Bud” Meattey was extended as interim chief through August. Winnipeg Stone and Sharon Portier were added to the search committee. Selectboard member Eugene Klepadlo removed himself from all discussion on the appointment, and member Margaret Sullivan disclosed the appearance of a conflict of interest over her own involvement.

But there was other business to attend to at both meetings.

On July 1, board appointed Herman Meattey of East Main Street as second deputy fire chief, and Sarah Meattey of East Main Street as firefighter and EMT. Meattey was not able to make these appointments because the appointees are family members. He had provided the selectboard with a list of the other fire department appointees for FY’14 earlier in the day.

Arthur Johnson of Mountain Road was appointed animal control officer, as recommended by police chief Chris Blair.

And on July 8, the board discussed a letter from Green International Affiliates, Inc. detailing planned safety improvements to the Farley Flats section of Route 2, where the road will be widened and straightened. The scenic overlook/turnout on the westbound side of Route 2 will be rebuilt. In addition, the western and eastern intersections of Holmes Avenue with Route 2 will be closed, and Holmes Avenue will be extended east to intersect with Wheelock Street. According to Sharp, the project is still in the design phase, with construction proposed for 2016.

The selectboard reviewed the annual goals and objectives for senior center director Polly Kiely, police chief

Chris Blair, highway/wastewater/water director Paul Prest, and town administrator Sharp. Goodwin noted that the purpose of the goal/objective setting was to set a baseline for measuring how the employees perform their jobs over the next year. Goodwin recommended that employees who act as supervisors “cascade” the goals to their reporting employees, having them complete portions of the tasks, so that “their success defines yours.”

The board approved accepting the bids from Commonwealth Guard Rail of Westfield to construct security fencing for the boiler building at the former Usher Plant for \$4,236 and around the water tank in Erving center for \$9,313.

Tighe & Bond, Inc. provided a preliminary bid of \$577,000 for streetscape improvements and sidewalk construction in two areas: from Erving Elementary School to the Senior Center, and from the monuments to the fire station. However, because the amount in streetscape grant obtained through the efforts of former Representative John Olver is \$435,000, the selectboard advised that the project scope be revised to fit the budget.

Prest discussed replacing the streetlight bulbs with LED lights at a cost of \$24,395, which includes a MassSave grant of \$200 per light fixture. Prest said that the town was expected to save \$7,113 on annual electricity costs. He proposed replacing just four of the current bulbs initially to see how the LED lighting was accepted.

CTC, Inc. recommended reprogramming the geothermal pump system at the senior and community center to reduce the system’s energy use. Goodwin asked that architect John Catlin be invited to the July 22 meeting to explain what was wrong with the design and why changes were needed.

Sharp said that plans were being made to hold the

town’s 175th anniversary celebration in conjunction with the fall festival. Sharp said events might include a guided hike to the hermit’s cave and opening of the historical museum to the public. Goodwin suggested an anniversary parade to kick off the fall festival. Sharp said that the recreation commission, which was also meeting July 8, was considering anniversary activities.

The board asked Sharp to get answers in writing from Ken Elstein of Hampshire Power regarding aggregation of electricity supply to residential and business consumers. Under the Hampshire Power municipal aggregation program, HCOG would buy electricity in bulk and sell it to Erving residents and small businesses. Hampshire Power says that this is likely to result in lower electric bills for consumers. Their municipal power supply program has resulted in 12% savings for municipal customers.

Among other questions, the board has asked for examples of electricity bills, and information about the effects on an individual consumer who switches back to WMECO or National Grid after using Hampshire Power.

Prest told the board that he and the building inspector had inspected the former Pleasant Street School building and that the inspector considered the Union 28 files stored in the basement a fire hazard. Prest was asked to get a written inspection report and Sharp was asked to send a letter to the Union 28 superintendent asking to have the files cleaned up.

The board plans to meet on July 22, and August 5 and 26. August 15 was set aside for a possible additional meeting, should the fire chief selection process require it. The board hopes to make that appointment on August 26. Meattey’s interim term ends August 31.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

String of Unlicensed Drivers Busted

Monday, 6/24

12:10 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle on Forest Street. Found to be in process of repossession.

Tuesday, 6/25

12:30 p.m. Report of past breaking & entering at Tim’s RV, East Main Street. Under investigation.

5 p.m. Arrested [redacted] on a warrant.

6:30 p.m. Report of breaking & entering of motor vehicle on West High Street. Items taken. Under investigation.

Wednesday, 6/26

5 p.m. Barking dog complaint on Northfield Road. Dog quiet on arrival. Advised owner.

Thursday, 6/27

2 a.m. Assisted Montague PD with intoxicated male on Avenue A.

8:30 p.m. Medical emergency on North Street.

Friday, 6/28

3:50 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for speeding and for operating a vehicle with no license and no insurance.

5:15 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating one with a suspended license and no inspection sticker.

Saturday, 6/29

2:15 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

[redacted] for operating one with a revoked license and no seatbelt.

2:15 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for allowing unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and not wearing a seatbelt.

7:20 p.m. 911 hangup call on North Street. Found to be a child playing.

11 p.m. Noise complaint on North Street. Quiet on arrival.

Sunday, 6/30

12:54 a.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Monday, 7/1

3:30 p.m. Motor vehicle crash on east end of State Road (Route 2). Assisted.

Tuesday, 7/2

12 noon Report of motor vehicle lockout with child inside. Assisted owner in gaining entry.

6:30 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, failure to inspect, and speeding.

8 p.m. Assisted on scene with medical emergency at Franklin Grocery.

Wednesday, 7/3

9:55 a.m. Suspicious vehicle reported on East Prospect Street. Found to be Jehovah’s Witnesses.

2:10 p.m. Report of dog running on Route 2 near paper mill. Could not locate.

4:18 p.m. Assisted Gill PD with possible breaking & entering on Main Road.

8:30 p.m. Report of a fire on North Street. Found to be a campfire.

8:45 p.m. Loose dog returned to Mountain Road owner. Advised owner of leash law.

Thursday, 7/4

6:45 p.m. Assisted Mountain Road resident in response to call.

9:50 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for lights violation and operating under the influence of liquor.

Saturday, 7/6

7:30 p.m. 911 hangup call from Laurel Lake payphone. Found to be children playing.

8 p.m. Car vs. pedestrian accident reported at Laurel Lake Road camping area. Investigated.

9:30 p.m. Report of motorboat floating down Connecticut River. Its motor had died but its operator was OK.

11:55 p.m. Fireworks reported in Erving Center. Quiet upon arrival.

Sunday, 7/7

12:02 a.m. Suspicious subject reported on French King Bridge. Checked out OK.

12:07 a.m. Large fight reported across from Box Car Restaurant on Main Street. Unfounded.

9:48 a.m. Suspicious activity at Pleasant Street residence. Report taken.

2:40 p.m. Assisted disabled motor vehicle on Route 2.

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# "New Blood" at the Weekly Farmers Market



FURBISH PHOTO

Eddie Johnson hands the customer a bag of "two flowers for the price of one."

