



Wendell to Yale  
with help from  
her friends

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Arson Strikes  
the Little  
Library

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LAKE PLEASANT

MILLERS FALLS

MONTAGUE CENTER

MONTAGUE CITY

TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 10 – NO. 41

also serving Irving, Gill, Everett and Wendell

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REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JULY 26, 2012

## Petty Thieves on a Rampage

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**TURNERS FALLS** – Last fall, it seemed like breaking and entering businesses in the night had become the new official pastime in downtown Turners, as small-town crooks feeding big-city drug habits smashed windows, jimmed locks, and stole cash registers, electronic equipment, and anything else with easy cash value they could get their hands on.

But after Montague police first put Thomas ██████ 41, of ██████ 11th Street, in jail for a bold daylight armed robbery at Rite Aid, and then sent Dennis ██████ 35, of ██████ 3rd Street, Christopher ██████ 25, of ██████ G Street, and Jeremy ██████ 28, of ██████ 5th Street, to join him for a string of crimes including ██████'s B&Es at the Millers Pub and Beijing Station, ██████ multiple home breaks including the home of an elderly man who had left his home on the Patch long enough to go to church, and ██████'s robbery at knife point at the Subway on Avenue A, it seemed like things quieted down for a time.

But in the last two weeks, petty thieves have hit downtown homes and businesses with a vengeance again, and police have been kept busy responding to burglar alarms, pursuing leads, and cruising the streets and alleys of downtown with redoubled vigilance.

At 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday July 11th, a burglary was reported at Crestview Liquors on Unity Street. Approximately \$1500 was taken from an unsecured safe, according to Sergeant Richard Suchanek of the Montague police. Crestview was broken into again sometime early Sunday morning on July 22nd; a smaller amount of cash was taken.

The burglar alarm at the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority went off at 7:11 in the morning on Sunday, July 15th; a basement window had been jimmed; nothing of value was taken.

That night, just before midnight, Bob's Auto Body on Avenue A was broken into. The alarm sounded, and police responded to the scene within one minute. Nothing of value was taken.

The next day, Dennis ██████ recently paroled, was apprehended trespassing at 8 Prospect Street with a controlled substance in his backpack, along with a number of cameras and small electronics. (Last Thanksgiving, ██████ was caught after slashing his wrist with a knife in the act of stealing the cash register at Beijing Station, trailing blood back to his apartment above Lisa's Handmade Soap on 3rd Street – which had been repeatedly burglarized at about the same time.) ██████ is not a suspect in the breaking and enterings that happened subsequent to Monday, June 16th, however, as he is back in jail.

The Shady Glen was hit in the early morning hours of Thursday, July 19th, and approximately \$200 in tips were stolen. The Glen was broken into again early Monday morning, July 22nd, but nothing of value was taken that time.

"It stinks," said the Glen's Ramon Nieves, filling in for

see RAMPAGE page 5

## Our Lady of Peace Gets Repointed

BY JOSEPH PARZYCH

**TURNERS FALLS** – Charlie Rucci of Rucci Masonry is repointing about 1,000 square feet of the brick façade of Our Lady of Peace church on 7th Street in Turners Falls, seventy feet above the ground.

Rucci estimates the church measures about 180 to 190 feet from the sidewalk to the cross at the top of the steeple. The bricks were last repointed about 20 years ago.

Repointing is a process where surface mortar, deteriorated by



Our Lady of Peace, with Scaffolding  
see REPOINTING page 11

JOSEPH PARZYCH PHOTO

## G-M School Committee Faces Open Meeting Law Challenge



ELLEN BLANCHETTE PHOTO

Sandra Brown (left front) and Misty Lyons at the June 12th school committee meeting with members of the girls softball team in the background. The team had just returned from winning their latest game and came to show support for their coach.

**BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE** – The Gill-Montague school committee meeting held on July 17th was the first attended by new interim superintendent Mark Prince. Prince sat next to the school committee chair, Joyce Phillips, as she told committee members that from now on they should copy the district superintendent's office on all correspondence related to district or school committee business.

Phillips also requested that all members set up Ed-line accounts and use them for school committee related email.

Though the reason for these directives was not clear at the outset, as the meeting progressed the reasons became clear.

Phillips was responding to a complaint filed by Michael Langknecht,

former chair of the committee and current member from Montague, with the district attorney's office in Boston claiming the school committee had violated the Commonwealth's open meeting law numerous times on June 12th.

The complaint filed by Langknecht had three separate parts.

The first had to do with a vote taken at the June 12th meeting, the last one attended by interim superintendent Nadine Ekstrom.

At that meeting, there had been a lengthy discussion on the issue of whether retiring athletic director Gary Mullins would continue in his position as coach of the girls softball and boys basketball team.

Since the discussion came during the section of the agenda reserved for public participation, the topic had not

been listed separately on the agenda. Members of the public attending the meeting were focused on keeping the coach that had led the athletic teams so successfully through the years.

But the conversation then took a turn to the general topic of hiring new employees, and how that hiring would proceed.

There was concern expressed that outgoing members of the current administration would do the hiring without consultation or approval from incoming principals or the incoming superintendent.

Ekstrom did her best to reassure the public this would not happen, that in fact she would not be available to approve any hires as she was leaving on vacation in just a few days. The newly hired interim superintendent,

see SCHOOL page 7

## JD McPherson Rocks the Art Block



J.D. MacPherson

BY AMY LAPRADE

**GREENFIELD** – JD McPherson's searing vocal style and muscular acoustic guitar cut through the torrid air of the Arts Block Cafe at 10 p.m. on Friday the 13th, backed by the kaboom-thump-boom of Jimmy Sutton's stand up bass, the racing line of Ray Jacildo's keyboards floating beneath the sweet, doleful melodies of Doug Corcoran's saxophone, all atop the driving beat of Jason Smay's drums. As the band kicked into action, the heat-fatigued fans were immediately revived, charmed toward the stage, and hypnotized by their rocking spell. Those not struck dumb on the dance floor by the rhythm of boogie-woogie swamp blues were shaking to the jitterbug dance grooves in next to no time flat.

JD McPherson's musical style and presence electrified the burnt, summer landscape of Franklin

County 2012 on the eve of the Green River Fest like no other act. Their sound, reminiscent of Eddie Cochran and Buddy Holly, conjures up the aroma of southern fried Americana, and the days of rockabilly, drag races and drive-in movies.

Their musical style is not brand new, but it has lain dormant by the electric guitar dominated rock now ruling the airwaves. Yet it simmers under the fault line, waiting to rock the landscape once again. And rock it JD McPherson did, adding his own original flare, and reminding us of what has been missing in the musical milieu for a long time: sensuality and danger.

"I like the retro style a lot. You can do the '50s dance moves and it's not out of place. I like the different instruments. It's not just a guitar and drum kit," said Lara Langweiler, a Brattleboro resident and avid fan of this Chicago-based group. She could be seen bopping and gyrating with wild abandon through the huge Arts Block windows, one among many others.

On the sidewalk, outside the Arts Block Cafe, a gang of onlookers watched the activity inside, and, catching the vibe, began swinging to the rhythm too.

Though the band's Stray Cats-style greased pompadours and debonair presence had a way of drawing the ladies to the dance floor like a magnet, it was the New Orleans jazz-fused mountain music, Delta blues and surf undertones that got the rest of the crowd off their seats and dancing. Songs such as "A Gentle Awakening," slow and

see ARTS page 8

## An Electronic Matchmaker for Local Food



Judy Hall at the Wendell Farmers Market

**BY JONATHAN von RANSON**  
**WENDELL** – The new Wendell Online Market for Local Food provides a no-muss, no-fuss way to buy (and offer) locally produced food.

Easy to use for those who do email, and highly flexible, the system started small, two four weeks ago, without a lot of fanfare, but it's off to a promising start.

The new system's coordinator and designer is Judy Hall, a new, active Wendellite who founded something similar out West – Idaho's Bounty Food Coop. The successful Idaho system involves a website for connecting growers with consumers, whereas in Wendell, for the time being at least, the week's list of local offerings appears before 200 presumptive consumers of food on the Wendell Townsfolk email list, and invites offerings of what local people have grown, processed or prepared. Those with products on offer simply

submit their list of items a couple of days before the full, compiled list appears.

"It's basically part of our effort to facilitate bringing things to market," said Betsy Ames, who heads the local-food work of the Wendell Energy Committee, "to strengthen connectivity between the farmer and the food buyer."

The committee is funding the initiative from its \$5,000 budget approved at special town meeting last winter.

"Think of it as an advertising and networking opportunity," explained Hall. "A buyer orders directly from farmers. I'm a matchmaker. I don't see any money, and basically don't touch the food."

The initiative arises out of an acute sense of the importance of local food production for a secure economy, given fossil energy's

see FOOD page 13



## PET OF THE WEEK Leta Snuggle



### Claudette

I'm Claudette and I'm a bit shy still at five years old. Not a scaredy cat – I just take my time. When I'm comfortable with you I'll sit in your lap and snuggle.

Pet me a little more please. I love it!

I'm friendly with most people once I get to know them and if we take it slow I'd be fine with most cats, too. If you're looking for a shy cutie who likes to spend time with you, that's me!

I was left behind by a tenant, so not much is known about my past. For more information on adopting me, contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.

## GILL LIBRARY EVENTS Dance Party

Saturday, July 28th, at 11 a.m., Anna Hendricks will host a Dance Party.

Let's dance around on the sweet summer grass on the lawn at Slate Library. Grab a dance partner or your mom and dad and boogie to some summer tunes! Lots of fun will be had by all, so put on your dancing shoes (or come barefoot!)

Bring your Gameboard all summer long for prizes. Let's start reading!

## Worst Way to Negotiate the Turn on Unity Street



*Taking the turn too fast, this tractor trailer landed on the Unity Street guard rail*  
**BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO**  
**TURNERS FALLS** – At about 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon, July 24th, a Bestway tractor trailer with Ontario plates rolled over onto the sidewalk on Unity Street hill just above Unity Park.

The driver was apparently going too fast to negotiate the

## CARNEGIE LIBRARY EVENTS Music on the Patio

Thursday evenings from 7-8 p.m., at the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls, rain or shine. People are invited to bring a lawn chair and sit by our beautiful wildflower gardens. In rainy weather, we move indoors.

August 9th Jazz with Masala (Sirinam and Dharam Bir Khalsa and Jahian Cooper Monize).

August 16th Rebirth: acoustic world, soul/folk, conga, ukulele & classic guitar with Ian Hamel.



LINDA WENTWORTH PHOTO

*Adults and children enjoy the puppet show from the Talking Hands Theater featuring Ann Sobel last Thursday at the Leverett library.*

The sound of the truck crashing onto the sidewalk sounded like an explosion to neighbors on Prospect Street.

The state police, who were first on the scene, stopped traffic heading down Unity Street. They were followed by the Turners Falls fire department and then the Montague police who completely secured the scene. Rose Ledge wreckers from Erving appeared shortly thereafter.

Traffic was tied up in both directions on Third Street until nearly 8 o'clock, as the contents of the trailer had to be removed before the truck could be righted and towed away.



LINDA HICKMAN PHOTO

**TURNERS FALLS** – The children at Story Hour made parade sticks and paraded around the Carnegie Library as part of a Fourth of July celebration. They were very pleased when the wind cooperated as they emerged from the library. Story Hour meets Wednesdays mornings at 10:15 a.m. For more information, call 863-3214.

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

**BY FRED CICETTI**  
**LEONIA, NJ** - *Q. How do I go about learning CPR?*

If you would like to learn CPR, contact the American Heart Association at [www.american-heart.org](http://www.american-heart.org) or 1(877)AHA-4CPR. Another resource is the American Red Cross at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). Or, you can try a local hospital.

CPR, which stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, employs chest compression and mouth-to-mouth breathing to treat cardiac arrest, heart attack, drowning and electrocution. CPR can keep some blood flowing to the brain and heart during an emergency.

Maintaining blood flow can prevent brain injury and save a life. The brain suffers irreparable damage in a few minutes if it doesn't get oxygenated blood. An unaided victim of cardiac arrest will die in five to ten minutes.

To learn CPR properly, take an accredited first-aid training course. There is no substitute for taking a course from a trained instructor, but it still helpful to understand the basics of CPR.

The University of Washington School of Medicine website has helpful illustrated guides and online

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

### How to Learn CPR

videos that explain CPR. Go to: [depts.washington.edu/learn/cpr](http://depts.washington.edu/learn/cpr).

*Q. What are "Kegel exercises"?*

Kegel exercises were developed 60 years ago by Dr. Arnold Kegel to control incontinence in women after childbirth. These exercises are now recommended for both women and men who experience urinary or fecal incontinence.

Kegel exercises strengthen the muscles of the pelvic floor, and thus improve both urethral and rectal sphincter functioning.

The muscles developed through the Kegel program are felt when trying to stop the flow of urine. After about eight weeks of exercising, you usually see results, such as less frequent urine leakage.

Urinary and fecal incontinence are examples of "pelvic-floor disorders." The pelvic floor is a network of muscles, ligaments and other tissues that hold up the pelvic organs – the vagina, rectum, uterus and bladder. When this network – often described as a hammock – weakens, the organs can shift and create disorders.

*Q. How can I tell if I'm having a heart attack?*

Here are six common warning signs:

1. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, although may be intermittent. The sensation may be painful or simply pressure or a squeezing or feeling of fullness.

2. Pain in shoulders, arms, back, upper abdomen, neck and jaw
3. Shortness of breath
4. Cold sweat
5. Nausea
6. Lightheadedness
7. Anxiety

A blood clot in a coronary artery narrowed by cholesterol and other substances is the usual cause of a heart attack. Doctors call a heart attack a "myocardial infarction." Loosely translated, the term means heart-muscle death. The clogged artery prevents oxygenated blood from nourishing the heart, which can lead to pain, the death of heart cells, scar tissue and fatal arrhythmias.

About 1.1 million Americans have a heart attack every year. About 460,000 of those are fatal. About half the fatalities happen within an hour after symptoms begin and before the victim gets to a hospital.

A heart attack can happen anytime – during exertion, or at rest. Some heart attacks are like the ones you see in movies; they're sudden and dramatic. However, most heart attacks build gradually over several hours. Many heart attack victims have symptoms days or weeks in advance.

If you think you're having a heart attack, call 911 immediately. There are drugs that break up clots and open arteries; they work best within the first hour after the onset of an attack.

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

## SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – July 30th - August 10th

### GILL-MONTAGUE

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

### Monday, July 30th

10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. No Knitting Circle

### Tuesday, July 31st

9:00 a.m. Walking Group

### Wednesday, August 1st

10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo

### Thursday, August 2nd

NO Tai Chi  
10:30 a.m. Brown Bag  
1:00 p.m. Pitch

### Friday, August 3rd

10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

11:30 a.m. Pizza Party

### ERVING

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

### New Quilting Class:

Class will meet on Mondays from 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. at the Center. Beginners, as well as experienced quilters, are welcome. Class size is limited. Call Polly at 413-423-3649 to reserve a spot. Donations accepted.

### Monday, July 30th

9:00 a.m. Tai Chi  
10:00 a.m. Osteo-Exercise  
**Tuesday, July 31st**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting

### Wednesday, August 1st

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing/Zumba  
**Thursday, August 2nd**  
8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
10:00 a.m. Posture Perfect  
11:00 a.m. Brown Bag

### Friday, August 3rd

9:00 a.m. Bowling  
11:30 a.m. Lunch

### Monday, August 5th

9:00 a.m. Tai Chi  
10:00 a.m. Osteo-Exercise  
12:30 p.m. Quilting

### Friday, August 10th

9:00 a.m. Bowling  
11:30 a.m. Lunch - Out to Lunch

### LEVERETT Senior Activities

• Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga – Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$4.00 (first class free).  
• Senior Lunch – Fridays, 12:00 p.m. Call 413-367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

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

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





## Local Briefs

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

**COMPILED BY DON CLEGG** – *The Montague Reporter* is looking for donations of (used) office furniture for our hard-working staff. We are particularly interested in a computer desk with retractable keyboard shelf, as well as ergonomic desk chairs. Your donations will allow our staff to work more efficiently and comfortably and would be greatly appreciated. Call (413) 863-8666.

