



The Montague Reporter

YEAR 11 – NO. 35

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

75¢

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 13, 2013

Abutters Weigh in on Leverett Gravel Pit Expansion



DAVID DETMOLD PHOTO

Owner Richie Roberts disputes a zoning board decision against the pit's southward growth.

By DAVID DETMOLD

When Peter d'Errico told his colleagues on the selectboard in April that "all sides seemed interested in settling" the lawsuit by Richie Roberts and landowner Roberta Bryant against the Leverett zoning board of appeals over the ZBA's denial of a special permit for Roberts to expand his gravel pit off Route 63, apparently d'Errico was not including the abutters to that project in his estimation of the various "sides." After all, the abutters are not parties to the court case. Yet.

Neighbors Speak Out

Speaking for a group of more

than a dozen neighbors to the Roberts' gravel pit at a ZBA hearing on a proposed settlement of the pending court case on Tuesday night, attorney Charles DiMare said, "It is our position that the November 4, 2010 decision of this board, denying the petition for a special permit, was sound, and the probability of success of the Roberts/Bryant lawsuit is very small. This is because the decision of the board was based on substantial evidence... that the extension of the gravel pit would have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character as well as the natural environment. Nothing has changed in the last two and a half years, and we see no rea-

son to grant the special permit or to settle the lawsuit."

Roberts has asked the zoning board for a special permit within one of the town of Leverett's three small commercial zones to expand his current gravel mining and landscaping business on the west side of Route 63 to include about five acres of land he would lease for that purpose from Bryant, who owns the horse farm just to the south of his current operation. When the ZBA denied his request by a 3-2 vote (four yes votes were needed for a two-thirds' majority), Roberts and Bryant sued the ZBA.

see ZONING page 10

Despite Stumbles, Gill Town Meeting Approves Most Articles

By MIKE JACKSON

On Tuesday at Town Hall, about seventy of Gill's 1,500-odd residents gathered together to embody the political will of the town, working their way together through 24 articles, one or two long bouts of procedural head-scratching, and frustrations with the meeting's amplification system before emerging victorious into the cool, rainy night. All told, 21 articles passed, including a slightly amended \$1.5 million omnibus spending article; two were passed over; and only one, to allocate funds to the Recreation Committee, was defeated, in an effort to publicize that committee's current defunct status.

"If you're so inclined," began moderator John Zwyna, "you can stand and pledge the flag with me." So began an opening flurry of housekeeping motions, mostly passed unanimously, moving small sums from account to account and fund to fund, and pausing here and there for clarifying questions. Most passed by a unanimous voice vote, but Article 4, tapping into the town's building repair account for the first \$5,000 of Article 20's proposed \$50,000 repaving project at Gill Elementary, raised a number of questions about that project, begin-

ning with whether the school's lower parking lot is big enough. Article 4 passed by a majority vote, but the issues would be revisited.

The school was again the topic of contention during Article 8, authorizing the select-

A number of questions were raised about a repaving project at Gill Elementary, beginning with whether the lower parking lot is big enough.

board to accept funds from the Quintus Allen Fund earmarked for education. Residents expressed disappointment that the school district didn't have plans for the use of such hypothetical funds -- reacting to outgoing acting superintendent Marty Espinola, who offered that "now that we know

money is available, we can certainly put something together" -- but finance committee member Claire Chang clarified that it is the responsibility of Gill Elementary itself, not the central office, to make requests for this money during the coming school year. Put to a vote, meeting members unanimously agreed that the selectboard should indeed be allowed to accept any monies the fund might offer.

Article 10, concerning salaries for town officers, saw disagreement over an amendment to add \$1,000 each for Town Clerk and Treasurer positions currently held by Lynda Hodsdon Mayo and Ronnie La-Chance. The amendment was ap-

see GILL page 5

Build Your Own Fairy House: Saturday at Unity Park



ANNE HARDING PHOTO

Andrew Keating puts the finishing touches to a larger-than-life fairy house occupied by Effie Paxton and Addi Lively.