By JOHN FURBISH

**TURNERS FALLS** – This year, when you walk along The Avenue toward the Great Falls Farmers Market, and cross 2<sup>nd</sup> Street on a Wednesday afternoon, things look a little different. The tables in the "anchor position" (right by the colorful Market mural) appear pretty much the same and, now in 2013 as in years past, they are filled with excellent produce at reasonable prices. But you'll be surprised as you get closer and you don't see familiar faces behind the tables. Where are Bob and Janice Johnson?

Bob Johnson, Senior, has retired

and his sons, Bob Junior (Rob) and Eddie now manage the operations. The Johnson Family Farm has been agriculturally active for more than a century and in the forefront of local produce for more than two decades. Bob, Sr. had been a mainstay at the Saturday Farmers Markets in Greenfield. He helped start the midweek offshoot of the Great Falls Farmers Market about fifteen years ago, and had continued to maintain the anchor position at Great Falls until his retirement from there this year.

As a farmer, Bob was fueled by a positive work ethic and would work seven days a week, no Sundays and

holidays off, no vacations. He refused to get bowed down by the extremes of nature, too much sun, not enough rain, too much wind. Bob hated to be idle, so farm work was just part of life. "You'll never get rich by farming. Only two things are certain: every year, there's more wear on your jeans, and every year the government will want more taxes."

Bob also had a definite attitude of diligence at the Markets and would show up rain or shine and stay open all the posted hours. "Why close down an hour early, and risk losing a loyal customer", he said. One year, the late-spring

coldness frosted his tomatoes. But Bob was there, open for the Market, with his produce spread out on the tables.

The 12-acre Johnson Farm is located in West Deerfield. Though on the border of the Deerfield River, the land is a bit hilly. The soil drains well from rains and stays dry, so this year's rain did not devastate any crop. Some of this farm is good for pasturage and orchards (6 apple trees, 6 peach trees, pear trees starting up). About 1900, William Johnson, Senior bought the land and started the farm. He and his son William, Junior following him farmed mostly tobacco on the land.

About 1960, Bob Johnson, Senior took over the farm next. His main occupation in adulthood was as a foreman, running equipment for the Consolidated Cigar Corporation, which raised shade leaf tobacco for cigar wrappers. Bob would work on the farm after his job shift, getting accompanied by his two sons, and he brought livestock to the Johnson Family Farm. After the introduction of artificial cigar wrappers, the Consolidated operations went out of business, and Bob worked fully on his farm, and started expanding into sales at local Farmers Markets. Bob kept working into his 70s, but decided this year to retire from the Markets and just to put in some work in the mornings on the farm.

Bob's two sons (both with grown children) now operate the farm and conduct sales at the Markets. Rob and Darlene live in the original farmhouse, restoring it as time and finances permit. Bob and Janice live in a ranch house in the front.

Eddie and Judy rent an apartment in Shelburne Falls. The family continues setting up at local Farmers Markets. Eddie and Judy are in Greenfield on Saturdays. Rob and Darlene handle Holyoke on Thursdays. Mostly it's Eddie and Judy at the Wednesday Markets in Turners Falls, with Rob and Darlene as back up. Sometimes the Johnsons set up in the main Market in Springfield on Saturday.

This spring, Rob and Eddie did most of the work to get the crops in. Working most days, Janice tends to things in the greenhouses. The brothers did most of the tractor work to get the land ready for planting. Ninety percent of their acreage holds vegetable crops. There are 3 greenhouses now, with a fourth on the way, to provide "hothouse crops" like flowers, plantings, tomatoes, and cucumbers, including European style cukes. As they learned as teens doing their chores, Rob and Eddie do new plantings of quarter acres of corn every Monday, to make sure their corn will be crisp and fresh week after week in the Market on The Avenue.

This summer, the Johnson tables at the Wednesday afternoon Markets will be jam packed with cukes, corn, cauliflower, broccoli, hothouse and tilled tomatoes, zucchini, various types of onion, leeks, apples, peaches, pears, bright carrots, green peppers, and potatoes in different shades. The summer squash, green beans, peas, beets, and cucumbers look especially good this year, says Eddie.

The spirit of Robert Johnson, Senior lives on in the Great Falls Farmers Market in the presence of his younger son, who manages the farm set-ups most Wednesday afternoons. Eddie learned what he considers "garden" techniques by doing his chores while growing up on the Johnson farm. There was a time in his twenties that he went for the allure of definite paychecks and started construction work locally. Then he found he could make three times as much (\$50 an hour) by working in eastern Massachusetts and moved to Boston in 1993 and stayed there through 2009. Even so at the end, he was commuting back to work on the Johnson Farm, and moved back here.

Eddie likes the lifestyle of farming, particularly how you work for yourself. You do what has to be done, and not what somebody tells you to do. Farm work is very hard, but it's extremely rewarding to see things spring up from the soil from your efforts. The pay is not that great says Eddie, but you adapt to frugality and will find that you achieve a peace of mind and contentment that is worth more than a million bucks. If you got to know Bob Johnson at the Farmers Markets, now's your chance to meet Eddie and get to know him. Johnson Farm produce is high quality, the prices are fair, and be sure to ask Eddie about the "weekly specials".



The Franklin County Sheriffs Training Academy recently graduated 22 new Corrections Officers. These Officers will be added to the ranks of Corrections Officers in Franklin and Berkshire Counties. They completed an 8 week Boot Camp style training with intense academic and physical requirements. Pictured with the new officers are Lead Trainer Sgt. Jordan Lehtomaki and Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan.

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## Block Party Parade Challenge

By ANNE HARDING

**TURNERS FALLS** – Pam Allan, of K Street, is putting out a challenge to the Villages of Montague, to all neighborhoods, groups, artists and anyone else who was disappointed in the 2012 Block Party Parade.

She wants to see the return of the Non-Precision Lawn Chair Brigade, lots of dogs in canine finery, music to march by, and as many representatives of Turners Falls and other

villages as possible. Ideally, parade participants will show spectators what it's like to live in our towns and villages!

So far, it appears there will be a K Street presence with marchers from Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish in traditional garb and a neighborhood float celebrating the K Street Porch Crawl. Allan is hoping the Prospect/Central Street crew might let us know what it's like to live in their neighborhood and what about the Patch??

Beverly Ketch is organizing a celebration of the Turners Falls Community Gardens and Friends of the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter and Adoption Center is planning to be part of the parade. I've heard a rumor that Basically Bicycles will have a presence in the parade, so I'm wondering: will he bring a specialty recumbent bicycle, a new-fangled recumbent tri-cycle, tandems, unicycles, or electric bikes?

Don Clegg is working with the Great Falls Discovery Center, and plans for the return of the goose are

underway. Maybe the Mass DCR could make arrangements for Smokey the Bear to march in our parade! Let's hope we see the Grace Kidz represented, and the Brick House. Start your planning now, folks: there's only a month remaining to the TF Block Party – it's on Sunday, August 11!



USFW ranger, Krista, marching with the USFW goose

## Volunteers Keep the Montague Business Association Moving Forward

MBA Guest Column

By HOLLY GIVENS

The Montague Business Association actively partners and collaborates with the community and promotes Montague's long-term economic growth.

Over the last year, the organization has met with local law enforcement officials and hosted speakers to talk to members about topics such as business security and maximizing Social Security, and represented its members in the recent Downtown Livability discussions. In addition, the association started its first round of grants to projects that support its mission.