Harmony Lodge on Masonic Avenue, across from the Farren Care Center in Montague City, is hosting a free **Children's Bicycle Safety Program** on Saturday, July 28th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Any child that participates in the safety course will be entered into the drawings for two 24 inch bicycles, with safety helmets and locks (1 girl's, 1 boy's), along with one 20-inch bicycle with training wheels.

Events for the day also include fire safety demonstrations by the Turners Falls fire department and bicycle safety courses at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. by the Montague police department. A child identification program will begin at 10 a.m. and continue throughout the event.

The annual **"Christmas in July"** fireworks display in Barton Cove is scheduled for Saturday, July 28th, starting at 8:30 p.m. with a parade of decorated boats. The event is best seen from the beginning of the bike path across from Unity Park in Turners Falls. Get to the area early because the good viewing areas (and parking) go fast.

Every 11 minutes, another family will receive the devastating news that their child has an **Autism Spectrum Disorder**. In fact, autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disorder in the United States, with

1 in every 88 children being diagnosed. It's time to get involved and change this statistic.

On Tuesday, August 7th, from 5 to 7 p.m. learn firsthand how you can make a difference in the fight against autism at the 2012 Franklin County Walk Now for Autism Speaks Kickoff Party to be held at Hallmark Institute of Photography's Educational Center located at 27 Industrial Boulevard in Turners Falls. In addition to receiving information about the September 29th Western New England Walk, Hillside Pizza will provide a variety of pizzas and desserts for all. There will also be entertainment, activities, games and a bounce house for the kids. The event is free and open to the public.

To RSVP for the kickoff party, contact Tammy Murphy at (413) 863-2478 or [tammy@hallmark.edu](mailto:tammy@hallmark.edu). To register for the 2012 Western New England Walk for Autism Speaks, please visit [www.walknowforautismspeaks.org/wn](http://www.walknowforautismspeaks.org/wn).

**Artist Donna Estabrooks'** work is fanciful, colorful, inspiring and inspired by her Buddhist chanting and meditation practice. Come see Estabrooks' newly installed works in the chapel of the First Congregational Church of Montague Center. The exhibit can be viewed on Wednesdays from 4 to 6 p.m. through the end of August.

**The Montague Community Band's** last local performance for the summer series will take place on Monday, August 6th, starting at 7 p.m. at Unity Park in Turners Falls.

Send local briefs to: [reporter-local@montaguema.net](mailto:reporter-local@montaguema.net).

## This Week at MCTV

BY CINDY TARAIL

**MONTAGUE** – Jon Dobosz, Montague's parks and recreation director, urges people to watch a new Quick Shot public service announcement produced by MCTV's technology coordinator Owen Weaver highlighting Unity Park's reconstruction. "I think it's critical for people to take a look at what we'll be providing for the community. The video will whet everyone's appetite and get them excited about the playground."

In other MCTV news, Lisa Davol of Riverculture created a video of the June 30th Feast for the



COURTESY OF MCTV

*RiverCulture's Lisa Davol awards the Creative Sidewalk design to Labri Bond of Pleasant.* Both videos can be viewed on Channel 17, or online at [vimeo.com/mctvchannel17](http://vimeo.com/mctvchannel17).

## Arson at the Little Library

BY BEVERLY KETCH

**TURNERS FALLS** – Over the past two months, you may have noticed a small peak-roofed house on a stand above the planter in front of Nina's Nook on Avenue A. Bigger than a bread box, but barely, the quaint and curious structure was actually a little lending library. If you looked in, you would have seen that free books were offered for all, and residents responded to the opportunity by circulating the books and magazines in the Little Free Library enthusiastically.

But sadly, in the small hours of the morning on Saturday, July 21st, some person intentionally burned the Little Library down and reduced its store of free reading material to ashes. The call came into the Turners Falls fire department at 2:56 a.m. All that was left was the stand that held the Little Library upright.

In May, the library was built by local book lover Geri Moran and her friend Frank Citino. They had learned about the idea from [littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org).

Moran, who works at the Greenfield Community College library when she isn't organizing small-scale community book lending projects, said she was heartsick when she heard about the fire. "I put more of myself in it than I had realized,"

she said this week.

Yet in keeping with the pure sweetness and enthusiasm from which the Little Library on the Avenue sprang, a friend of the project soon placed a crate of good books

Rossi decorated the temporary crates with the charred pages of "The Forgotten Beasts of Eld," one of the casualties of the arson blaze, tacked up with red felt hearts.

Rossi and Moran are friends, and



DETMOLO PHOTOS

(L-R) The Little Library as originally designed, after the fire, and on the mend.

on the stand where Moran's Little Library had stood, and covered it in plastic to protect it from the weather.

Now, so many books have been donated to the cause since the week-end fire, that a second plastic covered crate has been added to the first.

Nina Rossi, owner of Nina's Nook, said she had had the chance since May to observe a wide variety of people who exchanged books at the Little Library. After the fire,

each kept an eye on the Little Library. Moran would check to make sure there were enough books in the little structure for patrons to have a choice of reading material. Moran said once she stopped by and found someone had left a thick, dry-looking textbook on medieval history in the library. "This is taking up the space of three books," Moran thought, "and no one will want it!"

see ARSON page 7

## Compost Bins Available!

BY AMY DONOVAN

**GREENFIELD** – With summer in full swing, it's a great time to start composting. Composting is easy, and it can be even easier with an effective compost bin. Attractive, durable bins for backyard composting are available for purchase through the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District at several locations.

The "Earth Machine," which the district sells for \$45, is made of a tough recycled polyethylene plastic with a twist-on locking lid. The bin stakes to the ground and is easy to assemble, rodent resistant, and designed for aeration. The bin features a door at the bottom that can

be lifted to shovel out finished compost.

Gardeners can save money and reduce waste by using homemade compost instead of purchasing bagged fertilizers and topsoil. Residents of towns that require "Pay as you Throw" trash bags also save money by composting food waste rather than filling up town bags with compostable waste.

Composting does more than create healthy soil; it slows climate change. Food and paper waste placed in an anaerobic landfill release methane, a greenhouse gas 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Composting produces negligible amounts of methane because introduction of oxygen is part of the process.

Introduce oxygen by turning or

stirring the compost pile and by using a bin such as the Earth Machine that has good aeration.

The Earth Machine is available at these four locations: Colrain Transfer Station, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Wendell Transfer Station, Tuesday, from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m., Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Orange Transfer Station, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.; and the district office, 50 Miles Street, Greenfield (hours vary; call (413) 772-2438).

For more information on composting, recycling or hazardous waste disposal, call the solid waste district at (413) 772-2438 or visit the district website at: [www.franklincountywastedistrict.org](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org).

## Real Food, Real People, Real Investment



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## Craven New World

BY DONALD KAUL

ANN ARBOR, MI – I celebrated the Fourth of July this year by having a heart attack. All things considered, watching fireworks would have been more fun.

I woke up at 2 a.m. on July 5th with raging pain in my chest and both arms. I was bathed in a cold, clammy sweat, and my breath was coming short. I was slightly nauseated.

"Gee," I said to myself. "I wonder what's wrong?"

Apparently I was waiting for a Western Union messenger to come to the door and say: "You're having a heart attack, stupid. Call 911."

It went on like that for a few hours, until my wife woke up too and convinced me to get help. An ambulance brought me to the emergency room, where a team of doctors, nurses, attendants, and God-knows-who else was waiting for me.

It was like being sent through a cardiac car wash. I went in on one end with a heart attack; I came out the other an hour later with an unblocked artery, a stent, and an optimistic prognosis.

They told me they expected me to return to close to 100 percent. (This was particularly good news as I haven't been close to 100 percent in years, if ever.)

I'm told that my reluctance to seek immediate help is fairly typical of men. Even male doctors often go into a state of denial when confronted with symptoms that can only be a heart attack. They wait. It's a guy thing.

If you take only one thing away from the newspaper today, let it be this:

If you start showing symptoms of a heart attack, even if they're not as dramatic as mine, don't screw around. Call 911 and have an ambulance take you to the hospital. The treatment starts in the ambulance.

As a cardiologist friend told me: "They say time is money, but in my business time is muscle." The longer you take to get treatment, the more heart muscle is destroyed – permanently.

The upshot of this is that I've

suspended writing this column indefinitely. (I can hear the moans of anguish across the nation now.)

And there's a real question as to whether I'll start writing it again when I feel better. (I can hear the cheers and shouts of triumph drowning out the moans.)

I'm now 77 years old. I've been doing this – writing columns – for nearly 50 years, 35 years of it in Washington. I can tell you that things have changed, and not for the better.

I've covered fools, crooks, and charlatans over this half century. But for the most part, they had some sense of seriousness about them – an appreciation for the national interest as they saw it. Even rogues like Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon did.

The current bunch of miscreants is nothing like that. Centrist Democrats, who talk a good game but don't do much about it, are battling increasingly radical Republicans, a fierce tribe of Bible-thumping know-nothings fueled by money from modern Robber Barons who want to sell the country off by the board-foot and metric ton for their personal profit.

Thus we approximate the times described by the Irish poet W.B. Yeats:

"The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."

Does that describe Congress or what?

Do I want to spend my time left deciphering such people, trying to decide whether the Republican leaders are as stupid as they sound or merely willfully ignorant?

We are well on our way toward becoming a nation on the colonial model, where a few people own everything and the rest of us play the lottery and watch football. That's not the America I grew up in. It's not the America I spent my life writing about.

I have to figure out whether I want to spend my last years writing about this new country.

I'll let you know.

This editorial was distributed by OtherWords ([www.otherwords.org](http://www.otherwords.org)).

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## U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan as of 7/24/12

Wounded:

15,332

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2,057



### Note to Readers:

#### Summer Print Schedule

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

We follow suit, and print every other week in the months of July and August. There will be no paper on August 2nd or 16th or 30th.

We wish everyone a peaceful and relaxing summer.

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KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

## GUEST EDITORIAL

## Shortnose Sturgeon – on the Fast Track to Extinction in the Connecticut River



Shortnose Sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*)

BY KARL MEYER

**TURNERS FALLS** – This Valley lost a lion of environmental defense when former Conservation Law Foundation attorney and Antioch University professor Alexandra Dawson died last December. Quietly today, time grows desperately short for this ecosystem's only federally endangered migratory fish – the Connecticut River shortnose sturgeon. Alive since the dinosaurs, the shortnose sturgeon arrived shortly after the glaciers left. They are clinging to life by a thread – with perhaps 300 attempting to spawn annually in miserable conditions created in the two-mile stretch of river below the Turners Falls dam. The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service is responsible for protecting them; the agency has known fully of those conditions since 2004.

FirstLight Power Resources, Inc., acquired by GDF Suez in 2008, helps create those conditions, right next to the US Fish & Wildlife's Great Falls Discovery Center. Yet the public learns nothing of them. Abandoned by federal agencies, the shortnose is one industrial disaster or spill from extinction.

Imagine a cross between a dinosaur, a catfish, and a shark. At three to four feet long, the shortnose has bony plates instead of scales, with a shark-like tail at one end, and a suctioning, toothless mouth below cat-like feelers at the other. A shortnose can scarf down freshwater mussels whole and grind them up in their gizzards. Shortnoses can live over 40 years. One alive today might have witnessed Nixon signing the Endangered Species Act in 1973.

The conditions that most imperil the shortnose are overwhelmingly the result of floodgate manipulations and punishing water pulses sent to the riverbed and coursing down the two-mile long Turners Falls power canal below the dam by FirstLight, partially as a result of the upstream operations of FirstLight's giant 1102 MW Northfield

Mountain Pumped Storage Station. Below the dam you won't find anything like a river. For fish it's chaos – a feast or famine flow regime run largely to maximize the day-trader profits of today's deregulated energy spot-market.

And things may have just gotten worse.

FirstLight's operations are the biggest disruption to this ecosystem for a seven-mile stretch, affecting migratory fish restoration upstream to Bellows Falls, VT, and down to the Long Island Sound. Instead of shad and other migrants moving up natural river habitat to the Turners Falls dam, migrating fish are instead funneled into a deathtrap: the turbine-riddled bottleneck of the Turners Falls power canal. Barely one shad in ten emerges upstream alive. Crowded-in fish turning back out of that canal are often diced up in turbine blades.

Federal Conte Fish Lab researchers dubbed last year's power canal shad passage a "success." The dismal 16,000 shad they tallied at the gatehouse mirrored "success" from 1987, a quarter century ago. FirstLight helped fund their study.

And, if you are a spawning-age shortnose, wholly dependent on spring riverbed flows resembling a natural system below the dam, you're out of luck. Annually, shortnose attempts at spawning fail in an ancient pool near Conte Lab. Or, as conditions deteriorate, they default downstream to try spawning below the canal's outflow. Here again reproductive failure is common. Dam-deflected surges deluge their gatherings, or else flows get cut off in minutes, causing mating stage fish to abandon spawning. Even when eggs get fertilized, embryos get silted-over or washed away by floodgate surges, or left to die on banks when the flow is cut. Most years no young are produced. That is extinction's fast-track.

FirstLight's Northfield Mountain offers tours of its new two-megawatt solar installation, but none to its reservoir and pumped-storage plant

where, during fish migration season in 2010, FirstLight dumped 45,000 cubic square yards of sludge directly into the river over 92 days. This winter FirstLight quietly added 22 megawatts of power to those giant turbines: more than half of all the power generated by HG&E's Holyoke Dam. This occurred despite their failure last July to have an EPA-mandated plan in place to prevent "polluting the navigable waters of the United States" with a mountain of pumped-storage silt. Where were the public Federal Energy Regulatory Commission hearings on this license change? Where is the Environmental Impact Assessment for endangered shortnose sturgeon?

The hydroelectric plant at Northfield Mountain, dependent on Vermont Yankee's nuclear power to pump its water uphill, opened in 1970. Its legally stated purpose was to provide a "reserve" power source – to operate a few hours in mornings and afternoons during peak energy use. Northfield Mountain can generate for just eight and a half continuous hours; then its reserve is depleted. Originally it was proposed to shut down Northfield Mountain during the season of fish migration. Today, operating way outside its original intent, those giant pumps are switched on like a coin-op laundry – day, night, with turnaround intervals of as little as 15 minutes.

Time is running out for the shortnose; corporate fines for harming one start at \$200,000. Our region's electric capacity now exceeds 15% of demand. Except for emergency power grid situations, why is this plant allowed to cripple an ecosystem? Alexandra Dawson would surely cheer if her old Conservation Law colleagues sued National Marine Fisheries Service: for failure to protect a New England biological gem.

Environmental journalist Karl holds a Masters in Environmental Science from Antioch University. His blog is at: [www.karlmeyerwriting.com](http://www.karlmeyerwriting.com).



from **RAMPAGE** page 1

Chuck Garbiel this week. "It does take a toll on you."

Niedes said the Glen owner intends to purchase security cameras now, and possibly an alarm system. "We are going to change the locks and the doors, so it won't be as easy to get in," said Niedes. "And there's no cash left here at night anymore."

Ristorante DiPaolo was broken into that same morning. Three bottles of wine were taken, along with approximately \$1,000 in cash. An attempt was made to break into the Aubuchon's storage shed as well. Phase One Hair Salon, tucked away on J Street, was also broken into at about the same time.