By ANNE HARDING

TURNERS FALLS – On Saturday, June 15, people of all ages are invited to build fairy houses beginning at 10 a.m. at Unity Park in Turners Falls by the riverside. There will be a special dance performance, a guest appearance by a fairy queen, and a picnic in the park – with a prize awarded for the prettiest picnic.

Organized by Beverly Ketch of Turners Falls, the event is intended to celebrate the Community Gardens of Turners Falls, and kick off the addition of a new garden

at Unity Park opposite the refurbished playground parking lot.

Ketch will be taking names of people interested in tending a plot, and expressed her wish that gardeners keep in mind the public nature of the site and the importance of good garden maintenance. The new garden will not be available until the park construction is completed.

Participants should plan to meet at the park at 10 a.m. and disperse to build or install fairy houses. It is recommended you bring a bucket with bark, moss, acorns,

shells, flowers, and any other fairy house building materials that appeal to you. You may also use natural materials you find at the park, and event organizers will bring some extra building supplies.

Beth Bazler from the Northfield Mountain Environmental and Recreation Center has led many fairy programs. She will be on hand to help new builders get started.

A fairy house is a tiny structure made from natural materials that is meant to attract fairy visitors. They are the woodland or garden equivalent to a sand castle or snow fort, and range from simple and rustic to elaborate, whimsical creations.

Fairy houses have been made popular by author Tracy Kane, who first saw these tiny creations in the woods on a small island off the coast of Maine more than 10 years ago. She was inspired to write the first of her Fairy House books because "they contain the combination of ingredients an artist finds irresistible – creativity, nature and a pinch of fairy magic!"

There will be a special performance at 11:30 a.m. by five-year-old fairy lovers and dancers Velouria Menegoni and Effie Paxton, who have learned some dance steps from Ketch, their friend and neighbor. They were inspired by a Christmas Dance

see FAIRY page 4

Folk Singers to Wander Through These Parts

By MIKE JACKSON

"Well, our goal is to visit every town in Massachusetts," Mark Mandeville paused, perhaps to consider the ambition of such an undertaking. "Eventually." Next week, for the fourth time in four years, Mandeville and partner Raianne Richards will set out on foot, with friends, food, camping gear and musical instruments in tow, to cross a few more towns off the list.

This year's Massachusetts Walking Tour tackles a section of the newly dedicated New England National Scenic Trail, known for years as the Metacombet-Monadnock trail, from Royalston south to Longmeadow, passing through our own neck of the woods and stopping each night to put on a free show for – and with – us, the locals.

On Friday, June 14, Mandeville and Richards will leave their home in Webster to play a special pre-tour event at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls. The two have been playing together for years, and specialize in folk and old-time tunes, traditional and original. The show is free for children, a sliding scale for adults, and refreshments will be provided. They'll be joined by recent Berklee grads Amy Alvey and Mark Kilianski, of Jamaica Plain, their traveling companions for this year's Tour. The next day, the four



PHOTO COURTESY MASSWALKINGTOUR.ORG

Kilianski, Alvey, Richards and Mandeville will play a total of four concerts in our neck of the woods.

will set off from Tully Dam in Royalston and work their way south.

The group, working with land trusts, cultural councils, and a sprawling network of individuals and organizations along the way, sees the project as a way to bridge support for responsible, recreational land use with support for small-town arts scenes. On Wednesday, June 19, they will show up, provided they have not yet been eaten by bears, at the Evangelical Congregational Church in Erving. That show starts at 6 p.m.

Thursday, June 20 brings

them to Wendell. Attendees are encouraged to show up early to the Wendell State Forest headquarters – the official showtime is at 6 p.m. – to be shuttled, courtesy of the Mount Grace Land Trust, to the night's venue, within the Hidden Valley Memorial Forest, donated to the trust by the Cronquist family in 1996. The show is funded by the Wendell Cultural Council.