Heading up the Montague Business Association are four volunteers on the Steering Committee:

Linda Ackerman – Active on town boards and in the community for many years, Linda is manager of the Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank. She is instrumental in the town's annual Halloween Trick or Treat on Avenue A effort, and for many years also coordinated the tree lighting downtown. Linda brings depth of knowl-

edge of the Montague Business Association's early days, since she was one of the founding members, and served as co-chair and chair of the first iteration of the MBA. The mission to include the needs of businesses from every village in Montague is one of her priorities with the Association.

Eileen Dowd – Eileen, along with her husband artist Jack Nelson, operate Carriage House Designs from a studio overlooking the canal in Turners Falls. The business specializes in making customized memorial markers for pets, personalized stone benches and crocks, and etched glass. Eileen is very familiar with the needs of artisans in business. She sees the MBA as a catalyst for encouraging a stronger community in Montague, and as a way to celebrate the area's unique offerings.

Lynne Rudié – A self-employed graphic designer for over 35 years, Lynne can make the smallest display ad or the largest billboard look great. She works with existing and start-up businesses designing corporate identity, packaging and marketing materials. Lynne got her

early professional training in New York City free-lancing for magazines and independent studios and especially loves to design books and newsletters. She regularly produces event programs and a wide variety of collateral pieces and advertising. Part of the MBA Steering Committee since 2009, Lynne designed the MBA logo and puts together the Association's group advertisements. Lynne wants to make sure the MBA keeps focused on the needs of peo-

ple as business owners/operators, firmly believing this enhances the community as a whole.

Stephan Smith – An expert in insurance planning for individuals and businesses, Stephan is vice president at A. H. Rist Insurance. He has organized the two Shredding Days for the MBA, and will host the upcoming Summer Social at his home. Stephan often volunteers to run MBA meetings. He looks forward to the day when people from

more businesses regularly attend meetings to network and address problems businesses in the area commonly face.

Check the Montague Business Association Facebook page for updates on how we support, promote and develop Montague's businesses.

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on July 10, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Water, Water Everywhere...

Another summer is passing and Montague still has no safe public swimming area. The Turners Falls High pool is closed for renovations this summer. As Parks and Rec Director Jon Dobosz put it, "It has always been a frustrating problem. We are surrounded by water, but there is no accessible point to the river. At accessible points it is dangerous."

Two teenage boys drowned while swimming in the Rock Dam area in 1998, in spite of their having been warned of the danger.

Still No DPW Superintendent

The Montague DPW finds itself without a superintendent, due to the January resignation of longtime road

boss Edward Parks-Mleczo, Jr., after an investigation by the DA's office found him responsible for a major theft of funds from the town's trash sticker program. Consultant Alan Berg of the Holden, MA DPW met with the select-board on Monday to discuss his 52-page study. "You've got a good nucleus of people who want to do quality work," he told them.

A Highly Productive Venture

Tables offering top-notch produce, shaded under colorful umbrellas and awnings; pickups filled with vegetables. The Great Falls Farmers Market has found its home.

After starting up eight years ago in the parking lot of the Discovery Center, the market moved to the sidewalk of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, in the shadow of the burned-out Crocker Building. Two years later it finally found a permanent home on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, between the post office and the park. It is an ideal spot.

Montague Residents Edit Dictionary

For two residents of Millers Falls, the labor of lexicology became a labor of love when their work at Merriam-Webster's Springfield publishing house became a defining moment for romance. Karen and Daniel Wilkinson met in 1997 when Daniel landed a science editor's position, and a desk directly behind Karen, a general editor.

Turners Falls resident Emily Brewster got her assistant editorship three years ago, and sits in the same second-floor room, reading and marking, checking citations, and defining words.

Editorial: No Place to Swim

One thing is certain. When the weather is hot, kids will go swimming. We should not wait till the next tragedy to find a safe place for the children and families of Montague to swim.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Fairbrother Temporarily Blocks The Block Party

By PATRICIA PRUITT

On July 8 Colleen Campbell took a seat before the Montague board of selectman to request a permit for the annual Turners Falls Block Party. At the June 24 meeting, she had submitted a request in writing, but because she had not appeared in person, selectman Mark Fairbrother convinced the board not to move on her request until she appeared in person.

This time Colleen waited patiently to make her request for a "permit to use the public way" and to present the plans for the public use of the downtown on August 10 along Avenue A, from 3rd Street through 5th Street during the hours from noon to 9p m. The block party officially begins at 2 p.m. and ends at 8 p m. The extra hours allow for set up and take down and clean up after the event.

Selectman Fairbrother was clearly still bothered that neither Campbell nor any other representative of the block

party organizers had come before the board earlier. By this, Fairbrother meant even as early as a month or two ago, to apply for the public use permit. Campbell countered that she had applied for it in April. Fairbrother wanted her to wait another 2 weeks until the next selectmen's meeting on July 22 to see if the town's insurance could cover the block party again this year. Newly elected selectman Nelson felt that would leave too little time for the organizers to finish preparations for the event.

Selectman Boutwell saved the day with a compromise motion that town administrator Frank Abbondanzio check with the insurance company about coverage for the block party and, if it was coverable, the block party would be included on the town's insurance for the nine hours of the event. Nelson and Boutwell voted for the motion. From the audience, John Reynolds made the suggestion that

when possible, all events endorsed by the town as part of River Culture be covered by the town insurance.

Subsequent to the meeting, Abbondanzio stated that he had checked with the insurance company, and that the Block Party would be covered, as it has since its inception, by town insurance.

Mike Nelson, who created the Pumpkin Fest event for the past three years has had to buy insurance which is expensive for a less than-24 hour period of coverage. Pumpkin Fest has offered an enclosed outdoor beer garden to 21 year old plus participants. That has perhaps disqualified the event from town insurance coverage.

Most of the session was spent discussing issues with the ongoing sewer main break and repairs on Millers Falls Road and Industrial Boulevard (see article on page 1).

The meeting adjourned to go into executive session for reasons collective bargaining.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

and Charged With Breaking Into Eleven Cars

Monday, 6/24

7:41 a.m. Burglary/breaking and entering at St. Stanislaus Club on K Street: broken window, broken items inside, damage to electric meter/loss of electricity to building. WMECO advised.

2:55 p.m. Copy of poop-er scooper ordinance delivered to Montague Street dog owner.

Tuesday, 6/25

2:36 a.m. A 20 year old male resident of Fourth Street in Turners Falls was arrested on charges of domestic assault and battery.

5:02 a.m. Vehicle passenger seen placing a traffic barrel in the middle of the Canal Bridge. Vehicle stopped in Greenfield; verbal warning issued.

5:31 a.m. "Ginormous" snapping turtle removed from the middle of Avenue A.

8:53 a.m. Shoplifting reported at Food City.

2:14 p.m. Burglary/breaking and entering on Fourth Street. Possible family involvement. Verbal altercation ensued. Officers spoke with involved parties. Report taken.

6:13 p.m. A male Fifth Street resident against whom a restraining order had been filed earlier

in the day was arrested on a default warrant.

11:45 p.m. [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested in Montague City on a probation warrant.

Wednesday, 6/26

11:51 a.m. Report of unusually loud explosions at Millers Falls Rod & Gun. Police tactical unit was practicing using flash bangs.