"It seems like all these breaks are connected, because the method of entry has been the same," said acting Montague police chief Chris Williams. "We are finding large impressions of a large screwdriver, [jammed] into the latch, prying it open that way. That's how they've been gaining access on the majority of the breaks."

Williams suggested homeowners and business owners who are concerned might want to invest in heavier door and latch hardware, even including heavy metal bars that come down to sink into a recess in the floor on the inside of the door. Like in New York City.

"Any type of security system or mechanism that will enhance the safety and security of homes or businesses" might be a wise investment, said Williams. "I would recommend businesses not leave large amounts of cash on the scene, and post signs saying, 'No cash in till.' Or invest in a lock box or a safe."

Williams said the police have picked up "five persons of interest" and interviewed them this week. "We are still working some leads."

But the department's K-9 officer, Sunny, has been unable to pick up a trail at most of these breaks, nor has a bloodhound on loan from a neighboring department, leading Williams to speculate that the perpetrator of the more recent heists might be working from a car or bicycle. "It's been hard to establish a consistent track."

Even as the department beefs up police presence downtown, especially at night, Williams appealed to the public for help. "If they have any information pertaining to the breaks, give us a call. If they happen to be out late at night and see anything at all suspicious, give us a call and we'll check it out. Three guys should not be sitting in a car in a parking lot at two in the morning. If it feels suspicious, give us a call."



## Radio Tags Shed Light on Shad Migration



Ted Castro-Santos points to the radio sensors tracking shad migration beneath the Turners Falls gatehouse fish passageway

doing just as poorly as the salmon, like Blueback herring, whose numbers have collapsed to just 39 this year, down from 138 last year, a mere sliver of the numbers of herring counted in the mid-1980s, when as many as 630,000 herring were counted at the Holyoke dam.

But this year's shad count provides a glimmer of hope for the resilience of the ecosystem and the anadromous fish that annually attempt to navigate manmade obstacles like the Turners Falls dam and power canal, not to mention wildly oscillating river flows downstream of the Northfield Mountain Pumped Hydro Station, in order to reproduce and survive.

Although nearly half a million shad passed the Holyoke Dam this year, only 26,000 of them made it out of the gatehouse above the Turners Falls dam, and of these, just half passed on upstream of the Vernon dam. Why?

Sprinkle, who wrote a lengthy and carefully documented letter to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources on behalf of the CRASC calling for a re-examination of the thermal discharge allowed at the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant, where water heated up to 105

These include species that are

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**

**THE PATCH** – This year, in a surprising turn of events, American shad returning to spawn in the Connecticut River surged in numbers, approaching levels not seen since the early '90s. Scientists studying annual fish migration in the Connecticut don't really know why more than 500,000 shad were counted in the mainstem and tributaries of the river this year – more than doubling last year's count. But they aim to find out.

Ken Sprinkle, Connecticut River

Coordinator for the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission, said at the recent meeting of the CRASC on Tuesday, July 10th, as the 40-year emphasis on restoring Atlantic Salmon to the river was officially abandoned by the US Department of Fish and Wildlife due to budget constraints and poor numbers of returning salmon (just 50 this year), that the commission has now established separate committees to study each species of anadromous fish in the Connecticut.

### NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Galenski to Retire as Principal of Erving Elementary

**BY KATIE NOLAN** – School committee member Jarod Boissonneault told the selectboard he anticipates Erving Elementary School principal Charlene Galenski will be retiring as of October 1st. Galenski has informed school staff of her decision, and Boissonneault anticipates a letter to the school committee will arrive shortly.

Boissonneault predicted the school committee would appoint an interim principal for the 2012-2013 school year and form a search committee composed of parents, staff, and community members to select candidates for a new principal.

The selectboard decided to set up a four-person emergency medical services (EMS) committee to meet with Northfield's four-person EMS committee and discuss a possible collaboration between

the towns for ambulance services.

Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin said the committee would research whether collaboration would "be a good fit for the town or not a good fit for the town." Goodwin was selected as the selectboard representative to the EMS committee, with Eugene Klepadlo as alternate member.

The selectboard signed the warrant for the August 13th special town meeting, which will consist of two articles: transfer of \$500,000 from stabilization for demolition and cleanup at the former Usher Mill property on Arch Street in Erving Center and updates to the water department regulations, fees and charges.

Acting as water commissioners, the selectboard amended its June 11th vote to raise water rates from \$4.60

per thousand gallons to \$4.80 per thousand gallons.

Instead of making the rate hike effective July 1st, the board changed the effective date to October 1st to coincide with the water department's billing cycle. The board also decided the town should increase its payment to the water department for testing town water supplies from \$2,500 to \$3,500.

In addition, the hydrant fee paid by the fire department to the water department was set at \$5,750. The fee was originally instituted to cover the costs of the fire hydrant flushing conducted by the water department. Two years ago, the selectboard decided the fire department and not the water department should flush the hydrants, thereby reducing the water department's revenue. The water department is funded by the water enterprise fund, with the revenue coming from water ratepayers, while the fire department is funded by all town taxpayers.

According to town administrator Tom Sharp, the water department needs the revenue because there are costs associated with the fire hydrants, such as painting or other small maintenance, and replacing damaged hydrants.

Sharp informed the selectboard that the response to ads for a highway foreman and highway worker was "healthy."

The board asked Sharp to ask senior and community center architect John Catlin to attend the August 6th select-

see **ERVING** page 7

### NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

## Elementary School Window Replacement Project Hits Another Snag

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** – The Leverett selectboard is less than pleased with the progress of the window replacement project at the Leverett Elementary School.

Initially, the \$180,000 window replacement project, which is funded partially through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Obama administration's economic stimulus program, via the Massachusetts School Building Administration's (MSBA) Green Repair program, was delayed by a failure on the part of the architect to measure and order properly-sized replacement windows to fit some of the existing openings in the building. Adding to the problem, replacement windows were back ordered for months, due in part to the need to rebuild after severe storms in the area, such as the tornadoes that blew through the Springfield area last year.

Then, last Thursday, July 12th, with the project finally underway, an existing 25-foot window casement was removed from the courtyard side of the elementary school in preparation for replacement, and a three-inch sag developed in the ceiling, requiring a hasty revision of plans involving the installation of laminated plywood beams for headers, according to selectboard chair Rich Brazeau, who expressed his sentiments about the job performance of the Boston-based architect and project manager in choleric tones.

"I'm going to the MSBA," Brazeau said on Tuesday, July

24th. "We're spending thousands of dollars to hire these guys from Boston," as required under the terms of the Green Repair program, "instead of the local guys who know the building. The project manager shows up for an hour a day and then leaves, saying he doesn't want to hang around with nothing to do. He says he's got problems on other jobs. Well, no wonder. Now he's got problems here. He's colluding with the architect. These guys are supposed to be working for us."

Brazeau said he had called in Franklin Regional Council of Governments building inspector Jim Cerone to inspect the job, and threatened to call the state building inspector too. He said Cerone told him that when the plans for the window replacement project at the town's elementary school had been submitted to him, "Their plans showed no structural impacts to the building, just windows in, windows out."

Brazeau held up his hand with index finger circled to thumb to indicate the amount of extra money he expected the town to contribute to fixing the latest SNAFU at the elementary school renovation project.

"The town's cost will be zero," he averred. "I'm going to tell them, 'It's your fault. None of you even bothered to see what was supporting this wall.'"

The entire board expressed their anger with the fumbling pace and poor performance of the state-funded, state-regulated repair project, recalling

how in years past Americans had been able to build massive infrastructure projects like the 1,000-mile Alaskan highway in less time than it has taken Boston bureaucrats to successfully oversee the replacement of a few energy-inefficient windows at an elementary school in Leverett. Left unsaid, but plainly implied in the discussion, was the fear that poor oversight could lead to further delays in the completion of the project before the start of school.

In other business, Tom Scanlon, of Scanlon Associates in South Deerfield, reported favorably on the results of his recent audit of town finances. Very favorably.

"I love coming to Leverett," said Scanlon. "I can't say enough about the staff you have here. Usually small towns have problems with financial reporting and financial accountability. That's not the case with Leverett. The town received the best recommendation you can get."

After mentioning just three areas of minor concern – a \$6,400 deficit in the after-school program's revolving fund, minor discrepancies in invoicing from some small departments like the recreation commission, and a concern with the complexity of financial accounting and the 3% depreciation fund that will soon have to be set up for the town's anticipated \$3.6 million project to build a municipal fiber optic network to deliver high speed internet to residents – Scanlon could not

see **LEVERETT** page 6

### Another Half Mil to Clean Up Usher Mill

**BY KATIE NOLAN** – At the August 13th special town meeting, voters will decide whether to transfer \$500,000 from the stabilization fund for demolition and cleanup at the former Usher Mill. The May 2010 annual town meeting had previously approved an initial transfer of \$500,000 from stabilization for this project. But the estimates received recently for completing the work at the Usher site has risen to more than \$800,000, with the possibility that unforeseen contingencies could drive the cost up further.

The other article on the special town meeting warrant is an update to water department regulations, fees, and charges.

According to town administrator Tom Sharp, the regulation changes are "primarily grammatical changes and cleanup of the document."

The minimum charge per billing period, the shutoff, turn-on, and initial turn-on fees will all be raised from \$30.00 to \$40.00 if the new regulations are approved.

The meeting will be held at Erving town hall at 7 p.m. on August 13th.

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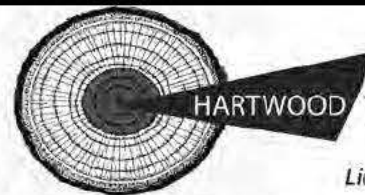
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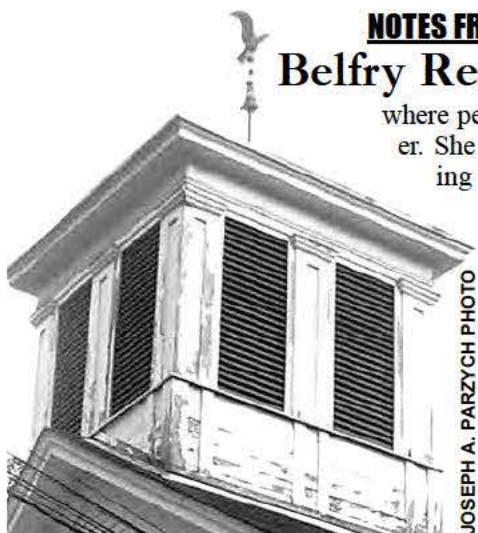
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## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

## Belfry Removal Batted Down



The Belfry on Gill's town hall

JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO

**BY EMILY KREMS** - After considering a proposal that would change the outward appearance of town hall, the Gill selectboard decided in a unanimous vote that the belfry (commonly yet erroneously known as a cupola) will remain on the roof of town hall rather than be removed during upcoming roof repairs.

In making the decision, the board first turned to the historical commission for guidance. Pam Shoemaker, member of the historical commission, said she felt "umbrage" at the idea the town might take down the belfry, calling it "iconic" and "one image that seems to say 'Gill.'"

According to records, the town hall was built in 1867. Prior to its existence, the town's citizens gathered in the meetinghouse (now church) as was common in the Commonwealth before the formal separation of church and state functions in 1833. The taverns then became the meeting spot. Shoemaker joked that if the town really wanted to be historic, town meetings should all take place at the Gill Tavern.

Shoemaker said the town has a responsibility to preserve the belfry on town hall, explaining that for much of Gill's history the building has represented the center of town

where people came to gather. She added that removing the belfry might jeopardize the building's listing with the National Registry.

The selectboard thanked the commission for gathering so much information about the town hall in such a short amount of time.

## Housing Rehabilitation Loans

Robin Sherman, executive director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA), described updates to the FCRHRA administered housing rehabilitation program and revolving loan fund. Sherman explained Gill's options for managing town funds in accordance with new Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines. The town has been the recipient of state and federal community development block grant funds for housing rehabilitation on a fairly regular basis since 1982. As these zero interest loans are paid back, funds accrue to a revolving fund designated for the town of Gill.

Sherman said currently there is a balance of \$42,246 in Gill's revolving loan account. As loans are paid back by homeowners, funds accrue to the account, minus a current 15% fee to the Housing Authority for administering the program. Funds in the account can be distributed according to specific guidelines as interest-free, payment-deferred loans to homeowners. Typical uses of the money are for repairs to wells, septic systems, or heating systems, roof replacement, and

electric and plumbing upgrades. Currently there are 15 loan applications pending review. Maximum loan amounts are \$30,000-35,000.

The selectboard members decided that it makes sense to have town counsel Donna MacNicol advise them on how to manage the housing rehabilitation funds.

## Paying for False Alarms

The rule in Gill is that residents are responsible for paying for false alarms after the first three; for each subsequent alarm within a year residents are charged \$200 per call. The alarms at the senior housing complex at Stoughton Place have already gone off five times this year, so a charge of \$400 has been levied. However, the money cannot easily be paid.

Stoughton Place is a state-aided housing property managed by the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Sherman, who had just spoken to the selectboard about the housing loans, provided some information about the complicated matter. She said her organization operates Stoughton Place at a loss. Furthermore, the false alarms have been triggered only during severe storms and the source of problem has been difficult to identify. Therefore, her staff has requested that the \$400 fee be waived.

Ann Banash, selectboard chair, thought it would be unfair to grant an exception but said the decision might be the fire chief's. The selectboard asked Sherman to speak with the alarm company, since the alarm system appears to be at fault, to find out if that company can bear some of the financial burden of the fee for extra false alarms.

the method in which the program is administered. The program allows income eligible residents to receive average loans of \$25,000 to \$30,000 at no interest with no obligation to repay until the sale of the property, to correct code violations, abate lead, replace roofs, septic, electrical wiring, and other conditions that may render their homes unsafe or difficult to heat. But when the loans are eventually repaid, the money accrue to revolving accounts for each town administered by the Housing Authority, and Sherman would like to see the arrangements by which those funds are eventually used and

disbursed, and the fees by which the Housing Authority gets paid to administer the program, clearly spelled out in writing, rather than handled by verbal agreement, as now.

The board was taken off guard, and very enthusiastic, by Sherman's report when she told them Leverett, over the course of six Community Development Block Grants for the housing rehab program since the mid-90s, now has about \$700,000 in loans that have been put to work in the community, and about \$80,000 sitting in the town's revolving loan fund with the FCRHRA from loans that have been repaid.

## NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Not So Fast or Closing Greenfield Cross Road

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - For the past 12 years, ever since former selectboard member Sam Lovejoy reported a child playing in the road at a dangerous intersection where Greenfield Road forks off onto Greenfield Cross Road, the 1800 foot long shortcut to Hatchery Road has been blockaded at the southern end with two lines of Jersey barriers. Since then, cars using the heavily traveled detour to Turners Falls Road from Greenfield Road have to come to a full stop and turn at the west end of Hatchery Road, rather than accelerate up the diagonal cross road.

On Monday, July 16th, Lisa Adams asked the Montague selectboard to permanently close Greenfield Cross Road at the end that abuts her Hatchery Road farm. But by the end of their discussion, the board recommended against closing the road, and sent the matter on to the planning board for further discussion.

Adams said her family had recently purchased the farm at 16 Hatchery Road, and since then she had researched the temporary closing of Greenfield Cross Road, and found it had been closed without a vote at town meeting.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the board had the right to close a road temporarily to alleviate a situation where public safety is endangered.

Adams said pedestrians, cyclists, and dog walkers frequently use the cutoff despite the Jersey barriers, and occasionally wind up trespassing on her land. If the town were to close the road formally, Adams' farm

could wind up absorbing that end of the road into the rest of their adjoining property.

But the board decided not to go with Adams' suggestion, since the reconstruction of Greenfield Road may commence in the next few years, and the cross road may provide a useful alternative route during some portion of that construction project. Also, a sewer line runs beneath the road, and the town may need to service that line at some point.