And on Friday, June 21, the tour will touch down at Red Fire Farm, 172 Meadow Road in Montague. The

see SINGERS page 4

Pet of the Week Mr. Handsome



It's no surprise that my foster mom nicknamed me "Mr. Handsome," as I've definitely been blessed in the looks department. The good news is that I also have a sweet, gentle personality to match. I love to be brushed and to have my chin rubbed. It takes me some time to feel comfortable in new situations and with new people, but with patience and the companionship of my sister, Tinkerbell Bob, you'll see me come out of hiding and start to bat at shoelaces – gently and with dignity, of course! Tinkerbell and I have a strong bond, and need to find a home together. Dakin will make that easy for you by offering a "two-fur-one" adoption fee!

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

RECYCLE

PAPER

Week of June 17th
in Montague



more info? call: 863-2054

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6

Cameron Fisher

Grade 7

Skylar Thompson

Charlie Kretschmar

Grade 8

Tim Black

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Turners Falls, MA 01376

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Call us or contact

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with any questions.

Montague Libraries Summer Reading Program Starts June 19

The Montague Public Libraries' *Dig Into Reading Summer Reading Program* sign-ups start on the last day of school, Wednesday, June 19. Children of any age and teens are invited to participate. Sign-ups take place at the Carnegie, Millers Falls and Montague Center Libraries. Children read at home and receive

weekly reading incentive prizes at the libraries.

Many exciting programs and activities will be held at the libraries throughout the summer. The kick-off event is the *Dig the Beat Concert* with Jay Mankita on Tuesday, June 25, at 10 a.m. at the Carnegie Library.

Erving Public Libraries Summer Signup Starts June 16

The Erving Public Library will offer an eight-week series of summer programs. In commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Erving, many of these will include a history theme. Others will follow the statewide themes "Dig Into Reading," "Beneath the Surface," and "Groundbreaking Reads." Signup starts June 16.

The first event is *Afternoon with Laura Ingalls Wilder* on June 23 at

4 p.m. Melanie Stringer presents a first-person educational history program in the persona of Laura Ingalls Wilder as a young farm wife and mother, circa 1895. Attendees will learn what life was like in the nineteenth century, both in the Midwest and New England, with an emphasis on daily life and historic clothing.

Refreshments will be served by the Friends of the Erving Public Library. Reservations are recommended for this program.

Bus Trip to Lost Town of Dana

NEW SALEM – This Sunday, June 16, the Swift River Valley Historical Society is hosting a bus trip with Marty Howe to Dana. Dana, one of the four "lost towns" of the Quabbin, was disincorporated 75 years ago to allow the flooding of the reservoir. On the land near the water, one can still see cellar holes where homes once stood.

We will meet at the museum at 40 Elm Street in New Salem, and

leave promptly at 11 a.m. The cost is \$15 per person. Reservations must be made either by mail by June 10 to Marty Howe, 98 Lower Beverly Hills, West Springfield, MA 01089; or by calling (978) 249-7321 by June 14. No refunds. Bring a lunch, bug spray, drinks and binoculars.

We will follow DCR rules: no smoking, and no taking or leaving anything. Call (978) 249-7321 or email svrshsmuseum@gmail.com.



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

By FRED CICETTI

Q. I've never been a smoker and I just don't get why people do it. What's the attraction?

Only a non-smoker could ask that question. Every smoker, chewer and sniffer knows how wonderful tobacco can be. I know it's probably not politically correct to say anything nice about tobacco, but it's the truth.

All tobacco products contain nicotine, which is an addictive drug. According to the American Heart Association, the "nicotine addiction has historically been one of the hard-

Why Smokers Smoke, and Why You Shouldn't

est addictions to break." Nicotine is up there with heroin and cocaine.