12:36 p.m. 2 911 calls received from Montague Center regarding a 15 year old female, who was subsequently arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery.

6:31 p.m. Report of an operator of an unmarked blue pickup truck removing a traffic barrel from the street, placing it in his trailer, and driving off.

Thursday, 6/27

12:41 p.m. Caller reported that there was a fox standing in the middle of Greenfield Road watching traffic go by. Area search negative.

2:44 p.m. Dog struck by vehicle on Turners Falls Road; had to be euthanized.

10:45 p.m. [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested in Turners Falls on a default warrant.

Friday, 6/28

3:00 p.m. Two separate calls regarding a large snapping turtle in Peskemoyskut Park.

4:58 p.m. A 15 year old female was arrested in Montague City on a straight warrant.

6:10 p.m. Tractor trailer unit unable to exit Industrial Boulevard due to construction. Caller also reported that placement of traffic barrels seems to be confusing drivers. Services rendered.

Saturday, 6/29

8:52 a.m. Walk-in report of a computer monitor on the sidewalk by the public parking lot on Fourth Street. Officer located the monitor; stated it was an old monitor and appeared to have been left there.

10:28 a.m. Caller reported that a white male in his 30s or 40s had set his camera up on one of the pieces of playground equipment at Unity Park and the previous day and was asking parents if they wanted their kids' pictures taken. Report taken; advised to call back if/when he is seen again.

2:46 p.m. In a dispute over seating at the clam-bake at Millers Falls Rod & Gun, a confrontational male party allegedly knocked a bowl of

chowder and a bottle of beer off of the table and onto the reporting party and the floor. Advised to seek own charges in court.

Sunday, 6/30

5:03 a.m. Report of two white males breaking into vehicles on Chestnut Lane. Suspects apprehended and identified as responsible for additional vehicle break-ins in downtown Turners Falls.

[redacted], and [redacted], both of [redacted] were arrested and charged with eleven counts of breaking and entering into motor vehicles at night; larceny over \$250; and possession of Class B drugs.

3:49 p.m. A Park Street resident reported that his truck had been broken into and a GPS taken the previous night; an older bearded man spotted near the truck took off toward Central Street, where he had a shopping cart. Vehicle determined to have been part of

break-in spree reported earlier this day.

11:49 p.m. Report of three males running around naked on T Street. Unable to locate.

Monday, 7/1

12:24 p.m. Officers responded to a report of a disturbance at 71 Third Street. Suspect tried to escape, but was caught and subdued after a foot pursuit.

[redacted] was arrested on three default warrants.

Tuesday, 7/2

5:43 p.m. Report of bear emerging from cemetery on Turnpike Road and heading toward a group of children. Area checked; unable to locate.

Wednesday, 7/3

3:48 p.m. Report that vehicles are using the wrong lane at the construction site on Millers Falls Road that is marked with traffic barrels. Caller refused to give name, stating that he got in trouble with someone the last time he called. Report from another party who was almost in a head-on collision with a vehicle that was in the wrong lane. Arrow sign relocated to try to make traffic pattern clearer.

6:40 p.m. An inebriated 22 year old male ob-

served behaving erratically on James Avenue was taken into protective custody; released to family.

Thursday, 7/4

12:07 a.m. Police cruiser struck by another vehicle on Second Street; male party who ran from the scene was apprehended a short distance away.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with operating to endanger, red light violation, failure to signal, speeding, assault with a dangerous weapon, and obstruction of justice.

3:59 a.m. Stop sign and "Welcome to Montague" sign at Montague City Road and Greenfield Road observed to have been knocked down/vandalized.

5:06 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

Evening: Multiple reports of fireworks.

9:43 p.m. Young porcupine reported hanging around barn on Hatchery Road and frightening horses.

Friday, 7/5

10:52 a.m. Call from car wash on Montague City Road to report a dispute between two parties. over a missing car mat. Officer located mat

hanging in car wash bay.

Saturday, 7/6

10:47 a.m. A 37 year old Montague woman was arrested on charges of domestic assault and battery.

10:53 p.m. Caller reported returning home to find house broken into and many items missing. Search initiated for two male parties seen in the area upon arrival. The males were spotted on Route 63, where one had just jumped out in front of a moving vehicle. Suspects pursued and taken into custody.

Sunday, 7/7

1:00 a.m. Latest of several reports of drug activity near Fourth Street/Powertown Apartments. 11:50 a.m. Two males were attacked with a baseball bat on Second Street following a tailgating incident. Both victims required medical attention.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with two counts of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon and one charge of intimidating a witness.

3:40 p.m. A 29 year old Erving man was placed into protective custody after showing up at his mother's Millers Falls home drunk, belligerent, and refusing to leave.

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Gravel Pit Neighbors  
Address Selectboard

By DAVID DETMOLD

Frustrated with the potential settlement by the zoning board of appeals of the lawsuit brought against the ZBA by gravel pit owner Richie Roberts over his plans to expand gravel mining in one of the town of Leverett’s few commercial zones, on Route 63 near the intersection of Jackson Hill Road, about 16 abutters to the project brought their concerns to the selectboard on Tuesday night.

For the most part, selectboard chair Rich Brazeau told the neighbors they were barking up the wrong tree.

“We’re being asked to fight something that is not in our purview to fight,” said Brazeau. He also said, “The court has made the decision the neighbors don’t have standing in this case,” and added, “The ZBA is the decider. We can’t tell the ZBA what to do.”

Having attended recent public hearings on the matter before the ZBA, many of the neighbors spoke fatalistically about the prospect of the ZBA settling the lawsuit by allowing Roberts to expand his gravel pit to include five acres of land owned by Roberta Bryant, owner of the horse farm on the west side of Route 63. The open land there provides a rare vista of Mount Toby. Many of the abutters have posted signs along the highway calling for saving the farmland and protecting the underlying aquifer from the possibility of spills associated with the use of heavy equipment used in gravel mining.

Robert Schmid, whose home across the highway enjoys the vista of Mount Toby, summed up many of the abutters’ concerns when he told the selectboard, “Two years ago, the zoning board denied the permit,” for the gravel pit expansion. “The court ordered mediation. We were left out of it. What has changed in the last two and a half years?”

Schmid said, “We feel some members of the ZBA are biased towards the Roberts.” He paraphrased one ZBA member, Ray LaClaire, who suggested at a recent hearing that soccer moms cause more traffic disturbances than commercial trucks hauling gravel.

Referring to the possible expansion of gravel mining along Leverett’s main north-south corridor, Schmid said, “This is a major change for the town. We don’t have the power to make decisions, but we want to be part of

the process, and we want to be treated fairly. We didn’t sue the town, but we feel we should be treated just as fairly as the person who did sue the town.”

That person, Richie Roberts, was also present on Tuesday night, and he spoke up in his own defense.

“My family has been up on Hemenway Road trucking since my grandfather in the 1930s.” He said, “Some of us have to try to work together. Not one of the neighbors came to talk to me before they shut the pit down,” he added, referring to the stop work order posted by the building inspector at Robert’s current gravel pit and landscaping operation three years ago, when the selectboard determined he had exceeded his permit and begun mining on Roberta Bryant’s land. Her land had been placed under special tax status as recreational land (Chapter 61B) but she allowed that designation to lapse in July of 2011.