Susan Conger of the Montague energy committee advised the selectboard on the progress of the Solarize Montague program, which will allow residents and businesses to take advantage of low cost photovoltaic (PV) power systems. The more residents who sign up to purchase solar systems under the program, the lower the cost for everyone in town that participates. Options to lease PV systems with no upfront cost to the homeowner are also available.

Conger said 115 residents, from every village in town, have already requested a preliminary site visit from the town's solar installer under the Solarize Montague program. Residents can continue to sign up for site assessments until September 30th. Visit the town's website ([www.montague.net](http://www.montague.net)) and follow the link to Solarize Montague to find out more.

Board member Pat Allen called that news "very exciting."

## River of Light

The board granted permission for a public gathering for the second annual River of Lights lantern parade, to cap off the

Turners Fall Block Party on Saturday, August 11th to Kathryn Greenwood-Swanson, in association with RiverCulture. Workshops to make lanterns will take place upstairs at the Montague Bookmill on Saturday, July 28th and on Saturday, August 4th, from 6 - 9 p.m., as well as at the Block Party itself.

The board also granted permission for Lahri Bond, a Lake Pleasant artist, to block off parts of Avenue A at 3rd Street during the first two weeks of August to paint his winning design from RiverCulture's Creative Crosswalks project. Expect to see various anadromous fish swimming across the Avenue in living color, soon.

## Chief Exam a Bust

The three in-house candidates for Montague police chief who took the Civil Service competitive police chief test were all recently informed that they had failed to pass. A score of 70 is required to pass. Two of the candidates, sergeant Chip Dodge and acting chief Chris Williams, had taken the test in the past year and passed. Acting sergeant Chris Lapointe was the third candidate to take the test this year; he was also informed by Civil Service that he did not make the grade.

Montague sergeant Richard Suchanek said later that he had decided not to take the test when he found out Civil Service had changed half the books required to prepare for the test, with very little advance warning. "That's a two-year test," Suchanek said. "There wasn't enough time to study for it."

The selectboard was of the opinion the problem lay with the test itself, not the candidates.

The board asked Abbondanzio to prepare a request for proposals to hire a private company to perform an assessment center exam for the Montague candidates, and also to inquire whether the city of Greenfield would like to work together with Montague and share the cost of an assessment center exam.

"I'm quite confident in all our candidates," said Allen. "I'd be interested to know if anybody passed" the test, statewide, she added.

**LEVERETT** from pg 5 help himself from adding. "The town is well managed. I can't say enough about how well managed it is."

Robin Sherman, director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA), took her traveling road show of county towns to Leverett on Tuesday, to discuss the zero interest loan housing rehab program, which the Housing Authority has been administering for Franklin County towns for the last 30 years.

Sherman said the Housing Authority has until now not had written contractual agreements with the towns about

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**SCHOOL** from page 1

Prince, sat quietly in the audience and declined to speak.

At some point, Gill member Jennifer Waldron moved, and Marjorie Levenson of Montague seconded, a motion that the current interim superintendent and administration "make no further appointments or hires from tonight forward." The members voted, hastily and with just a short time for discussion, in favor of freezing any hiring until Prince took over as interim superintendent on July 1st.

Six members voted in favor. Phillips and vice chair Jane Oakes of Gill voted against, as did Langknecht, who said as he cast his vote that this was "the worst kind of micromanaging."

The conditions under which the vote was taken constitute Langknecht's first complaint. Because the issue was not on the agenda, he claimed there was no time for anyone affected by this vote to respond to it. Under the open meeting law, the committee is required to give 48 hours notice to the public before voting on such an issue, Langknecht maintained.

Beyond the matter of whether the open meeting law was followed, the district's lawyer, Russell Dupere, in a letter to Phillips, said in his opinion the motion passed by the committee "restricts the statutory hiring authority of [the] administration," and for this reason also fails to comply with state law.

The second and third complaints filed by Langknecht involved emails sent among members of the school committee, emails he believes to be in clear violation of the open meeting law.

Following her receipt of the opinion from Dupere, Phillips tried to organize a meeting of the school committee to address the problem. The motion had been passed hastily, and some committee members said they had voted under the impression the hiring freeze would only apply to the outgoing superintendent. But the superintendent gives final approval for all hires by principals and department heads, so all hiring was effectively frozen by the motion, putting in jeopardy, in particular, new staff for the 13 open positions at the high school, some of whom had already been offered jobs. There was concern that some of these potential hires would not wait for the matter to be resolved and would look elsewhere for positions for the fall.

Phillips sent an email to all school committee members on June 14th asking them to attend a meeting on June 20th at the high school to discuss the hiring freeze. But the committee failed to muster a quorum on that date.

Langknecht considered what happened after that to be another violation of the open meeting law: an ongoing, serial email conversation between elected committee members. Guidance from the attor-

ney general's office in the past has advised the G-M school committee that serial email discussions involving all members constitute a violation of the open meeting law.

In responding to the request for a meeting on June 20th, Misty Lyons, newly elected from Montague, began the email discussion by remarking that then superintendent Ekstrom had made some questionable personnel decisions. In a lengthy email, Lyons referred to several new hires and expressed dismay at how the hiring process had been handled. In one statement, echoed by others, she said, "Whether we could legally make and/or pass this motion... I still feel very strongly in not changing my decision."

Levenson replied she agreed with Lyons, saying "Her reasoning is sound." She also complained that she had not been properly informed. These and other emails were sent to the entire school committee, which may in itself constitute a violation of the open meeting law, as Langknecht alleged in his second and third complaints to the attorney general.

Langknecht stated in his complaint that over the course of two days, from June 14th to the 15th, a deliberation on an issue under the jurisdiction of the school committee occurred via email. In a separate complaint he added that statements made in these emails violated the requirements of Massachusetts General Law regarding the rights of public employees.

Recommendations by Langknecht of actions to be taken to remedy the situation formed the basis of Phillips' directives on July 12th. Not everyone on the committee accepted these conditions, and both Brown and Levenson objected to the characterization of the alleged violations. Brown continued to disagree with legal counsel, represented in the July 17th meeting by attorney Fred Dupere, standing in for his son Russell. Brown said bluntly she did not agree with Dupere's interpretation of the law, to which Dupere responded, "The law is the law, whether you agree or not."

In one of her emails to the members, Levenson replied to the information that Russell Dupere would be attending the meeting planned for June 20th by saying (in caps) "I believe the attorney has no standing, hence no need for a meeting. We were elected, not the attorney."

The circular email process was stopped by Prince (also by email), who asked all committee members to discontinue the conversation, and stated that because some members had gone beyond sharing opinions, and several had replied to all, the committee may be in violation of the open meeting law.

Asked by this reporter if there had been any negative consequences of the hiring freeze, Prince answered it was hard to tell, and that his administrators had done their best to communicate to prospective

hires that the delay was only temporary. For the top choices for new hires, assurances were given that letters would go out as soon as they were able proceed with contracts.

In response to Phillips July 17th request that all committee members join Ed-line, most were amenable to the chair, but Sandra Brown, member from Gill, said she didn't believe the committee had violated the open meeting law. She said she would decline to open an email account with Edline, opting to continue using her personal account instead.

Phillips said the district preferred to have a record of all correspondence related to school district business in one place, so if a legal issue arises they could easily respond with the necessary information. She reminded the committee members that everything public officials say regarding district business is required to be part of the public record.

But Brown was not persuaded. A school committee meeting has been scheduled for August 21st for an open meeting law training session with Russell Dupere at the Turners Falls High School conference room from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The next regular Gill-Montague school committee meeting will be held on August 14th at Turners Falls High School at 7:00 p.m.

**ERVING** from page 5

board meeting to discuss problems with the well at the new building.

The first town department head meeting will be held August 1st, at 7 a.m., with department of public works, fire department, and police department heads attending. Andrew Goodwin will attend as the selectboard representative and will provide guidelines for meeting rules and responsibilities. All other town department heads, board chairs, and elected officials are welcome to attend. Minutes and action items from the meetings will be forwarded to the selectboard.

Sharp informed the selectboard that town counsel has advised tax collector Michele Turner she does not have the authority to hire an assistant tax and water collections clerk. The proper appointing authority is the selectboard.

The selectboard appointed Julie Wonkka, who was initially hired by Turner, as assistant tax and water collections clerk.

Noting the five-member finance committee has two vacancies, the selectboard brainstormed to come up with suggestions for new members. Nominees will be forwarded to moderator Rich Peabody, who appoints finance committee members.

The selectboard will hold its semi-annual goal-setting retreat on September 9th, starting at 1 p.m. at the Whately Inn.

**NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD****My Brother, My Road Boss**

**BY JOSH HEINEMANN** – Unscheduled, highway commission chair Harry Williston met the Wendell selectboard at its July 18th meeting to report on the selection process for a third road crew worker.

The commission narrowed the half dozen applications it received down to the two men who held hoister licenses. Of those two, their preferred candidate was the brother of road boss Rich Wilder, but state ethics rules prohibit even the appearance of nepotism between a supervisor and a worker.

Williston said the law would allow the hire if Rich Wilder resigned as road boss and worked as an equal alongside his brother, but aside from the absurdity of that approach, it would force the town to start a search for a new road boss.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said her research into the state ethics law brought her to the same conclusion.

Williston said passing up on hiring Wilder's brother would be a loss for the town.

Wilder recused himself from hiring deliberations because his brother was involved, but the state ethics law prevents Wendell from hiring its first choice for the road crew.

Williston turned to the topic of the Cooleyville Road bridge project, which he said is going well. One footing is poured, and the second footing was to be poured on Thursday, July 19th. The box culvert will be arriving soon, and its installation will be made easier because the water level in the brook is low.

Pam Richardson, representing an anti-nuclear affinity group called Water, Roots, and Branches, met the selectboard to request permission to plant a Japanese maple tree on Old Home Day, Saturday, August 18th, in memory of the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear disaster. A Japanese maple does not grow tall like a sugar maple, only about 30 feet tall, and some varieties have attractive red leaves.

Richardson thought there might be room on the south side of the common between two sugar maples, but selectboard chair Christine Heard said Old Home Day vendors fill that space.

Selectboard member Dan Keller asked, "Isn't that an invasive species?" but then realized he was thinking of Japanese beetles, and knothead.

Heard suggested that Richardson consult with the historic commission, and Richardson asked, "Consult with myself?" The historic commission has two members, Pam Richardson and Joe Coll.

Selectboard member Jeoffrey Pooser said there are two more selectboard meetings before Old Home Day, and a decision on the proposal could be made at either one of them.

Other species of tree and other locations were discussed, and the parties agreed to meet on the common and look for an appropriate place to plant a new tree in commemoration of the ongoing nuclear disaster in Japan.

Aldrich reported the new town copier has been installed with a wired network connection to computers in the building. She said it has all kinds of features the old copier lacked, but she did not elaborate, except to say the machine worked well. At prior meetings board members discussed including a wireless connection for an additional \$400, but for now only the wired connection is operational.

**ARSON** from page 3

Just then a man walked up and spotted the tome. "This is amazing! Just what I was looking for!" he said, as he happily carted it off.

As I was checking in on the temporary bookstand in the research for this article, I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw the name Mavis Gallant on one of the books on offer. That is the very writer I had set my cap for. I saw a book of hers at a friend's house, one of those friends who has an uncanny way of discovering all the writers who become my new favorites, and now here was Gallant, rising from the ashes on the Avenue.

Moran said she herself spotted a book she wanted to borrow in the outpouring of generosity since the fire.

An ongoing investigation by the police and fire department may find the culprit in this misguided prank. But departing briefly from journalistic norms, I would like to say if the arsonist who burned down the Little Library reads this article, when the community rebuilds this precious resource, please don't burn it down again. You may find just the book inside to calm your troubled mind.

The new library will cost money to rebuild, and anyone who wants to chip in can bring a donation to Nina's Nook during open hours: Thursday 4 to 6 p.m., Friday and Saturday 1 to 6 p.m.

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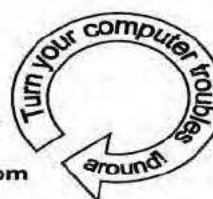
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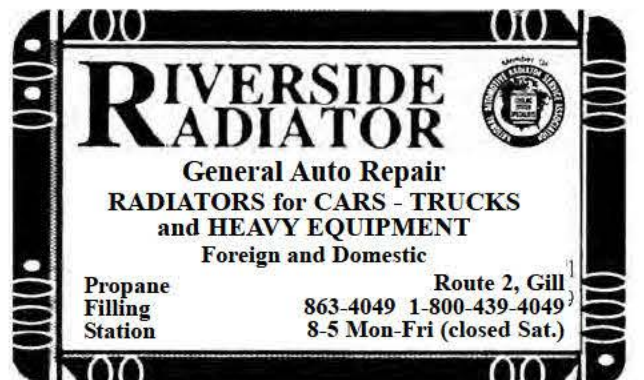
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## Artistic Crosswalk Coming to Turners

BY SHIRA HILLEL — At the 2nd Annual Feast for the Arts held on June 30th at St. Kazimierz, local residents picked their favorite artistic crosswalk proposal out of 17 designs submitted to Turners Falls RiverCulture. The design submitted by Lahri Bond, a resident of Lake Pleasant, was the chosen as the winner. Bond's crosswalk design will be painted on the main intersection in downtown Turners Falls, across Avenue A at 3rd Street, in front of the Gallery at Hallmark.

The award for the winning design is \$1,500. "Hopefully it will be ready in time for the downtown block party on August 11th," said RiverCulture director Lisa Davol.

The purpose of crosswalks is to let people know where there is a crossway for foot traffic. They must be visible to both pedestrians and oncoming vehicle traffic. Crosswalks are re-painted every year. However, there is nothing in the rule books that says crosswalks must keep to the simple zebra white striped design we are all familiar with.

The selectboard and highway department examined the chosen design to insure safety requirements, and have finalized approval of the chosen design.

Bond said his design, "takes into account the



*Lahri Bond's winning crosswalk design*

unique... ecology of Turners Falls." He described his design as "super-impos[ing] a color filmstrip with seven indigenous river dwellers swimming through it. The filmstrip echoes both the Shea Theater's 1927 origin as a first run movie theater, and the present day presence of the Gallery at Hallmark. The seven river dwellers include (from left to right, paralleling the journey upstream through the Connecticut River): Blueback Herring, Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon, Shortnose Sturgeon, Striped Bass, American Eel, and American Shad. The mural... [is] also a supplementary teaching tool in conjunction with the Great Falls Discovery Center, as the fish portrayed are all included as part of a current information sheet on local river life."

Bond will use leftover white, yellow and blue street paint that is not compatible with the town's current street sprayer. "The extra sidewalk paint will be used, instead of simply being thrown out and wasted," Davol noted.

Bond explained his "aquatic theme makes maximum use of the current colors and paint available from the town," and he will get supplementary colors from local professional exterior painters.

Bond plans to paint the crosswalk "in several concise stages; with the current space painted flat white, the film strip and background colors then painted in, and finally the fish drawn and painted over and through it."

Bond welcomes volunteers to help him in the project, "to make the painting of the crosswalk a community-supported event."

"A bunch of people will help

paint the background and easier parts, and Bond will paint in the fish details," said Davol, who added Bond had submitted "a great design."

Bond is a qualified art teacher, and brought in a lot of town references to his design, Davol said. She called the winner concept "clever and eye-catching," with a "wow effect."

RiverCulture aims to strengthen the creative and cultural industries and enhance the overall quality of life that Turners Falls has to offer residents and visitors. "RiverCulture wanted to do more projects that were not just one-time events, but projects that would remain in the town as a permanent fixture and would be an indication of the town's playful attitude and atmosphere," explained Davol.