What does nicotine do for you? Nicotine:

- * Decreases the appetite and helps you keep weight off.

- * Boosts mood and may even relieve minor depression.

- * Stimulates memory, alertness and concentration.

So why don't we all gobble up nicotine? Because it:

- * Increases heart rate by around 10 to 20 beats per minute.

- * Increases blood pressure by 5 to 10 mmHg (because it tightens the blood vessels).

- * Raises the blood level of blood sugar (glucose) and increases insulin production.

- * Increases bowel activity, saliva, and phlegm.

- * May cause sweating, nausea, and diarrhea.

- * Creates anxiety, irritability, headache, hunger, and a craving during withdrawal.

Nicotine is a substance found in

the nightshade family of plants. It kills bugs, therefore it has been used as an insecticide. A drop of pure nicotine would kill a person.

Nicotine is named after the tobacco plant *Nicotiana tabacum*, which was named after Jean Nicot de Villemain, French ambassador in Portugal. Nicot de Villemain sent tobacco and seeds from Brazil to Paris in 1560 and promoted their medicinal use. Nicotine was first isolated from the tobacco plant in 1828 by German chemists Posselt & Reimann, who considered it a poison.

There are several strategies for treating nicotine withdrawal. Nicotine supplements can help. These include gum, inhalers, nasal spray and skin patches. There are also non-habit-forming prescription medications to get off nicotine.

The symptoms of nicotine withdrawal usually go away in less than a week. Withdrawal is the most uncomfortable part of quitting, but the real challenge is beating long-term

cravings.

Each cigarette contains about 10 milligrams of nicotine. A smoker gets about 1 to 2 milligrams of the drug from each cigarette.

With each puff of a cigarette, a smoker absorbs nicotine into the bloodstream. In eight seconds, nicotine changes how the brain works. Nicotine stimulates the release of large amounts of dopamine. Dopamine stimulates the brain's pleasure and reward circuit.

The nicotine in cigarettes isn't what kills you.

Cigarette smoke is a complex mixture of chemicals produced by the burning of tobacco and additives. The smoke contains tar, which is made up of more than 4,000 chemicals, including more than 60 known to cause cancer. Some of these substances cause heart and lung diseases, and all of them can be deadly.

Send your questions to fred@healthygeezer.com.

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Senior Center Activities - June 17th to June 21st

GILL-MONTAGUE

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

All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Call now to sign up for six week free introductory floor yoga class beginning soon on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter.

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

Monday 6/17

10:10 a.m. Aerobics

10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

12 noon Pot Luck & Bingo

1 p.m. NO Knitting Circle

3:30 p.m. FCHCC Public Forum

Tuesday: 6/18

10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga with

Jean Erlbaum

12 noon Lunch

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Wednesday: 6/19

10 a.m. Aerobics

12 noon Lunch

12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday: 6/20

9 a.m. Tai Chi

12 noon Lunch

1 p.m. Pitch

Friday: 6/21

10 a.m. Aerobics

10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

1 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING

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

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

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

Monday 6/17

9:00 a.m. Tai Chi

10:00 a.m. Osteo Exercise

12:00 p.m. Quilting

Tuesday: 6/18

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics

10:00 a.m. Steve Damon: *Name That Tune*

12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday: 6/19

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10:00 a.m. Chair Yoga

12:00 p.m. Bingo

Thursday: 6/20

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10:00 a.m. Posture Perfect

12:00 p.m. Cards

Friday: 6/21

9:00 a.m. Bowling

LEVERETT

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

Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga – Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$4 (first class free).

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

WENDELL

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



Diamond Dusters Bring Trophy Back Home

The Montague Diamond Dusters won the Small Towns League Softball Championship on Saturday at Turners Falls High School. The Diamond Dusters beat the Northfield Pink Cougars, 18-7. This was the first championship victory for Montague in two years.