Referring to abutters’ professed concern for saving farmland, Roberts asked rhetorically, “How much longer will Roberta keep that farm going? It’s not going to be the same. It might not be some little guy like me,” who develops that land, he warned. “It might be some big guy with lots of money.”

He also said, “I’ve been in town longer than anyone else here. That doesn’t give me any special privileges, and I’ve taken none.”

Schmid wanted the selectboard to explain what official would be charged with monitoring the agreement and conditions if the ZBA approves the special permit for gravel mining on Bryant’s land. “I don’t want to be calling the police on Mr. Roberts,” he said.

Schmid also wanted to know how the process would unfold in determining whether permission would be granted to expand gravel mining in the aquifer protection zone. If the ZBA grants a special permit to Roberts, the zoning bylaws will then demand an environmental review of the gravel mining operation, and further action by the ZBA, since the land is located in an aquifer protection zone.

Brazeau said the ZBA would likely hire a geohydrologist to map the aquifer, install test wells, and put restrictions in place to prevent pollution from entering the drinking water supply.

Schmid pointed to the lack of protections – and the ongoing cost to the town – of con-

tamination from the town’s former landfill, which has entered the groundwater and contaminated private wells along a section of Teawaddle Hill Road, as a cautionary tale for the town to consider as the next permitting hurdle looms in Robert’s bid to expand the gravel pit. Brazeau admitted that the town is spending close to \$25,000 a year to test well water and ameliorate conditions for homeowners along Teawaddle Hill Road. The town is considering spending up to a million dollars to hook those houses up to the town of Amherst’s water lines.

But Brazeau suggested prior protections could be put in place to insure the safety of the aquifer along Route 63 in the event of expanded gravel mining there.

Many of the neighbors at the meeting called for the selectboard to support restrictions on the use of Jackson Hill Road by commercial trucks, except for local deliveries. Jennifer Storey said she had been run off the road numerous times in her car by heavy trucks using the narrow, curving dirt road. She talked of being forced to drive in reverse down half the length of the road after meeting a truck with earth moving equipment on a trailer. “I’ve been run off the road pushing my daughter in a carriage by a trucker. This is our experience. The people who live on the road travel extremely slowly. There are steep drop offs and no guard rails.”

Police chief Gary Billings said, “I do not have a problem with occasional truck use of the road, provided it is not used by Mr. Roberts or anyone else as the main route.”

Roberts said his trucks had detoured around to North Leverett Road or taken other routes for the last two weeks. Neighbors thanked him for this change, which had been noticed by residents. Roberts said the detour added three miles to his route to and from his landscaping business.

Julie Shively supported reconfiguring the Cave Hill Road intersection with Montague Road so that trucks, and cars, could negotiate that turn safely.

After the neighbors left the meeting, the selectboard instructed highway boss Will Stratford to look into installing additional pulloffs on Jackson Hill Road, to allow for two way traffic to negotiate the narrow road more easily. Stratford suggested doing a traffic study on the road, to determine its current use.



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Energy Committee  
Recommends Energy Contractor

By JOSH HEINEMANN

At its first meeting of the fiscal year, Nan Riebschlaeger, representing the energy committee, described the three sealed bids that the committee received for energy audits on the town’s buildings. The bids came in response to the town’s request for proposals for Level 2 ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers) audits. She said that each of the proposals had something to recommend it.

Opening the bids revealed that Guardian Energy Management Solutions was by far the least expensive, at \$4,000. The next lowest bid was \$12,500, and the highest was \$17,500. All three bids came with good and credible references and Guardian would reduce their charge to nothing, if they are given a contract to do work they recommend. Riebschlaeger felt the town should accept that proposal, and selectboard members agreed.

Wendell budgeted \$12,500 of the \$138,125 of the green community grant money for the Level 2 audit, which is a required first step for actually getting the rest of the grant money.

Solar Farm in Wendell

Dan Mascroft of Envirohealth met with the selectboard to discuss some details of a draft of the contract for the town’s hosting a two megawatt solar farm that Envirohealth is planning to build on private land in Wendell. At a prior meeting selectboard members had suggested that Envirohealth pay more than ½ cent per kilowatt to the town as rent to match Seaboard Solar ½ cent plus the discount Seaboard gives Wendell on electricity the town buys.

Mascroft suggested that Envirohealth will be making payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) as well as the rent, and that the PILOT money is likely to amount to far more than the discount.

Town Coordinator Nancy Aldrich had called the Northfield and Orange town administrators to see what arrangements those towns had made for collecting PILOT or other property tax payments. The Orange administrator had not returned her call yet, but Northfield taxes the solar farm at Northfield Mountain as personal property.

Mascroft said that

Envirohealth could not pay that much. Solar facilities still cost too much relative to the income they produce selling electricity to the grid. He said the town of Bolton will get 11% of the value of electricity produced from 2013 to 2020, then 9% for ten years then 7% for ten years, and he was comfortable with an arrangement like that. On selectboard member Geoffrey Pooser’s suggestion, town assessor Stephen Broll was asked into the room for his opinion but, caught totally by surprise, Broll was not ready with an answer.

Mascroft was comfortable with a deadline to complete work within 15 Months, but he is still waiting for National Grid officials to complete their work on the net metering agreement so he can start the physical job of installing the solar panels. Also the solar farm in Wendell is designed to produce 2.0 megawatts AC, but it will produce 2.4 megawatts DC. It is reasonable to assume that the AC amount is the relevant amount, but he was not absolutely certain; the limit is 2.0 megawatts, unspecified after Seaboard Solar completes installing the 8 megawatts of solar panels that Wendell is hosting for them.

Town Mends Fences  
with a Tree Line

Broll had other business he wanted to discuss with the Selectboard. He is a board member of the Valley Community Land Trust, which owns the property next to the town office property, east and down the hill. They have sold that house, and the new owner is making repairs, but he wants a fence uphill from the house as a screen from headlights of cars that park for the office building facing east. Selectboard chair Christine Heard asked what kind of fence and thought that a stockade fence would be ugly and would deteriorate quickly.

Near the end of the meeting board members walked down to the house and introduced themselves to the new owner, Brandon Eckert, who was still working in the waning daylight. The fence would be on town land, part of the community garden, but a part that is still unused. A prior occupant of the house had asked the community garden committee to plant a screen of trees, and committee members agreed to do it, but the occupant moved out before the trees

were planted and that project was forgotten. Eckert was amenable to the suggestion of a living fence, arborvitae and he said he could be patient in getting smaller trees and allowing them to grow.

Tax Title taking

Treasurer Carolyn Manley reported that the owner of the house at 63 Locke Village Road, the occupied house that Wendell acquired through tax taking in land court, contacted her and said he would pay his debt to the town and to land court. Manley said that land court has to accept the offer, but the town does not, but does not want to own the house either. Heard suggested and the other board members concurred that the town accept the offer, but with a time limit. She suggested August 15, but the selectboard meets August 14, so the selectboard set August 13 as the deadline for accepting payments. 2014 taxes will have to be paid on time.