Davol said this year's Feast for the Arts was very successful. A lot of different people submitted designs, including many youngsters. It was a "warm and welcoming evening."

Avenue A resident Suzette Snow-Cobb's beautiful floral and salmon design came in second place.

Davol called the Feast for the Arts, which raised money to pay for the winning design from tickets at the door, and then allowed the dinner guests, as they enjoyed food donated by area restaurants, to vote on the winning design they were funding, a real "community event, where the community reflected on itself. That really came through."

Soon, traffic will stop each day at Avenue A and 3rd as pedestrians cross in the light of public art, chosen by the people of the town, celebrating the river, the fish, and the culture of Turners Falls.

from ARTS pg 1

melodic, with a heavy punctuated boom ba ba boom, cast a sultry, seductive mood with overtones of dread and lyrics

like, "Walking in a lucid dream while the sky is set aflame..."

Catchy numbers like "Fire Bug" made it impossible to just stand there and listen. You had to get up and dance. The alley cat crawl of crunchy guitars and choppy piano licks took control. The music conjured up images of classic cult movie sound-

tracks and bored and restless youth of the surf generation, while the lyrics "Burn it up, burn it down, let it burn across the town," seethed like a mantra, bottling the band inside an old transistor radio and transporting the listeners straight back to the 50s. What a time we had then.



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The new playground is ready for action at Unity Park



Ben Cachiguango, of Montague, on the hopscotch course



Metteo, Isabella Demers, and Tory Decker, of Turners Falls, on the rope bridge

BY DAVID DETMOLD  
TURNERS FALLS – If your kids are looking for a fun way to beat the heat, the good news is, the Unity Park water feature is now ON!  
“We got the water quality test back this morning at 11:57,” said Montague parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz on Wednesday afternoon. “The water feature is on right now. It went on at noon, and it’s been a big hit. There has been a constant stream of kids going in and out ever since.”

The water feature, a sort of fountain with graceful fish-like shapes of metal leaping up around the jets of water, forms the centerpiece of the new play area at Unity Park, the eagerly awaited renovation of the town’s largest and most heavily used recreation area. This spring, the first phase of construction began, utilizing a \$652,000 Community Development Block Grant.  
In June, the town of Montague got the good news it had been approved for the second phase of construction at Unity Park, for about \$460,000, to renovate the playing fields, basketball court, establish community gardens and install a new parking lot at the south end of the park, along with an accessible walking path around the entire perimeter of the park. Construction on Phase 2 will begin next spring.  
A new 80-car parking lot has already been paved at the north end of the park. A little landscaping still needs to be completed, but the main attraction for most families in this first phase of construction is, without a doubt, the children’s play area. The brightly colored play structures were mobbed with children and their caregivers on Sunday morning, even though the play area had reopened without the slightest fanfare only the day before.  
“It was a quiet opening this past Saturday,” said Dobosz, who added, “Right now, we are working on a



Will (left) and Pax Stark, from Deerfield, try out a climbing structure

grand opening which we anticipate to be Friday, August 17th, tentatively at 4 o’clock.”  
No formal progress has yet been made on the concrete skate park that is planned at the north end of the park, although Phase I improvements did include tearing up the blacktop

on the former Williams Way, and leveling the ground where someday teens in Turners may be executing graceful arcs on skateboards and BMX-style bikes.  
But for the younger children enjoying the park, it’s a brand new day.



Carlie Kemps, of Greenfield, is well pleased with the new playground



Daniel (left) and Derek Lenois, of Greenfield, like the tire-go-round the best

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KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

## MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

# Site Visits Underway for Solarize Montague

**BY SALLY PICK** — This week marks another step in the solarization of the five villages of Montague. Northeast Solar Design Associates, the installer for the Solarize Montague program, has begun site visits to several Montague homes to determine if they are good sites for solar power (also called photovoltaics or PV).

One of the first site assessments took place in Montague Center, at the home of Alejandro Levins. Levins explains why he went ahead with a site visit for PV.

"I've been dragging my feet on getting PV, but when I heard about Solarize Montague, I decided this was the time to act. Where else can I get a return of over 20% on my money?"

In early April, Montague was selected by the Mass Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) as one of 17 Solarize Mass communities. Montague chose Hadley-based

Northeast Solar to be the community's solar installer. To date, about 120 residents and owners of businesses across the five villages of Montague have signed up for a free, no-obligation site assessment to explore PV through this special, discounted program. Participants have until September 30th to sign a contract and take advantage of PV prices that are well below the standard rate in Massachusetts.

Solarize Montague pricing information is now available online. You can download summaries of pricing that compare the standard PV pricing to the Solarize Montague pricing, show annual savings, and highlight the different ownership options (buying a PV system outright, purchasing it with financing, or leasing PV).

The Ownership Options for Solar PV summary gives the up-front cost, after rebate cost, payback period, and net income from the system, for

someone buying PV. PV owners, even with full financing, may see net annual savings of hundreds of dollars. Solarize pricing may save a buyer between \$1,225 and \$4,900 on a typical residential system of 4.9 kilowatts compared to the standard market cost. The summary gives annual financing costs and net income over ten years and shows annual savings of \$87 to \$233 on yearly electricity costs for someone leasing a system.

The program is structured in such a way that savings go up for all participants as more people in town sign contracts for PV. The summaries, *Solarize Ownership Options* and



SALLY PICK PHOTO

*Andrew Cunningham, design consultant for Northeast Solar, the solar installer for Solarize Montague, takes computer readings for the design of a PV system on a home in Montague.*

*Solarize Cost Savings Basics*, are available from the Solarize link on the Montague Energy Committee's website:

[www.montague.net/Pages/MontagueMA\\_Energy/Links](http://www.montague.net/Pages/MontagueMA_Energy/Links).

The Tiered Pricing Matrix on Northeast Solar's Solarize Montague page ([www.northeastsolar.biz/montague/tieredpricingmatrix.html](http://www.northeastsolar.biz/montague/tieredpricingmatrix.html)) provides more detailed cost information that can be tailored to the electric usage of a building owner. Enter your typical monthly electric bill cost on the pull down menu at the top of the web page, and the matrix gives costs and savings based on that usage that includes specific information on rebates, tax credits, and more.

The online calendar at [www.SolarizeMass.com/Montague](http://www.SolarizeMass.com/Montague) lists Solarize Montague events and meetings, such as Ask Solarize Montague, an opportunity to speak with a Solarize Montague representative, likely Greg Garrison of Northeast Solar, starting Tuesday, August 7th, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Turners Falls safety complex and running every other Tuesday through September 18th.

The Solarize website also includes a link and contact information for Northeast Solar for setting up a free site visit for PV, a link to more information on the Solarize Montague Energy Committee web page, and a link for contacting me, the town's Community Solar Coach. I can take your questions about the program and can be reached by email at [MontagueEnergyCommittee@gmail.com](mailto:MontagueEnergyCommittee@gmail.com), or by phone at (413)559-7257.

## SHAD from page 5

degrees Fahrenheit is disrupting the river's ecology, told the commission. "Just because we've passed 10,000 shad at Vernon, I don't want anyone to think we're satisfied with that. After delays at Holyoke and two fishways at Turners Falls, that's going to impact whether you see fish up in Vermont and New Hampshire."

Conte Anadromous Fish Lab researcher Ted Castro-Santos is working with Sprinkle on a shad movement and survival study, involving radio tagging shad and following their movements up river to better understand the conditions

under which this species thrives. Historically, shad were once so plentiful Native Americans talked of being able to walk across the river on their backs during spawning season, and even as recently as 1992 were estimated at more than 1.6 million fish.

After the last CRASC meeting, Castro-Santos said, "When I see 100,000 shad pass a ladder, I want to know: was that 20,000 shad passing five times and falling back down?" Radio tags implanted in 82

shad netted by Sprinkle and Castro-Santos at the mouth of the river last year allowed a preliminary study of the pattern of shad migration in the river, and the researchers have expanded the scope of that study this year.

Looking right out the back door at the Conte Fish Lab, Castro-Santos can now hope to answer the question of why shad do particularly poorly in the turbid confines of the power canal, with the nearby mainstem of the river deprived of

sufficient flows to sustain fish passage for all but a few weeks of the year.

"They die in droves in the canal. They are not dying in the turbines. Fundamentally, they are dying of starvation. They wait weeks in the power canal; they're not feeding in the river."

Sprinkle and Castro-Santos concurred that when the First Light-owned Turners Falls dam and Northfield Mountain power station come up for federal relicensing in 2018 (with public hearings beginning next year), "We're going to want more flow in the river," downstream of the dam, all year long.

Meanwhile, a power company promise to install a lift at Cabot Station similar to the fish elevator at the Holyoke Dam to ease fish passage into the power canal is not enough to satisfy the researchers.

"In 2004-2005, when we stopped studying the Cabot ladder, we had a clear agreement that the utility would replace it with a lift," said Castro-Santos. "Since then, we've focused on the gatehouse [fish ladder at the Turners dam]. Our passage success was never very good out of the canal."

If the researchers could not solve that part of the puzzle, allowing more shad to move through at the gatehouse, "We'd be lifting them into an artificial canal with no big improvement in passage," he said.

But improvements in the fishway at the gatehouse have been implemented in 2008, improving shad passage from 5-10% to an estimated 20-25% now.

One improvement was to move

the entrance to the gateway fish ladder to the east wall of the power canal, since fishermen had noticed the fish seemed to prefer that side of the canal to the west wall, where the entrance had been located. The utility demanded proof before they would invest in a new entrance, and Castro-Santos demonstrated that. Fish passage immediately doubled with the east wall entrance, and doubled again, Castro-Santos said, when the height of the weir was adjusted to increase the flow rate at the gatehouse entrance.

More statistics will soon be forthcoming from Sprinkle and Castro-Santos' telemetry study, using radio tagged shad. But there are still more questions than firm answers. Are shad negatively impacted by being jostled together in the confined space of the Holyoke fish lift? Do the rapidly oscillating flows produced by Northfield Mountain make it even harder for shad to pass upstream to Turners and beyond? And is it not, perhaps, the most natural state of affairs for shad to spawn not once, and die, as they seem to do now? Or is Castro-Santos right when he asserts, "The natural state for northern shad, as in pre-industrial times, is to spawn multiple times and not die in the river?"

If that is true, then the manmade obstacles we have put in the way of upstream passage may indeed be making it impossible for exhausted fish to make the return trip to the sea after spawning. That might be another explanation for the long, precipitous decline of so many of our native species.

## Learn. Support. Fund.



Join the new online citizens initiative "Wendell Citizens Supporting Mahar" for information and news relating to the Mahar budget and how you can help.

[www.facebook.com/groups/wendellformahar](http://www.facebook.com/groups/wendellformahar)

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

### Campground, Railroad Trespassers

**Tuesday, 7/10**

7:00 p.m. Medical emergency at State road residence. Assisted same.  
11:30 p.m. Suspicious youths at Renovators Supply area. Same climbing on cement wall. Advised to stop.

**Wednesday, 7/11**

11:15 a.m. Assisted Gill police at Barton's Cove campground for disturbance.

**Thursday, 7/12**

12:15 a.m. Suspicious person and vehicle in parking lot at French King Bowling Alley. Spoke with resident. All set.

10:00 p.m. Arrested

for operating under the influence of drugs, failure to dim headlights, and possession of marijuana, Route 2.  
**Friday, 7/13**

1:00 p.m. Possible disabled motor vehicle, Route 2, Found to be all set, was using cellphone.

3:20 p.m. Motor vehicle lockout on Dorsey Rd. Entry gained.

8:35 p.m. Call to East Main St. residence for verbal argument between juvenile and parent. Situation under control; report taken.

9:35 p.m. Suspicious person at Red Lantern Cafe on Lester St. Checked area; gone upon arrival.

**Saturday, 7/14**

12:30 a.m. Arrested

for unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle, defective equipment, and possession of ammunition without FID, French King Highway.

11:00 a.m. Assisted state police at Barton's Cove campground for removal of

unwanted subjects.

7:15 p.m. Vandalism, North Shore Rd. Report taken; under investigation.

**Sunday, 7/15**

1:20 p.m. Assisted railroad police with arrest, Rt. 2, near bowling alley. Arrested

for larceny over and trespass on rail-ways.

6:45 p.m. Report of domestic dispute at French King Entertainment Center. Was verbal only. Subjects separated for the night.

**Monday, 7/16**

5:25 p.m. Old State Rd. resident called regarding child custody issues. Spoke with same. Incident documented.

8:15 p.m. Call to Gary St. regarding road rage incident on Rt. 2.

9:06 p.m. Arrested

for domestic assault and battery.

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# Dinosaur Prints Found in Bank Lobby



DETMOULD PHOTO  
*Andrew Brodeur, President of the Connecticut Valley Mineral Club, at the Greenfield Savings Bank*

**BY DAVID DETMOULD**  
**TURNERS FALLS** – The Jurassic Roadshow took a scheduled pit stop in the community room of the Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings on Saturday, June 14th. No one has seen interest rates like this in a bank in eons.

Sarah Doyle, of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, was on hand to guide viewers through a bold display of dinosaur prints and other fossilized relics from way back in the day, and local historian Ed Gregory added his impressions of how local amateur science finally caught up with the fact that creatures who never made it onto Noah’s ark were responsible for leaving the three-toed prints in sandstone formations in Gill and Turners millions of years ago.

Locals are familiar with the story

of how Dexter Marsh, born in Montague in 1806, moved to Greenfield in 1834, built a home on Bank Row and worked as a day laborer. At one point, building side-walks for the town, Marsh began noticing giant fossilized prints in the sandstone slabs, and he correctly surmised they could not have been made by any species then familiar to the natural sciences.

Marsh wrote to professor Edward Hitchcock at Amherst College trying to persuade him of the importance of his discovery, but Hitchcock at the time was unwilling to credit the fact that giant reptiles had left records of their passage in riverbank mud millions of years ago. Marsh continued to send records of his discovery to Hitchcock, but not until a colleague of his from Yale, Benjamin Silliman, convinced him that Marsh was onto

something did Hitchcock bother to come up to Franklin County to have a look.

It was a Eureka moment for science, and subsequently hundreds of thousands of paleontological fossils made their way to Amherst College’s museum, now called the Beneski Museum of Natural History. Many of these were from Marsh’s original collection; many came from right here in Turners and Gill.

All this rich 19th century history was on display, along with history millions of years older, down Avenue A at the Greenfield Savings Bank on July 14th. Returning from the teller windows, depositors paused to peruse the ancient records of transactions that took place along the river long, long ago, when dinosaurs ruled the planet, and no one’s nest eggs were insured.

## Summer Programs at the First Congregational Church

**BY BARBARA TURNER DELISLE**  
**MONTAGUE CENTER** – During a Tuesday evening Irish music concert on Tuesday, July 24th, with Rosemary Caine and members of Trine, an enthusiastic audience at the First Congregational Church of Montague enjoyed the songs and stories, and were treated to a beautiful rainbow too.

As part of its ongoing program of summer activities, the Congregational Church will offer a free outdoor showing of the movie *Finding Nemo*, with popcorn and lemonade, on Tuesday, July 31st at 7:30 p.m. The event moves inside in the event of rain.

On Wednesday, August 1st, at 7 p.m. Manny Mansbach will offer a lecture at the Congregational Church on discernment from a Buddhist per-

spective. Mansbach has been practicing and studying Insight Meditation since 1980, and is committed to helping people remember and express their basic goodness, and to gain confidence in the beauty and power of the Buddha’s teachings of profound understanding and boundless kindness.

The Congregational Church invites the community to join in an exploration of Buddhism and Christianity, each Sunday, for the next three weeks, at 10 a.m. worship. The meditation will focus on some aspect of life considered from the perspective of Buddhism and Christianity.