Sammy Bocon, Reagan Fiske and Autumn Adams threw for 12 strikeouts. Reagan Fiske had a triple with three RBIs, Emily Denison hit for an RBI, Sammy Bocon hit a double and two singles, and Anna Kochan hit three singles with two RBIs.

Northfield's Olivia Rowe threw 4 strikeouts, Karlie Porter hit two singles with two RBIs, Mary Elizabeth Smythe had one single and an RBI, and Jennie Fuller had one RBI.

Gill: Slate Library Dig Into Reading

Stop by the library and sign up for our summer reading program!

Pick up a game board and get ready to play the Slate Library reading game. Lots of fun prizes for all the books you read!

On Saturday June 29, 10:30 a.m., come dance on the green outside of the library with Anna Hendricks of

Great Falls Creative Movement. Put on your boogie shoes or dance in bare feet and celebrate summer!

On Saturday July 6, 10:30 a.m. Teacher Creatures presents "Diggin' Critters," an interactive show for all ages. Wildlife educators will visit the library with many furry friends.

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

Compiled By DON CLEGG

Celebrate Father's Day and the upcoming Summer Solstice along the river at Unity Park in Turners Falls on Sunday, June 16, from 2 to 3 p.m. with educator/musician Aimee Gelinas M.Ed., co-founder of **Gaia Roots World Music** and Director of Tamarack Hollow Nature & Cultural Center in Windsor, MA. Hear and see demonstrations of traditional West African and Caribbean instruments, rhythms and songs in a short demo with members of Gaia Roots. Then try your hand at drumming by joining a community music jam for all ages.

This event is free thanks to a grant from the Montague Cultural Council in collaboration with FirstLight Power, Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. In case of rain or high heat (80°+) the program location will be moved to the Great Falls Discovery Center. The decision to move the program will be made by noon on June 16 and posted on the Facebook page of the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center or call the GFDC at (413)863-3221. Please bring your own chair for the outdoor performance. To reserve use of an instrument at this event, please email aimee@gaiaroots.com.

Danielle Letourneau and **Big Brother/Big Sister** come to Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls on Saturday, June 15, from 9 a.m. to noon. This event is an open house format and agency staff can expert-

ly answer any questions you might have regarding the program, philosophy, benefits, rewards, participation and sign-up opportunities. BB/BS not only provides that extra personal interaction with caring adult role models and those youngsters who may benefit by the attention, it also fills a void for the adults who may be looking for that extra connection of caring and sharing with a special friend. This bond often times exists far beyond the scope of the program. Drop in and share light refreshments with Danielle and her staff while you discover the joys of this program.

Last chance to view shad, lamprey and maybe even salmon at the **Turners Falls Fish Ladder!** The viewing station in Unity Park is open both days this weekend from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A new shop is opening in downtown Turners Falls. Designer Christa Lee, formerly a co-owner of the Second Street Bakery, opens the doors of **FUNK*SHUN**, an arts and crafts boutique located at 38 Third Street, this Friday, June 14 at noon. Come Friday or Saturday to check it out, and say hi to Christa!

Giant indoor tag sale on Saturday, June 15, rain or shine, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, 84 K Street, Turners Falls, just up the hill from Food City. Furniture, toys, housewares and other treasures at rock bottom prices. Coffee and donuts available. For information, call Shirley at (413)773-7202.

Summer Reading Program sign-ups start on Wednesday, June

19, at all the Montague Public Libraries for children of all ages.

Meet the **Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center** on Thursday, June 20, at 6:30 p.m. and learn how you can also become a Friend. Then join Friends and

staff for a special museum tour and presentation with **Frank Gregory** at 7 p.m., the artist who painted all of the amazing murals in the GFDC exhibits. Get the behind the scenes scoop on how the museum was born. Light refreshments provided.

The public is invited to the second Great Solstice **Ice Cream River Paddle**, to be held Friday, June 21, the longest day of the year. The route covers the Millers River Blue Trail, starting from the Alan E. Rich Environmental Park in Athol at 5:45 pm and finishing six miles downstream at the Riverfront Park in Orange.