Pole Hearing

Paul Davis, an engineer from U.C.Synergetic, of Sunderland, representing Verizon asked for permission to move a pole that is 6’ from Blue Heron Road (formerly the Erving side of Old Farley Road) 15’ parallel to the road to allow for an upgrade of electrical service. Verizon is responsible for the poles in Wendell.

No highway department employee was present, but since the road is dirt, and used by only a few vehicles, and since the highway concern is only that poles stay 6’ from the road or more, the selectboard approved his request. No abutter came for the hearing.

Board member Geoffrey Pooser said that it was worthwhile for him to attend the MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Initiative) meeting. He said the fiber optic connections are running behind schedule, and will not be completed by the end of June. Projection is for the fall, and he said that could be as late as December 20. Access Plus, which is providing the internet connections in the town center now seems like a good company to stay with after the fiber optics are connected.

Board members signed appointment slips for Kathleen Nolan, Judy Hall, Nina Keller, Patty Smythe, and Myron Becker to the kitchen committee.



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# GMRSD Roundup

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

At the school committee meeting on June 25, Acting Superintendent Marty Espinola announced that the Gill-Montague Regional School District will once again sponsor Camp Razzle Dazzle, a summer program at Montague Elementary for students in grades 1-5, run by elementary school teachers and staff. The program’s goal is to make summer learning fun, and to keep students involved in activities aimed at maintaining the skills and knowledge they’ve acquired during the school year.

According to Espinola, students will read, write and do some math in the morning program and will participate in a scientific study of Biomes in the afternoon. The program will include field trips to the local library as well as the Springfield Museum of Science. Wednesday Watermelon days should also be great fun. The program was started over 10 years ago when administrators and teachers became concerned about students’ loss of reading skills over the summer months. By June 7, the program had already reached their quota of 72 students for Camp Razzle Dazzle but they started a waiting list and Espinola said they would do their best to accommodate all students who want to participate, with consideration for staffing requirements and group management.

This year’s camp program begins on Monday, July 8. The special education department will run its own program during the same time period and they will share resources at the school and integrate the students where possible and appropriate. The Book Bingo program, started at Gill Elementary last year, will also continue this summer, with the goal to keep students reading over the summer months.

Joyce Phillips, school committee chair, thanked Espinola for doing a fine job as acting superintendent, bridging the gap between when the departure of Superintendent Mark Prince and the hiring of Michael Sullivan who took over on July 1. The school committee members all joined in warm expressions of appreciation along with those in the audience and Espinola smiled broadly looking very pleased.

Mark Chapulis of the Management Solution returned to answer some questions raised by committee members about the way school choice money is handled by the district. Part of the confusion comes from the way the budget is now presented, in the form of an all funds budget which shows all revenues that come into the district in detail, including sources previously left out of budgets, such as grants. Sandra Brown, member from Gill, said she was used to seeing the school choice revenues and expenditures listed together, so they could see if there was a surplus or a deficit. This may have been useful as a way to evaluate how well the district was doing in relation to school choice but it is not

a true reflection of the way choice funds are handled.

Chapulis said that these two things are dealt with separately in the budget, that whatever they spend on tuition for students who choose out, the amount of revenue that comes into the district through students who choose in goes into a revolving account to be used for educational purposes as required by state law. In the budget projections for the FY13 school year, this money was designated to be spent for teacher salaries. He said the decision to use some of the surplus in the revolving account on technology upgrades, that was requested and approved at the previous school committee meeting, was in keeping with the intent of the law to use these revenues for educational purposes.

The line item transfer of funds from high school salaries to technology hardware in the amount of \$235,196 was approved by the school committee with five members voting in favor, Brown abstained. Chapulis said the change to the overall budget was zero.

Deb Moiles, who has been providing professional development to the school committee through the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, offered a very positive year end report to the school committee, praising their progress in governance. She told the committee, “As a whole I think you have a pretty good handle on your roles and responsibilities,” one of the things the school committee had been asked to improve. Moiles said Eva Mitchell and Joan Connolly of the Department of Education had been meeting with Commissioner of Education, and would be coming to the second school committee meeting in August. She added that she thinks their report will be a very positive one.

The school committee agreed to have no meetings during the month of July. The next regular school committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 13, 2013 at Turners Falls High School at 7 p.m.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

### Accidents And Alarms

**Monday, 6/3**

4:03 p.m. Medical emergency on Dudleyville Road.

**Wednesday, 6/5**

4:45 p.m. Long Plain road resident reported a motorcycle and a pickup racing past his house. Vehicles gone on arrival.

6:47 p.m. 911 misdial on Lead Mine Road.

**Monday, 6/10**

9:55 p.m. Malfunctioning panic alarm on No. 6 Road.

**Wednesday, 6/12**

4:29 p.m. Shutesbury Road resident reported attempted telephone scam.

5:20 p.m. Long Hill Road resident reported unauthorized credit card withdrawal.

**Thursday, 6/13**

1:23 p.m. Medical emergency on North Leverett Road.

1:46 p.m. Assisted Shutesbury PD with car accident.

**Friday, 6/14**

9:34 a.m. Carbon monoxide alarm on Cave Hill Road. Fire department handled.

**Saturday, 6/15**

2:15 p.m. Intrusion alarm accidentally tripped on Meadow Road.

**Monday, 6/17**

2:25 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Montague Road. A woman who left on foot was located and transported to Franklin Medical Center. Under investigation.

vestigation.

**Wednesday, 6/19**

12:37 p.m. Medical emergency on North Leverett Road.

**Friday, 6/28**

4:51 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on Montague Road.

Both vehicles towed.

## FY’14 from page 5

Governor has only released half these funds, arguing that the full long term highway program is underfunded by the legislature’s revenue proposals.

Advocates for municipalities are furiously lobbying for the full amount to be released, arguing that the Governor’s actions mean that a large increase in Chapter 90 approved by the legislature has, in effect, become a 50% cut.

The local aid portions of the budget contained no big surprises for most cities and towns in the region. Table 1 shows the impact of the final state budget on local aid to selected towns and regional school districts in the region.

With the exception of the Franklin County Technical School, none of the towns or districts received increases in Chapter 70 school aid under the core “Chapter 70” formula. In fact, strict application of the formula would have produced significant cuts in school aid.

Both the Governor and the legislature followed past precedent, holding school districts “harmless” (no aid cuts) and allocating increases of \$25 per student. This produces very small increases in education aid, generally well under 1%.

On the other hand, regional districts entitled to transportation aid will probably receive slightly

more state funding in this area than when budgets were developed in the spring. For example, the Gill-Montague Regional School District will receive over \$252,000 in transportation aid, although its budget and assessments to member towns assumed an increase of just over \$212,000.

Towns in the region saw relatively large increases in so-called “unrestricted general government aid,” primarily a form of state lottery distribution.

Of course the local aid numbers reflect only one aspect of the impact of the state budget on local communities and their residents. For example direct aid to state and community colleges increased by over \$101 million (over 10%). This is higher than the governor’s original proposal.

On the other hand the legislature increased the state scholarship funding by only 3% while the governor had proposed to double the amount, currently just under \$90 million.

In the area of human services, which includes elder services and support for children and needy families, the FY 14 budget will increase by approximately 3% to \$3.63 Billion.