Artist Donna Estabrooks, whose work (viewable at [www.donnaestabrooks.com](http://www.donnaestabrooks.com)) is inspired by her Buddhist practice of chant and

prayer, will have her paintings on display in the chapel and throughout the church.

We round out the summer with Old Home Days, a weekend that includes food, entertainment, a road race, childrens games, a magician, parade, information and craft booths, raffle, thrift items for sale and more. Come join us on this great community day, Saturday August 19th and Sunday August 20th for lots of fun.

For more information, please call and leave a message at (413) 367-9467. The First Congregational Church is located at 4 North Street in Montague Center, across the common from the Grange and diagonal to the library.

*Barbara Turner Delisle is the pastor of the First Congregational Church of Montague.*

from **REPOINTING** page 1

freeze-thaw cycles, is removed and replaced. Twenty years is about the length of time that usually elapses between repointings.

“I don’t know why they call it repointing,” Rucci said. “Maybe, because they used the point of a trowel in the beginning. Now we use a jointing tool that smoothes the mortar in the joint.”

Rucci’s crew are a couple of hard working men from Moldava, Ivan and Will Darmanchev, grinding away 60 to 70 feet above the ground. They were using 4-inch electric angle grinders equipped with diamond-tipped blades to remove the deteriorated mortar from between bricks to a depth of one-quarter to one-half an inch, to be later refilled with durable cement mortar.

“The old mortar isn’t like today’s cement mortar. It was made with just lime and sand,” Rucci explained. “It’s soft and crumbly. We put in

cement mortar, but it still is something that has to be done every 20 years or so.”

Though Rucci has scaffolding for smaller jobs, he rented scaffolding from New England Scaffolding for this one. But how did they put it up?

“Five guys with a rope put it all up in three days,” Rucci said. “Look at the wires all around. A hydraulic lift wasn’t practical.”

The church was built in 1888, most likely from bricks fired in the brickyards of Turners Falls. The church measures 100 feet from the 12 on the clock to the ground, and the steeple reaches up approximately 70 feet closer towards heaven. From the ground, it doesn’t look that high, but with the vantage point of a bird up on the scaffold, the view elongates grandly.

Rucci has worked on the church chimney and the steeple in the past, and said that this church has the most interesting brickwork of any building he’s ever worked on. “The

arches of the windows are repeated in the brickwork going up the side of the building,” Rucci said. “The architect who designed the church did a beautiful job.”

The church roofing, which appears to be wood shakes, is clay tile with a wood grain surface.

Coming from a long line of masons, Charlie Rucci said he first worked as a mason for his uncle Bill Rucci, later with Fontaine Brothers, and in the tunnel at Northfield Mountain. In 1974, he started his own business.

Ivan Damanchev and his son, Will, Rucci’s hardworking crew, are from Moldava, now U.S. citizens.

With his reputation for outstanding masonry, Rucci has not lacked for work. Another example of his fine workmanship can also be seen at the Southworth Paper Company’s redesigned façade. Rucci lives in Greenfield; his telephone number is 774-4067.



# TF WATER DEPARTMENT ASKS RESIDENTS TO CONSERVE WATER



**BY NANCY HOLMES**  
**MONTAGUE** – The Turners Falls Water Department is urging Montague users to voluntarily conserve water due to dry conditions in the area. At the present time our water supply shows no imminent sign of being at risk. We will continue to monitor water levels and will advise residents of any changes to conservation measures.

## Tips for Saving Water Outdoors

*Abide by local water use restrictions:*

Local water suppliers know the limits of their system and will enact voluntary or mandatory restrictions accordingly. Always follow the advice or restrictions provided by your local water supplier.

*Stop watering your lawn during drought conditions:*

Most lawns can survive extended dry periods without watering – they will turn brown, but will revive once the rain returns.

*If you water your lawn, water only as needed:*

ture rainwater from downspouts for use in your yard. A lid, mesh fabric or several drops of baby oil on the surface will prevent mosquitoes from breeding.

*Keep your blades sharp and high:*

Keep your mower blades sharp to prevent tearing of grass, and raise your lawnmower’s blade to 2 1/2”. Longer grass provides shade for the roots and helps reduce water loss.

*Use plants that need less water:*

There are many varieties of low water use plants that can withstand dry summers and that actually thrive in drier soil.

*Plan and design your garden for efficient outdoor watering:*

Be aware of the various shade and moistures zones in your yard and plan your gardens and plantings accordingly.

*Mulch to keep roots cool and moist:*

Mulch can serve as a ground cover that reduces water evaporation from the soil while reducing the number of weeds that compete for soil moisture.

*No Water, or No more than One Inch a Week:*

If you want to water, give established lawns and shrubs a maximum of one inch of water per week. If there has been an inch of rain in the week, you don’t need to water. Use an inexpensive rain gauge to measure rain and watering efforts.

Did you know that you could actually do your lawn harm by watering during the heat of the day or even at night? After about 10 a.m., evaporation robs the soil of moisture, so any watering that you do after that time doesn’t get absorbed efficiently. Also, water droplets combined with the presences of hot sun create a magnifying effect that can actually burn blades of grass. Running a sprinkler or watering at night can lead to root rot and creates excessive moisture that is favorable to lawn diseases.

You not only save time by watering early in the day, but also you save water!

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

**Bayonets Stolen; Kids Vulgar**

**Monday, 7/2**  
9:20 p.m. Assisted Shutesbury PD with a domestic disturbance at a Lakeview Drive residence.

**Friday, 7/6**  
10:35 p.m. Sent to a disturbance in the area of the Amherst/Leverett town line on Long Plain Rd. Caller reported a lot of screaming and vulgar language. Located disturbance on East Plumtree Rd. in Sunderland. Kids running through a sprinkler.

**Monday, 7/9**  
10:00 a.m. Manager of the Leverett Historical Society at Moore’s Corner reported the

pre-Revolutionary War bayonets from the display case. Under investigation.

**Tuesday, 7/10**  
10:12 p.m. Responded to a chimney fire on Depot Rd. Assisted Leverett Fire.

**Wednesday, 7/11**  
5:01 p.m. Responded to a Richardson Road residence for a medical call. Subject transported to FMC by Amherst FD Ambulance.

6:15 p.m. Alarm sounding at Shutesbury Road residence. Unable to locate owner. Cleared.

7:48 p.m. Returned to Shutesbury Road residence

theft of two for alarm sounding again. Officer able to locate owner this time. Secured, no problems.

**Friday, 7/13**  
6:25 a.m. Single car crash on Shutesbury Rd. Driver left the roadway and struck a utility pole. No injuries. Pole and transformer replaced.

**Saturday, 7/14**  
1:30 p.m. Motor vehicle accident at North Leverett Road and Chestnut Hill Road. Driver attempted to turn onto Chestnut Hill Rd from No. Leverett Rd., swerved to avoid another vehicle, and struck a stone intersection divider. No injuries.

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## Ferry Meadow Farm - part XLVIII

Turners Falls 2017

BY ELOISE MICHAEL – I look expectantly at Leah. She continues. “Jason didn’t want to bury the body – uh, your body, uh, your other body – because someone might notice the fresh grave. He and Marissa, they thought that he could cover the body with rocks, if he did it right, so he caused a few landslides. I think it might work.”

“I hope so,” is all I can say.

“It all depends on no one going there for a little while. And, hopefully, if anyone ever does find the body, enough time will have gone by to make it unrecognizable.”

I nod.

“I mean, one thing we have going

for us is that no one is looking for your body. Since you’re not missing.”

“Unless the FBI are looking for me.”

“I don’t think they are expecting one of you to turn up dead.”

“Neither do I,” I say. “I hope not.”

“They think you want to keep the doppelganger,” she says confidently.

“Let’s hope so.”

“So what’ll you do now? Are you really going to live at Ferry Meadow?”

“Yeah.”

“You know you could stay here.

There’s room for a bunch of people in this house. And you could grow a

lot of vegetables out in the yard.”

“Yeah,” I say. “I’ve really been wasting a lot of space here.”

“I wasn’t going to say that.”

“It’s OK. I just did,” I laugh.

“You could help out in the community gardens, too,” Leah says. “Lots of people around here are living without electricity. We could help you get a corn stove for heat. If you have time to work, we can grow the corn. You learn to get by with less heat, too. A sweater and a hat work really well. And you insulate your house.” She’s looking around, making plans for the house.

“To tell the truth, Ferry Meadow feels more like home than here. There’s a room almost ready for me. I’ve been working on it myself.”

“You should donate the property to the land trust,” Leah tells me, without missing a beat. “There’s no

shortage of people who would like to lease it, I’m sure.”

Leah is on the board of the land trust. We talk through the details, and then she has to leave. “Always too much to do in the gardens,” she explains.

After she’s gone, I get to work reorganizing my life. During my years with the bank, I have amassed quite a lot of stuff. Much of it will be useful at Ferry Meadow, I think. There are clothes, furniture, tools. It’s more than I can fit into my small room at the farm, but that’s fine with me. I feel a little embarrassed about having so much, when others at the farm have so little. I will be happy to share my belongings with the community.

The computers, I realize, I will not need. The electricity at Ferry Meadow comes from solar panels,

and people use it sparingly. I will not need my car, either, without money for gas. Anyway, where would I go?

In the short run, my computer will be useful for selling the car, two computers, and an assortment of other gadgets, all of which require electricity. Before I get rid of the car, I find a bike on Craigslist, even though bargain shopping is not something I have been used to doing. I decide that the drive to pick up the bike in Amherst will be my last. I need to save whatever money I have.

That afternoon I ride my new bike to Ferry Meadow for a visit. It’s not a short ride – about seven miles.

I am glad I kept the body that was always exercising late at night, or I might not make it back to Turners Falls.

– Continued Next Issue

### Notice of Mortgagee's Sale of Real Estate

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given personally by John P. Ancil and Swift River Island Development, LLC to Fabulous Investment Opportunities, LLC (F10) recorded in FCRD book 5494 @ page 122 of which mortgage F10 remains original and present holder, for breach of conditions thereof and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at public auction on July 27th, 2012 at 1 p.m. on the mortgaged premises located at 8 Canal Road, village of Turners Falls, Town of Montague, County of Franklin, State of Massachusetts.

#### To Wit:

The parcel contains 3.192 acres, more or less, and is filed additionally in FCRD plan book 64, page 99. Meaning and intending to convey that same premises as described in a deed dated April 28th, 2008 and recorded in FCRD book 5494 @ page 119.

#### Terms of Sale:

- Deposit (to bid) \$5,000.00 USD by certified or bank check
- Successful bidder will be required to sign a memorandum of sale
- Balance of purchase price to be paid in only Federal Reserve Notes by close of business on August 6th, 2012 to auctioneer
- Foreclosure deed will be issued to successful bidder upon receipt of full amount of bid
- Successful bidder is responsible for recording of deed
- Seller will assume all real estate taxes in arrears through August 6th as certified by MLC issued from Town of Montague
- Reserve Amount of bid is \$125,000.00 USD
- Should successful bidder default by close of business on August 6th, 2012, deposit will not be returned and seller will automatically regain property by right.

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413-665-2877  
Agent for Fio

### LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF MONTAGUE NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL MEETING FY 2013 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) APPLICATION

The Town of Montague will hold an informational meeting on Monday, August 13, 2012 at 7:01 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, second floor, at the Montague Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA.

The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss and solicit public response to the Town of Montague's FY 2013 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant application to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Local citizens are requested to attend and propose activities which the Town should apply for in this application. The town is considering applying for slum and blight studies in Millers Falls and the Historic Industrial District in Turners Falls; a senior center feasibility study; housing rehabilitation and social service programs.

In the FY'12 application, the town applied for and was awarded four (4) units of housing rehabilitation in the Turners Falls Target Area and Unity Park Phase Two.

The Town of Montague will contract with the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to administer the Community Development Block Grant Program. The HRA will be available to discuss the application process.

The Town wishes to encourage local citizens to attend the meeting where any person or organization wishing to be heard will be afforded the opportunity. The Town of Montague is an equal opportunity provider.

Board of Selectmen  
Town of Montague  
Advised  
7/26/2012  
8/9/2012

### AN INFORMATION SESSION ON LEVERETT AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS

**Tuesday, July 31  
7 p.m. at Leverett Town Hall**

Come and learn about the programs that have been created to help people stay in their homes, make necessary home improvements and afford to purchase a home in Leverett:

- Housing Rehab Program
- Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program
- Homeownership Assistance Program
- Possible Habitat for Humanities Projects

More information is available on the Town website: [www.Leverett.ma.us](http://www.Leverett.ma.us). Go to the Boards tab and click on Affordable Housing. Or call Margie McGinnis, Town Administrator at 413-548-9699

Presented by the Leverett Selectboard  
and the Affordable Housing Trust

## Attention Quilters

As part of the Montague Old Home Days Celebration the **Montague Historical Society** is planning a display/sale of quilted items.

**Saturday August 18th, 9 - 4**

For more information contact Lillian Fiske at 367-2270

Come to the **Rendezvous** in Turners Falls to catch that swingin' **Drew Paton** and his 1940's Hit Parade. He's always there **first Fridays** of the month at 7pm. Next show is **August 3<sup>rd</sup>**. No cover, but he passes the hat. **All us uys and Dolls** dig him the **MOST!**

## OUR COURTS ARE IN TROUBLE THEY NEED A GOOD LAWYER

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## Furbishing the Avenue

# Gary's Coins Expands



JOHN FURBISH PHOTO

Gary Konvelski is expanding his Antique and Coin Shop on Avenue A.

**BY JOHN FURBISH**  
**TURNERS FALLS** — Gary Konvelski, the proprietor of Gary's Coins and Antiques on 115 Avenue A is bullish on Turners Falls. "Business has been good," said Konvelski. "Very good!"

On the eve of his second anniversary, August 11th, the date of the annual Turners Falls Block Party for 2012, Konvelski will expand his storefront display of coins, jewelry, and antiques into the old Cup o' Joe location, next door at 111 Avenue A. Konvelski has refurbished the interior of the new space and is filling it now.

Konvelski thinks it's great local folks have been so supportive of his new business. He said he is pleased with the number of repeat customers who come into his shop, and

the great word-of-mouth he gets, and the tourist trade that still finds him despite the ongoing bridge reconstruction from Gill to Montague. Antique shoppers regularly come into Gary's from far-away locales like Stockbridge and Brimfield.

Konvelski will buy gold, silver, coins, all types of jewelry, and antiques, both at the shop and through home visits. Gary's Coins and Antiques is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. He spends 5 to 10 hours a week on home appraisals.

The expansion of Gary's Coins from a single storefront into a duplex shop is a sign of confidence in Turners Falls. Stop by Gary's Coins, Jewelry and varied Antiques at 111-115 Avenue A.

## FOOD from page 1

growing undependability for production and transportation of food. (Besides the hard economic and political factors underlying this undependability, fossil fuels contribute to profound problems like climate disruption). More and more people are making "local" a focus of their buying, and local food the centerpiece of their diet.

Ames and her committee hope the new Wendell system will encourage entrepreneurship — that some of those listing their extra garden produce might gradually realize they have a knack for serious food production.

Under the new system, farmers, gardeners and anyone with food-stuffs to offer are invited to submit their items for listing, by Tuesday at 5 p.m. of each week they have something to sell, in an email to Hall at [wendell.local.foods@gmail.com](mailto:wendell.local.foods@gmail.com). Soon thereafter, the compiled list of products is sent out on the town list, and the producers receive their orders, by email, directly from the customer.

To complete the transaction, customers arrange with the producer for pick-up. Shoppers can expect the products being offered to show up in an email appearing late Tuesday nights under the heading, "Wendell Online Market for Local Food." They have until Thursday at 5 p.m. to place their order — again, by email, directly to the seller. For those without internet access, there's always the possibility of buddying up with someone who has it. Also, Hall is making arrangements to post the weekly list of offerings at the Wendell library.