The final budget also is heavily impacted by the new federal health care law, which is producing an

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

### Firearms Issues on West Gill Road, Oak Street, Center Road

**Monday, 6/17**

6:45 a.m. Break-in reported at a French King Highway business. Under investigation.

11:30 a.m. Breaking & entering in progress at French King Highway residence. Subject removed.

2:40 p.m. Restraining order issued to Mountain Road Estates resident.

**Tuesday, 6/18**

7:20 a.m. Trespassing issue on Atherton Road.

8:30 a.m. Trespass order issued from Riverview Drive to party in Northfield.

8:20 p.m. Responded to suspicious motor vehicle at the high-tension lines on Mountain Road.

**Wednesday, 6/19**

3:05 p.m. Responded to Main

Road residence regarding foreclosure issues.

4:25 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle located on Route 2. Owner to remove same.

7:40 p.m. 911 call to Mountain Road Estates. It was a misdial: a child had been playing with the phone.

**Thursday, 6/20**

10 a.m. Firearms issue with West Gill Road resident.

4:15 p.m. Loose dog reported running in the area of the Mobil station.

8:10 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with an arrest in their town.

**Friday, 6/21**

9:55 a.m. Firearms issue on Oak Street.

5:20 p.m. Complaint regarding Canada geese in Riverside. Referred to environ-

mental police.

9:05 p.m. Gunshots reported on Upper Main Road. Determined to be fireworks.

**Saturday, 6/22**

9:10 a.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with a motor vehicle accident on Route 10.

**Sunday, 6/23**

11:30 a.m. Assisted party with a leg injury at state boat ramp.

12:30 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Barton Cove Road. Assisted owner in removal.

**Monday, 6/24**

8 a.m. Firearms issues with Center Road resident.

**Tuesday, 6/25**

12:25 p.m. Neighbor dispute on Hickory Hill Road.

8:05 p.m. Car vs. deer accident on Route 10.

**Wednesday, 6/26**

4:15 p.m. Trespassing issue at Riverview Drive residence.

4:60 p.m. Medical response to French King Highway residence.

7:50 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with welfare check.

**Thursday, 6/27**

7:50 a.m. Restraining order issued at Mountain Road Estates.

3:10 p.m. Larceny by check at French King Highway business.

5:45 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with arrest at motel on Route 10.

**Friday, 6/28**

11:10 a.m. Phone scam reported by French King Highway resident.

12:33 p.m. Past accident at

Town Hall reported. Investigating.

1 p.m. Lost dog reported on Main Road.

5:30 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with arrest on French King Bridge.

10:35 p.m. Lost German Shepherd reported on French King Highway.

**Saturday, 6/29**

4:45 p.m. Dog reported running loose in Mount Pisgah Road area.

**Sunday, 6/30**

8:05 a.m. Sick raccoon reported on River Road.

3 p.m. Notified State DPW of dead animal on Route 2.

4:30 p.m. Main Road resident reported harassment.

6:30 p.m. Open windows reported at Main Road home. Checked out OK.

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## ONGOING:

## EVERY SUNDAY

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Celtic session*, 10:30 a.m.

## EVERY TUESDAY

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope*, environmental program for ages 3-6 and their adults. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., free.  
The Millers Falls Library Club: Free after school program. 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

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

## EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

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

Avenue A & 2nd St., Turners Falls: *Farmers Market*. 2 - 6 p.m.

## EVERY THURSDAY

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

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

## ART SHOWS:

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Distant Objects*, featuring mixed-me-

dia constructions by artist *Barbara Milot*. July 5 through July 28.

## EVENTS:

## THURSDAY, JULY 11

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Lonesome Brothers*. Well-known, well-loved local hick rock. Doors at 6:30 p.m., \$  
Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Brook Batteau*, alt rock dance pop. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *The Roosters*, classic rock dance music by *Bruce Scofield & Mark Feller*. 8 to 10:30 p.m.

## FRIDAY, JULY 12

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Terry Jenoure's *My Bronx*, interdisciplinary theater piece. 6 p.m., \$  
Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986). Color, 88 min. PG-13. Music before the show: *Natural Music School*, Broadway tunes, 7 p.m. Film at 7:30.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Fireseed*, celtic appalachian folk. 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *The True Jacqueline*, shoegaze, *Beach Honey*, surf, and *Beth & Brian*, pop. 8 p.m., \$

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Ghostlight Theater presents *The Woman in Black*. 8 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Barret Anderson*, renegade blues. 9 to 11:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Ellingtones* and *The Warblers*, rock. Free, 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JULY 13

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Terry Jenoure's *My Bronx*, interdisciplinary theater piece. 6 p.m., \$  
Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986). Color, 88 min. PG-13. Music before the show: *Daniel Hales & the frost heaves*, indie rock, folk, country mix, 7 p.m. Film at 7:30.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Rick Murnane*, pop rock, with special guest *Siobahn Hotaling*, pop singer/songwriter. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Ghostlight Theater presents *The Woman in Black*. 8 p.m., \$

Montague Bookmill: *The Ivy Leaf*, traditional Irish, and *The Ephemeral String Band*, traditional American. 8 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Burrie & Friends*, progressive folk. 9 to 11:30 p.m., free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Willy*

& the *Poorboys*, CCR cover band; *Spacecrab*; *The Sweaty Discomforts*. Rock, 9:30 p.m., free.

## SUNDAY, JULY 14

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Terry Jenoure's *My Bronx*, interdisciplinary theater piece. 6 p.m., \$  
Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *T-Bone & his Uke*, with bassist extraordinaire *Joe the Plucker*. Free.

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

## TUESDAY, JULY 16

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Fancy Trash*, indie folk rock, with special guest singer-songwriter *Henning Ohlenbusch*. 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Nick's Sweet '80s Movie Night, with *Stand By Me*. 9 p.m., free.

## WEDNESDAY, JULY 17

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD. Verdi's *La Traviata*. 6:30 p.m., \$

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quiznite* with Quizmaster Alex. 8 p.m.

## THURSDAY, JULY 18

Downtown Turners Falls: *Third Thursday Turners Falls* (T3F), featuring art exhibits, open studios, musical performances, walking tours, theater, invited artisans, and extended open hours at participating venues. This month's theme is "Music In The Air." 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half Shaved Jazz*, 8 p.m., free  
Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Brooke Batteau*, alt rock dance pop, with special guest *Belle Amie*. 8 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: Northern Routes presents *Alasdair Roberts & Friends*, with *Sam Moss*. 8 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Tommy Filiault & Friends*, acoustic rock. 8:30 to 11 p.m., free.

## FRIDAY, JULY 19

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Signature Sounds presents the kick-off party for the Green River Festival, with *Rubblebucket*. 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., \$

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *The New Oddville Review*, improvisatory participatory madness. 8 p.m., \$

Montague Bookmill: *Mike Gundlach*, *Brooke Saracino*, *Max Kennedy*, and *Russell O'Rourke*. 8 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & the Mud, Blood & Beer Band*, singing all your Johnny Cash favorites and much more. 9 to 11:30 p.m., free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bella's Bartok*, gypsy stomp, with *Gnarlemagne*. 9:30 p.m., free.

## SATURDAY, JULY 20

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Jeff D'Antona / Alex Snyderman Trio*, jazz. Noon, \$.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *The Reprobate Blues Band*, blues baby blues! 9 to 11:30 p.m., free.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers

Falls: *Moose & the High Tops*, '70s and '80s classic rock. 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rockit Queer*, dance party, with guest DJ Cool Breeze (aka "Sam. u.el" King). 9:30 p.m., \$

## SUNDAY, JULY 21

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: Backyard dance party with Pink Floyd cover band *Crazy Diamond*. Two sets. 8 to 10 p.m., free.

## TUESDAY, JULY 23

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Fancy Trash*, indie folk rock, with special guest *Bunk*, indie pop rock country. 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Nora's Open Mike Cabaret*. Sign up at 7:30 p.m., show at 8 p.m. Free.

## WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD. Puccini's *Turandot*. 6:30 p.m., \$

## THURSDAY, JULY 25

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ben Grosscup*, activist singer-songwriter. 8 p.m., free.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Blue Pearl*, blues/jazz. 8 to 10 p.m., free.

## FRIDAY, JULY 26

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: The Marx Bros.' *Duck Soup* (1933). B&W, 70 min. NR. Music before the show: *Small Change*, acoustic swing, 7 p.m. Film at 7:30.

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

Montague Bookmill: *Two Tree*, electric folk, and *Sandy Bailey*, singer-songwriter. 8 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *The Atomic Scissors*, '60s and '70s classic rock. 9 to 11:30 p.m., free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Scott Kusmeskus*, solo rock/folk originals & covers. 9:30 p.m., free.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Reprobates*, blues rock 'n' roll. 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JULY 27

Turners Falls: *Upper Valley Music Festival!* Many venues, all day and night. See [uppervalleymusicfest.com](http://uppervalleymusicfest.com) for details.

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: The Marx Bros.' *Duck Soup* (1933). B&W, 70 min. NR. Music before the show: *Daniel Hales & the frost heaves*, 7 p.m. Film at 7:30.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Hanging Hills*, folk rock, with special guest *Claire Orion*, pop rock. 8 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Freddie Bryant / Alex Snyderman Trio*, jazz. 8 p.m., \$

Montague Bookmill: *J. Mascis, Dredd Foole*, and *Passerine*. New local talent. Rescheduled from a few months back. 8 p.m., \$

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## West Along the River

# Ervingside: The Trouble with Bears

By DAVID BRULE

*First of all do you remember the way a bear goes through*

*The door when nobody is home?*  
*He goes through the*

*Back door. I mean he really goes through it...*

The last time something that big and furry went through the back yard was the woolly mammoth, the other morning, about 13,000 years ago.

A big buster of a bruin shambled and foggled out of our woods and snorted out a neglected coffee can full of yummy sunflower seeds (black oil, "high protein, easy to shell", said the package.) He didn't bother with the shelling part, he was intending to snarf the whole thing.

It started out like any other summer day along the river. The heavy humid air was sure to produce the drenching afternoon thundershowers that have once again turned our river bottom lands into emerald

New World rainforest.

The frog pond has stayed full, brimming with pollywogs and bug-eating adult green frogs. Iridescent electric blue damselflies lilt and flirt together in the random sun beams on the warming boards of the footbridge.

The river is running so high that the beavers are not venturing out into the raging current. They'd rather stay home over in their tranquil spring-fed pond in the old Indian village oxbow across the way.

The young mink were out however, leaping, dancing and bounding in their frenzied way along glens of the fern-shaded bank, fishing and generally creating mayhem for every living creature in the vicinity of their laser-guided noses. (I once watched a panic-stricken rabbit fleeing a mink, leap into the river and dog paddle furiously over to my side across the water where I sat on a rock as the drama unfolded.)

Rabbit scrambled out of the river, shook off like a dripping dog, and lightfooted it away down the woodland path from the would-be assassin, standing puzzled on the far shore.

I do like summer mornings like that. Wake up

with the sun or the calling of the phoebe who has her nest under the eave of the woodshed. Walk past jungle-size rhododendron, leaves dripping still with last night's shower, coolly washing skin as I brush by.

But back to the bear.

*Then he takes the cupboard off the wall and eats a can of lard.*

*He eats all the apples, limes, dates, bottled decaffeinated*

*Coffee and 35 pounds of granola. The asparagus soup cans*

*Fall to the floor. Yum!...He chomps the bullion, salt, pepper, Paprika, garlic, onions, potatoes...*

Now, luckily, our Ervingside bear didn't do all that the other night.

He did flatten however, all the 7 foot wrought-iron plant hangers holding the bird feeders. He leaned on the poles with all his 450 pounds of bear weight, and laid them out flat on the ground to get at each feeder.

Then he galumped up onto the deck just outside the kitchen and found Hoover the Chipmunk's unfinished sunflower seeds in the bright red French Market coffee can ("New Orleans-style coffee and chickory").

He found the contents tasty, so he lay down flat on his belly, hind legs extended out (just like a... ahem! bearskin rug.). He held the can in his forepaws as he would have if he had found the fabled pot



Illustration by Robert Mc Cauley

of honey that bears always dream about.

That's when Monique spotted him, sprawled out and enjoying some high protein treats. Flashlight shining in his eyes didn't bother him. He just turned his great head to look up at the beam emanating from the kitchen window, determined he had nothing to fear and calmly returned to finishing his snack, snout reaching the bottom of the can.

I tell you, the kitchen door got locked tight and windows slammed shut lickety-split. But he couldn't have cared less about the defenses of our mere wooden fortress preparing for a bear assault. He wasn't interested in expending the effort to break down the door.

When he had inhaled all the seeds, he got up, leaving a huge wet belly print on the porch boards, and took his dignified time going carefully down the steps.

He probably had in mind some ursine plan to head over to the next street to destroy a few trash barrels

and spread some garbage around. Whew! At least he was gone..

But it could have been otherwise.

*He tries the Coleman Mustard. Spills the ink, tracks in the Flour. Goes upstairs and defecates.*

*Rips up the bed, eats incense and drinks perfume...*

*He goes back downstairs and out the back wall.*

*He keeps on going a long way and finds a good cave*

*To sleep it all off.*

*Luckily he ate the whole medicine cabinet, including...*

*Alka-Seltzer, Psilocybin, Amantadine, Benzedrine, Valium and Aspirin.*

— "Destruction," a poem by Joanne Kyger, adapted with considerable poetic license by this author.

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## Poets Wanted!

to submit original poems. please email: [poetry@montaguereporter.org](mailto:poetry@montaguereporter.org) for consideration in the monthly Poetry Page. Include 25-word bio. Poems may also be posted to Montague Reporter, 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

No prior experience necessary, at least as a poet.



I took the newspaper along with me with plans to find a photo op, but I didn't expect to find one as apt as running into my regular paper carrier on the CCRT. Some paper carriers really go the extra mile to deliver! Gray Davidson Carroll delivers the Reporter to Susan Conger on the Cape Cod Rail Trail in Brewster. Gray was camping with his family at Nickerson State Park, and Susan was enjoying the Cape portion of her bike trip crossing Massachusetts.

## MONTAGUE REPORTER ON THE ROAD



On a recent trip to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon Joe Graveline from Northfield takes a break from sightseeing to catch up on the news from back home.

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