Now under discussion is the possibility of creating a separate email list for those — out-of-towners as an example — who want to be part of the system but don't want to receive the full weekly complement of Townfolk email traffic.

Statistics are promising. For the first week of the online market's operation, June 30th, there were 23 items offered by five producers. Three customers responded; six items sold.

The second week 30 items were offered, again from five producers, with eight customers enjoying the freshness of locally produced comestibles and the good feeling of helping rebuild local food production. They bought 14 items.

Now, as the second month of use rolls around, it is apparent that more and more residents have adopted the online market, and indeed made it more of a self-perpetuating system, without the need for much if any supervision from Hall. Some customers arrange to pick up items at the Wendell Farmers' Market on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Wendell Country Store; others make arrangements to pick up directly from the growers.

Hall is currently a volunteer coordinator of program development for the Good Neighbors Food Pantry, and is helping with publicity for the Wendell Farmers Market.

## Year Two of Wendell's Local Food Program

The online ordering system described in the accompanying article is just one of the food-related initiatives the Wendell energy committee plans to inaugurate in the months ahead. In the second year of a two-year pilot project on bolstering local food production and commerce, the committee has restructured internally and begun meeting regularly twice a month — second Mondays on the topic energy as a whole, with Nan Riebschlaeger as chair, and fourth Mondays on the more specific energy related issue of local food security, with Betsy Ames as chair.

On the food side, the committee has shifted away from a hired part-time local food coordinator this year, in favor of offering grants for selected local projects, an approach members feel is more participatory and invites a wider range of the skills abundant in town. In June, the committee issued a request for proposals for "community food security" projects.

In the RFP, the committee encouraged the community "to consider how Peak Oil, Climate Change, and Economic Instability will impact our food system and... generat[e] support for the revitalization of our local economy through re-localization of food production."

Of special interest, according to the document, are project areas that involve education (e.g., skill-sharing for beginning gardeners), food preservation, bulk buying, water security, food-related infrastructure (e.g., community root cellars, greenhouses), resource and tool sharing, and local food distribution. For anyone interested in proposing a project, the RFP is available from Betsy Ames ([yagas\\_jai@hotmail.com](mailto:yagas_jai@hotmail.com)).

With Idaho's Bounty Coop," Hall recollected, "as founder, I identified the issue for the local food economy is not generally one of supply or demand, it is distribution. An online market is a tool to facilitate sales and distribution for local farmers."

Hall said, "The Western Massachusetts emergency food network is now in the midst of a significant food shortage. With rising food prices and federal funding clashes, we have seen sharp declines in food intake at the Western Mass Food Bank. In the first six months of 2012, our overall food intake at the Food Bank was down 25%. Because of this decline, we are aware that our member programs are making hard decisions — to limit clients, to reduce their hours, and even to reduce the amount of food provided for each client. That is another reason why we are supporting local food production."

Hall and her partner, Alistair MacMartin, are restoring and improving property they purchased a year and a half ago from the town of Wendell — the former Herrick property on Wickett Pond Road. By sheer coincidence, she was planning a move to Wendell precisely as town meeting was voting a budget item involving food security.

From her participation already in town affairs, and from her many years of experience in rural, community, social and food issues and in writing successful grant applications, it is clear that Hall works with the happy convergence of enlightened self-interest and community spirit. She's both an idealistic and pragmatic agent of social change.

Hall says she's "motivated by the environmental challenges of global warming and peak oil and economic instability. Wendell is where I live, and I'm committed to helping in whatever way I can to support our resilience in the face of these challenges. There are many ways to do that, and people are doing it with water and energy, but my particular motivation is through food."

Wendell has a long tradition of self-sufficiency combined with a free spirit. This market continues that tradition. All local growers who have something to sell, whether it is produce, meat or baked goods, of any size are encouraged to use the townfolk list as a local marketplace, a locavore's Craigslist if you will. In order to help potential customers locate these 'locally grown' items on the list, sellers are encouraged to use the same tag line in the subject heading: "Wendell Online Market."

To join the Wendell Townfolk email list, send a request to [Wendell-townfolk@deepsoft.com](mailto:Wendell-townfolk@deepsoft.com). For other information or to list on the Wendell Local Food Online Market, contact Judy Hall at [wendell.local.foods@gmail.com](mailto:wendell.local.foods@gmail.com).



### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

#### Bridge Vandalism; Kayak Theft

Thursday, 7/12

5:00 p.m. Court process paperwork issued to resident on Dole Rd.

10:00 p.m. Assisted Erving Police Dept with arrest of intoxicated subject on Rt 2.

Friday, 7/13

3:05 p.m. Reported dog complaints in Riverside area. Owners located and secured same.

10:10 p.m. Welfare check of resident on Green Hill Rd. Requested to contact family member.

Saturday, 7/14

12:30 a.m. Assisted Erving Police Dept with arrest of subject on Rt 2

drugs turned in to officer located at the Mobil Station on Rt 2.

6:20 p.m. Resident on Mountain Rd for welfare check. All OK.

Monday, 7/16

6:40 p.m. Riverview Drive resident reporting unknown subject creating late-night noise in the area of the old bridge abutment.

Tuesday, 7/17

9:20 a.m. Subject from NY calling for assistance getting his motor vehicle from Gill car dealership that was already paid for. Situation straightened out, per dealership.

2:51 a.m.

Class D

Wednesday, 7/18

8:20 a.m. SPS supervisors reported vandalism to equipment on the Gill-Montague Bridge overnight.

10:45 a.m. Suspicious vehicle located on Camp Rd. Turned out to be new resident, called in by neighbor.

11:20 a.m. Assisted Erving PD with tractor-trailer unit accident on Rt 2.

Friday, 7/20

11:35 a.m. Loose dog reported on Main Rd. Owner located.

Saturday, 7/21

12:30 p.m. Report of two kayaks stolen from Setback Lane.

9:15 p.m. Domestic disturbance reported on West Gill Rd.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

#### Vandalism; Burglary, Breaking and Entering; Larceny

Wednesday, 7/11

8:00 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Crestview Liquors on Unity Street. Investigated.

9:40 a.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], for violation of a restraining order.

Thursday, 7/12

7:41 a.m. Vandalism near 14 Fourth Street. Referred to an officer.

8:42 p.m. General disturbance in alley extension off Fourth Street. Investigated.

Friday, 7/13

2:39 p.m. Larceny at 33 Bridge Street. Services rendered.

3:47 p.m. Fight at 20 G Street. Investigated.

5:27 p.m. Fraud at 8 Sunrise Ter. Advised of options.

5:59 p.m. Larceny at 30 G Street. Report taken.

7:07 p.m. General disturbance at 105 Second Street, 3rd floor apartment. Investigated.

7:46 p.m. Domestic disturbance at 145 Second Street. Peace restored.

10:06 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], for operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle trailer in the vicinity of the Farren Care Center on Montague City Road.

Saturday, 7/14

1:18 a.m. Assault at 10 S. High

Street. Removed to hospital.

11:55 a.m. Larceny at 65 Hillside Road. Referred to an officer.

12:15 p.m. Larceny at 201 Millers Falls Road. Report taken.

2:57 p.m. Breaking and entering attempt at 25 Davis Street. Report taken.

4:45 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at 2 Davis Street. Investigated.

8:15 p.m. Domestic disturbance at 8 Meadow Road. Peace Restored.

Sunday, 7/15

12:44 p.m. Domestic disturbance at 434 Millers Falls Road. Investigated.

7:11 a.m. Burglar alarm at Franklin County Regional Housing Authority on 42 Canal Road. Investigated.

1:12 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED] for a probation warrant.

3:10 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering into garage on 93 K Street. Referred to an officer.

7:41 p.m. Disorderly conduct at the Lady Killigrew Café on Greenfield Road. Referred to an officer.

11: 52 p.m. Burglar alarm at Bob's Auto Body on 303 Avenue A. Report taken.

Monday, 7/16

10:26 a.m. Fraud at 571 River Road. Referred to an officer.

11:33 a.m.

Arrest of [REDACTED] for possession of illegal substances and trespassing at 8 Prospect Street.

5:09 p.m. Neighbor disturbance at 127 Fourth Street. Services rendered.

Tuesday, 7/17

8:30 p.m. Assault in vicinity of Millers Falls Road and Lake Pleasant Road. Advised of options.

10:27 p.m. Fight in Cutlery Block parking lot on Third Street. Investigated.

11:40 p.m. Domestic disturbance in the vicinity of Element Brewing on 30 Bridge Street. Citation issued.

Wednesday, 7/18

2:36 a.m. Fire alarm at 127 Third Street apartment. Services rendered.

5:46 a.m. Fire alarm at Park Villa Drive apartment. Services rendered.

6:30 a.m. Vandalism at Gill-Montague Bridge on Avenue A. Report taken.

3:04 p.m. Brush fire on Dry Hill Road. Services rendered.

8:52 p.m. Domestic disturbance at Food City on Avenue A. Investigated.

11:46 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED], for operating a motor vehicle with revoked license in vicinity of Highland School on Millers Falls Road.

Thursday, 7/19

4:39 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Shady Glen on 7 Avenue A. Services rendered.

1:55 p.m. Threatening harassment at 3 Fifteenth Street. Advised of options.

7:46 p.m. Domestic disturbance at 11 Fourth Street apartment. Peace restored.

11:05 p.m. General disturbance at 24 Bridge Street. Investigated.

11:15 p.m. Runaway reported from 6 Eighth Street. Report taken.

Friday, 7/20

3:51 a.m. Burglar alarm at Turners Falls Rod & Gun Club at 15 Deep Hole Road. Report taken.

8:06 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at 175 Avenue A apartment. Investigated.

8:35 a.m. General disturbance at

119B Avenue A. Referred to an officer.

1:37 p.m. Vandalism in vicinity of 152 Avenue A. Advised of options.

3:39 p.m. Threatening harassment at 29 I Street. Advised of options.

Saturday, 7/21

12:54 p.m. Arrest of [REDACTED] Turners Falls, for disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, trespassing and resisting arrest.

2:57 a.m. Fire at Equi's Candy Store at 125 Avenue A. Report taken.

4:29 p.m. Larceny at St. Stan's on K Street. Services Rendered.

5:09 p.m. Vandalism on the side of the church at Sixth Street. Report taken.

10:43 p.m. Assault and battery at 8 Burnett Street. Referred to an officer.

Sunday, 7/22

8:38 a.m. Larceny at 12 Farren Avenue. Services rendered.

8:38 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Crestview Liquors on Unity Street. Services rendered.

1:07 p.m. Escort at 144 Montague

City Road. Advised of options.

5:55 p.m. Burglar alarm at Montague Center School on 15 School Street. Services rendered.

Monday, 7/23

12:19 p.m. Domestic disturbance at 8 Laurel Lane. Peace restored.

3:12 a.m. Burglar alarm at Ristorante DiPaolo at 166 Avenue A. Investigated.

4:37 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at the Shady Glen at 7 Avenue A. Investigated.

7:50 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at the Hair Salon at 44 J Street. Services rendered.

9:38 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Aubuchons storage building on Avenue A. Services rendered.

12:00 Burglar alarm at Ristorante DiPaolo at 166 Avenue A. Services rendered.

7:51 p.m. Fraud at 59 L Street apartment. Report taken.

Tuesday, 7/24

10:32 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at the Shady Glen at 7 Avenue A. Referred to an officer.

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# Be Prepared!

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ON THE AGENDA IN GREENFIELD

**BY SHIRA HILLEL** - Planning for hypothetical emergencies seems abstract and hard to wrap your head around. What would you do if you were stuck at home without power for days? Where would you go if you had to evacuate your town?

However, the reality of today's world lends credence to the ever-increasing possibility of both natural and man-made disasters.

On Thursday, June 28th, an Emergency Preparedness Forum was held at the Greenfield Middle School to present plans and information to the public in case disaster strikes Franklin County. An ad hoc committee called the Citizens for Emergency Preparedness organized the panel discussion and question and answer session, and handed out lots of literature.

The panel tried to convey the complex reactions necessary on the part of both individuals and authorities in response and recovery in the event of natural, nuclear or chemical disasters.

Presenting panel members included, among others, Greenfield's Mayor William Martin, deputy fire chief and Greenfield emergency manager Bob Strahan, Nicole Zabco, who works as an EMT and as the public health director for Greenfield, and Tracy Rogers, Franklin County Regional preparedness program manager.

Mayor Martin sought to inspire confidence in the public. "We are very well prepared," he began.

"We've made a lot of advances in the last couple of years," Strahan concurred. His emergency team staff includes representatives of the DPW, the health department, police department, fire department and 12 volunteers.

Fire, floods, mud slides, hurricanes, extreme winds, micro bursts, freak snowstorms - Franklin County has experienced all of these in just the last two years.

Strahan recited a laundry list of recent weather-related events he and his team have had to respond to. The 2008 ice storm left neighboring hill towns without power for days;

Greenfield sent resources south to assist Agawam after last summer's devastating tornado; the town of Greenfield incurred \$15 million in damages after Hurricane Irene while its residences had more property damage beyond that; and last October's snow storm dubbed "Snowtober" left 98% of utility subscribers throughout the Pioneer Valley without power and blocked most roads in Greenfield.

With climate change, events like these may become still more commonplace.

Strahan explained that beyond natural and nuclear disasters, his team has tried to put response plans in place for events such as building fires, wildfires, bio-terrorism, infectious diseases, hazardous material spills, and rail accidents.

It is a struggle to raise public awareness and funds for emergency preparedness. Such programs are not well-funded, and there is no state level funding for them. Mayor Martin said he is working to increase the budget for emergency preparedness.

Emergency response groups that help in these efforts include the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), FEMA, the medical corp, CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), the fire department, Baystate Hospital, the police department, the Salvation Army, the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition and the Kiwanis.

Greenfield is the center for all neighboring towns in Franklin County. Greenfield's emergency plans include methods of gathering food and clothing for emergency response, testing necessary equipment, listing inventory, and running drills.

Martin stated, "The town is obligated to care for everyone... the first step in emergency preparedness is awareness."

Strahan explained emergency responders must set priorities when catastrophe strikes, and when power is down, residents need to understand that restoring power to homes is not

the number one priority. For this reason, he recommended that people prepare for a loss of power for three days.

First of all, power needs to be restored to hospitals; secondly, roads need to be cleared to allow ambulances and fire trucks to reach residents; only after that do responders turn their attention to restoring power to residences.

The panel stressed the need for personal responsibility. Martin told the audience, "Work on a 72-hour plan for yourself," and recommended including exit routes.

"No power means no gas pumps and no ATMs," said Strahan. When there are impending bad weather reports, he warned people to stockpile cash, gas, water, and medications.

The recommendations were extensive. The panel advised people to keep a list of necessary items on hand: canned food in the pantry and an old-fashioned can opener, not just an electric one.

Panelists reminded people that communication can be difficult in an emergency. Cell phone reception is unreliable; a lot of newer phones require power to operate. Keep an old phone around that just connects to the phone jack; charge your cell phone beforehand.

Strahan explained, "Greenfield does not have a siren system within the community." Instead, there is a Code Red System, which is a reverse 911 call system to contact people with information in cases of emergency. People must sign up to be on the list and register phone numbers, cell phones, TDY numbers if necessary, and emails.

If the system doesn't reach people, "We will go door to door to talk to people," Strahan promised.

First responders use radio, the best way to ensure communication in an emergency.

The panel tried to outline all of the sources of information available. People can dial 211 for information on shelters, cooling centers, and the nearest food pantry. This service is provided in English and Spanish,

sponsored by the United Way.

Dialing 511 gives transportation information on road conditions and available routes.

Social media such as Facebook and Twitter is being increasingly utilized. People can follow FEMA tweets on Twitter.

Greenfield is also getting electronic signs with information to be placed at highly visible locations and exits in emergencies.

Neighborhood watch groups are advised to develop a rendezvous point and check on seniors.

The panel discussed opening shelters equipped with power, cots, blankets, wheelchairs, food and mental health counselors, but explained the shelters won't have room to house 10,000 people. Emergency planners suggested people with family members or friends in other geographic areas make contingency plans to stay with them in emergencies.

Those who can afford generators, and those with wood stoves, should help neighbors so they won't have to sleep on a cot in a gym with strangers.

Animal shelters have been included after emergency responders learned that many people will not leave their homes without their pets.

Greenfield needs a plan to shelter people from other parts of the state as well if say Boston is evacuated and sends their people west.

Rogers spoke about cooperation between towns if more than one town is involved in a crisis or if a town needs back-up support. Every town needs an evacuation plan and those plans must match up with those of neighboring towns.

Home insurance often doesn't cover floods unless people pay extra, as 'Acts of God' are not covered. Homeowners need to look at their insurance policy carefully. People can apply for coverage from FEMA after floods. One audience member pointed out that home insurance plans do not cover nuclear events and people can't sue the Entergy Corporation.

During the Q&A, there were several questions about preparedness in

the event of a catastrophic accident at the Vermont Yankee (VY) nuclear reactor in Vernon.

Martin explained that "the city can only prepare for itself. If a disaster involves other towns, we have to wait for federal plans; we have no choices there." But he added, "Evacuation plans are the same for every event."

Under federal plans, GCC is the reception center for the 10-mile evacuation zone of VY.

Strahan said, "As citizens, your plans for VY should be the same plans and preparation as for any other event." He added, "Greenfield gets very high marks from FEMA for emergency plans, whether a nuclear event or a flooding event."

One questioner mentioned that the current 10-mile evacuation zone around VY may not be large enough. After the Fukushima melt-down, the evacuation zone had to be expanded beyond 12 miles, to account for the direction of the radiation plume. Parts of Greenfield are less than 15 miles from VY.

According to Strahan, the Mass Department of Public Health (not Entergy employees) will monitor radiation levels in Greenfield in the event of a VY meltdown.

Martin stated, "We can provide information, direction, emergency supplies, but people need a plan... the mayor can only declare a state of emergency. He cannot summon the National Guard."

One questioner suggested: "I think we need a trial [evacuation] run in Greenfield."

Martin responded: "I think that's a good idea. Why don't you put a plan in place, including the funding."

One questioner asked, "We can't get 3000 people out of the parking lot at Beacon Field after the fireworks. How do we evacuate?"

Martin responded with annoyance: "3000 people will not be pulling out of your driveway. We have I-91 and 5&10."

The forum was filmed by GCTV and will be aired several times.

# ULTIMATE FRISBEE SOARS INTO THE MAINSTREAM

**BY JEFF SINGLETON**  
**MONTAGUE** - Nine in the morning is not the ideal time to interview an 18-year-old during the summer following his graduation from Turners Falls High School. As many readers may recall, this is the ideal time to sleep in .... finally!

But Sam Letcher of Montague agreed to get up earlier this week to talk about his passion for 'Ultimate.'

The cobwebs disappeared quickly. He immediately became extremely articulate, with a nicely understated sense of humor.

Letcher has been playing Ultimate since he was in elementary school, a habit encouraged by his parents who are also players. This past spring, he traveled to Northampton on a daily commute to play on the high school team there. Turners does not have a team and efforts to create a coop program with another high school are currently on hold.

'Ultimate' is of course the official name for what we used to call 'ultimate frisbee.' The name was shortened to avoid conflict with a brand, but it also may have had the effect of giving the game greater legitimacy as a true sport. Fair or not, 'frisbee' has a certain flaky, anti-athletic connotation from the hippie era. When you announce that your team just won the region-

al 'Ultimate' tournament, well... who can argue with that?

I asked Letcher what is appealing to him about the sport of Ultimate. He stressed the fact that it combines features of many other sports.

Ultimate is played on a field akin to a football field. It requires a good deal of running, cutting, jumping and catching ability. "It is a great sport for a wide receiver or a defensive back," said Letcher. On the other hand it is a more or less continuous flow game of keep-away like soccer. Elements of the offense and defense resemble basketball.

But most of all Letcher claims to love the so-called 'spirit of the game.' This is embodied by the fact that there are no referees, or shall we say every player is a referee. This creates an ethos of fairness and personal responsibility.

The system seems to work, in part because infractions are the type which are more easily recognized by participants and in part because bias on the part of one player or team will cause the structure of play to break down. That is to say while the system certainly reflects non-competitive values inherited from the 1960s, it actually works in a very practical way. "You can not blame the referee for a loss," Letcher emphasized. "You avoid that distraction."

The official Ultimate field is 120 yards long. This includes two 25-yard end zones. The goal of the game is for the offense to complete a pass into the end zone. To achieve this, the offense must work the disk down the field through a series of passes. When a pass is

completed, the receiver must stop and can only move on a pivot foot. He or she has a ten count to make another throw. An incomplete pass causes the disk to change hands. A single defender is allowed to stand very close to the player with the disc (think basketball), although there can be no physical contact or double teaming.



There are a variety of offenses and defenses, which sometimes vary according to wind conditions. A familiar sight on an Ultimate

field is the 'stack offense' consisting of a thrower and a single vertical line of receivers or 'cutters' extending down the field. Defensively, there are zones, person-to-person marking, and various combinations in between. One of the key goals of the defense is to

reduce the choices available to the thrower. There are still some skeptics who, for whatever reason, do not consider Ultimate a true sport. Given the stamina, athleticism, and team discipline required this attitude is a bit of a puzzle.

Perhaps one reason for the skepticism is the historical context. Most organized American sports evolved in the nineteenth century. They assumed their modern form in the early twentieth century in

tandem with the expansion of high schools, colleges, and mass professional spectator sports. Ultimate is not only new, it is a product of the culture of the 1960s with its apparent disdain for traditional athletics.

Yet, inevitably, as the popularity of Ultimate has grown, it has

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# The Frost Heaves of Summer



James Lowe, (left - right) Ivan Ussach, and Daniel Hales – the frost heaves

**BY ANNE HARDING**  
**TURNERS FALLS** – ‘Daniel Hales, and the frost heaves’ hosted a CD release party at the Rendezvous on Sunday, July 22nd to introduce newcomers to their new production, *You Make a Better Door than a Window*. But it was more a multi-media event than a traditional introduction to the new tunes of a band’s latest release.

The frost heaves were fresh off the stage at the Green River Festival, but kept up the energy for the home town crowd.

I was particularly intrigued by the CD title as it was reminiscent of so many idioms of my teenage years, those slightly sarcastic phrases so casually used by teens and adults alike when a simple request might be kinder or more effective. The two sayings that flashed into my mind were not relevant to the cover title (they just amused me) – responses we winged out when it seemed like someone was not pulling their weight: “I don’t see your ass tied to a piano,” and “Are your arms and legs painted on?”

Anyhow, the night opened with a short video produced by bass player James Lowe that featured a medley of practice sessions, studio work, short interviews, live performances, and scintillating views of the everyday doors and windows (most were familiar to Franklin County residents). It can be viewed in full at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebZr393--Bs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebZr393--Bs)

The audience next heard the recorded version of the CD – song by song – accompanied by the overhead projection of the lyrics (as compared to the standard PowerPoint presentation of our current century), followed by reading of poems inspired by each song, and often a brief shout out to

an associated art piece hanging somewhere in the Rendezvous. Most of the pieces were collages done by Hales (who’s never exhibited his art before), but there were also ‘window’ pieces by Lowe featuring photos taken by Carol Lawless, and of course a door or two.

Hales, a former Philadelphian, was a graduate of the UMASS MFA program in 1998 – and, like many who came to Western Massachusetts for a short academic stay, he hasn’t left yet. He still meets with a group of fellow writing ‘students’ monthly where they share their current work.


It was at one of those meetings that Hales proposed sending interested fellow poets one of his new songs – if so inspired, they would respond with a poem. His poetry circle responded eloquently, and many came to the party to read their poems in person. A few stand-ins took over when the authors were not available. The event

wound up with the heaves regaling the audience with an acoustic stomp through their new songs.

The CD is largely the work of Hales, drummer Ivan Usach, and bassist James Lowe, engineered and mixed at Harmonium Studios with Norm Demoura. The auxiliary ‘heaves’ include Joe Boyle, Emily Breines, Charlie Conant, Carrie Ferguson, Mark Hoover, Rick Lowe, Heather Maloney, and Hilary Weiner.

Hales’ lyrics and music are exasperatingly appealing and catchy in their own right. But later I found it difficult to separate the songs from the poems, and now I find myself humming the Hales tunes while I re-read the poems written by the contributing artists. I adore the windows these artists have opened in my mind.

For more information about the band visit their website, [www.thefrostheaves.com](http://www.thefrostheaves.com)



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the **ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT** page  
is taking a break to tune up – back next issue



## Genevieve Gagnard Heads to Yale – with a Little Help from Her Friends

**BY KATIE NOLAN**  
**WENDELL** – Wendell Country Store cashier, pizza cook, community photographer, and rural music video creator Genevieve Gagnard has been accepted to the fine art photography graduate program at Yale.

But, so far, the financial aid information looks bleak for Gagnard. So, under the sponsorship of the Wendell Cultural Council, Gagnard has taken the initiative to set up a Yale-School-of-Art-or-Bust fundraiser at Wendell town hall on Saturday, July 28th from 7 to 10 p.m.

The event will include a silent auction of donated art works, raffles, jambalaya, baked goods, a performance by Wendell reggae band Rhythm Inc., and screening of new Gagnard videos.

Gagnard graduated from Mahar Regional High in 1999, got an associate’s degree from Johnson & Wales University, and then a bachelor’s degree from Massachusetts College of Art.

Since graduating from art school, she has supported herself with odd jobs and some photography sales “to pay the bills and still have time to make art.”

Gagnard landed in Wendell when she got a part-time job at the Wendell Country Store. Yale accepts only ten graduate students in fine art photography each year, selecting them after reviewing their photography portfolios and a demanding multi-person interview. Gagnard said she applied last year, and was wait-listed, but was accepted this year.

“This may sound cheesy, but if you have a dream, don’t give up,”



Genevieve Gagnard

Gagnard said. She added, “And thumbs up to the Wendell community for being so supportive.”

Donations may also be made to help further Gagnard’s art education at the Wendell Country Store or through Gagnard’s Facebook page.



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## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

# Natural Chemistry

green beans and pumpkin plant.

This is the second time I've planted beans and I am ready to cry, 'Uncle!' We leave in a few days more for two weeks in Maine. The lines will be unmarked for much too long and in any case, I no longer have heart for the fight.

However, the onions, garlic and basil remain of no interest either to the deer, which have polished off the second leaves of the kale and chard, nor to the chubby woodchuck, who ignores my insults. I have dropped foreign scat down his tidy burrow entrance and watered his front door with urine. He simply architects a new entrance and goes on his merry eating way.

I realize we are reduced to using the bomb or a trap, but cannot face either until our return from our next travels.

Happily, the tomatoes are legendary. They have loved the sultry temperatures and are tall, green and weighed down with fruit still to ripen. We look forward to a bumper crop, unmolested by varmints who find the vines unpalatable after a petite initial trial.

The bittersweet in the daffodil bed has been joined by wild rose and honeysuckle, resulting in a thick tangle of growth that has been slow to respond to my organic weed killer. Over several sessions I have hacked all of this down to stubble and have taken the remainder on in earnest.

First, I applied heavy doses of white vinegar, salt and dish soap. Next, I covered the area with blue tarps to heat up the ground and speed up the action. Already the first section of remaining growth is brown and sickly.

I am aware that I have likely sacrificed my daffodil crop as well as the weeds and vines, but sometimes the cure is as rugged as the disease. We will rototill the plot in

the fall and remove all the roots we can before spreading one last treatment. Depending on how things look next spring, I will venture to plant day lilies, hoping for a vigorous growth of these plants, which will spread their roots to the disadvantage of interlopers.

Next season, we plan to install a serious fence around the garden. If we make it permanent and avoid sharing our crop except with friends, it will be well worth the cost and labor.

At least the asparagus bed looms hearty and lush, the tomatoes abound, and the roses have been lovely. The butterfly bushes are particularly beautiful, attracting small colorful moths as well as emperor and monarch butterflies. The hummingbirds love the bee balm.

It is a thrill to report that once again we have three bats that oversee the garden at dusk. Hopefully, these mark a healthier bat population turnaround.

I love watching them dip and float over the open space and rejoice also in their consumption of insects. This natural antidote, plus citronella oil, make it possible to stay outside until sleep overtakes us. We enjoy both the cooling night air and the stupendous display of stars and planets under the low moon.

While in Maine, we will thrill to the full moon and its effect on the high tide, sleep lulled by the persistent rush in and out of the tide and acquire new energy from the clear, fresh air of August.

The summer seems to fly by. It's hard to believe the last month of summer is almost at hand.

Although the dark falls sooner at the coastal reaches, the gardens are two and three weeks behind. This means we can again enjoy late-season strawberries, and often sweet

peas.

Wishing all of you gardeners some well-deserved days of R & R before the rush to harvest, preserve, and store for the coming winter. Gardening demands hard labor and often proves frustrating, but we continue to toil for the lush rewards of fresh food cooked tastily in our own kitchens. Happy vacationing, and happy gardening.

### People- and Pet-Friendly Weedkiller

Mix:

- 4 cups white vinegar
- ¼ cup salt
- 2 tsp. dish suds

Apply to Soil

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** – We awaken to the crack of lightning and the growl of thunder. Then, at last, the rush of rain.

After the early spring heat and plentiful moisture, the lawn has baked, the hanging pots need a drink every day, and I have continued to water the garden. This stop-gap measure is woefully inadequate even if the sprinkler runs for hours. And now the water department has issued the expected warning to curtail unnecessary water use.

Unnecessary? This seems a bit like those days of heavy snow when only "essential" personnel must show up for work. Who are these notorious and perhaps ill-fated people? How do they know?

What we really need is a couple of days of soaking rain, but that kind of weather pattern is unlikely until early fall. Still, we are much better off than the many parts of the country being scorched by days of continuous high heat, wildfires, and other apocalyptic happenings.

Local farmers are selling sweet corn, early root vegetables, squash and greens. We have picked our first tomato, an Early Girl, on July 17th. Early indeed.

The battle with invasive plants and critters continues.

Like the wolves, I have marked the edges of my garden territory with great results, as long as the lines are freshly marked at least every other day. But then we left for a brief three-day camping trip and returned to find the fence scaled and the garden missing the

**ULTIMATE** from page 14

unique opportunity to see - and participate in - the evolution of a new sport.

There is historically a close connection between Ultimate and the Pioneer Valley region. According to one account of its origins, a version of Ultimate was played in the late 1960s on the campus of Amherst College. An AC student taught the game to a summer camp at Northfield Mount Hermon School in Northfield. One camp attendee named Joel Silver brought the game back to Columbia High School in Maplewood, NJ. There, students created the first high school team

and developed many of the basic rules we have today.

But the sport is still evolving. So you might say that Sam Letcher is helping to make history. He will be attending Northeastern University in the fall, where he plans to continue his Ultimate playing career. He urges anyone interested to join the all-ages pickup game behind Friendly's on Federal Street in Greenfield (Greenfield High School campus) on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

For those who still have doubts about the sport I would recommend the book *Essential Ultimate* by Michael Baccarini and Tiina

Booth. Booth is an English Teacher at Amherst Regional High School and, among other things, coached the American boys junior team to world championships in 1998 and 2004.

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