The paddle celebrates the solstice, ice cream, the Millers River and its first Blue Trail segment. "These are all great things," says Ivan Ussach, coordinator of the The Millers River Watershed Council. Paddlers wishing to unload their boat in Athol and park their cars in Orange beforehand can register in advance for a shuttle van leaving Orange Riverfront Park at 5:30 p.m. For more information and to register for the shuttle van, contact the Watershed Council at (978) 248-9491 or email watershed@millersriver.net by Wednesday, June 19.

The **last day of school** in Montague is Tuesday, June 18, and in Gill on the 20th. The Montague Parks and Rec is looking at Saturday, June 29, to turn the **sprinklers on at Unity Park**, in Turners Falls.

Send local briefs to: editor@montaguereporter.org.

Third Thursday Turners Falls: Exponential Fun! Thursday June 20, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Third Thursday Turners Falls (T³F) is a monthly arts, culture and downtown business night, featuring art exhibits, open studios, musical performances, walking tours, theater, invited artisans and other attractions in the village as well as extended open hours at participating venues. Come check it out!

The Montague Congregational Church Strawberry Supper

June 22nd 5:30 p.m.

Bake Stuffed Chicken Breast, Rice, Gravy, Salad & Hot Veggies, Homemade Breads, Strawberry Shortcake on Homemade Biscuits
Adults: \$10.00
Children under 10: \$5.00
Reservations: (413) 863-2398
Walk-ins welcome! Call for takeout.

Library Director

The Trustees of the Montague Public Libraries seek a new Library Director.

Required: MLS, at least five years experience. Salary starts at \$54 K. Details at montaguepubliclibraries.org. The Town of Montague is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

CORRECTION

In last week's edition (June 6, 2013), one of the pictures accompanying Joe Parzych's update on the two bridge projects ran with the wrong caption, identifying the wrong man at the wrong bridge. Our picture on pg. 6 actually showed Tom Carr, the ironworkers' foreman with Atlantic Bridge and Engineering. Carr, with the crane in the background, was working on the Factory Hollow Bridge on Route 2. Our apologies to the workers, reporter, and readers alike!



www.MontagueMA.net
local gossip, news & business listings

PRE-REGISTRATION

is now being offered for children in **grades K-2** at **Our Lady of Peace Church**.

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

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

Public Workshop Notice

Greenfield Road Reconstruction Project # 601657

A Public Workshop will be held by the Town of Montague and MassDOT to discuss the proposed Reconstruction of a portion of Greenfield Road, specifically the stretch from the Canalside Bike Path in Montague City to Hatchery Road. The purpose of the workshop is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed reconstruction of Greenfield Road. All views and comments made at the workshop will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible. Project plans are available at the Montague Planning Office.

WHERE: Montague Town Hall, Second Floor Meeting Room
One Avenue A Turners Falls, MA
WHEN: Thursday, June 27 at 6:00 PM

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Two Arrests, and Two Restraining Orders

Monday, 6/3

6:10 a.m. Loose cow in area of Lyons Hill. Returned to pasture.

11:20 a.m. Firearms issue at West Gill Road residence. Resolved same.

1:45 p.m. Restraining order issued to Munns Ferry Road resident.

2:50 p.m. Alarm sounding at Boyle Road resi-

dence. Employee error.

11:45 p.m. Arrest relating to domestic incident on River Road.

Tuesday, 6/4

1:20 p.m. Assisted West Gill Road resident with power issue.

2:00 p.m. Assisted Walnut Street resident with credit card fraud issue.

Wednesday, 6/5

9:45 a.m. Civil dispute

at business on the French King Highway.

Thursday, 6/6

8 a.m. Driving complaint on Center Road. Officer to speak with resident.

1:45 p.m. Restraining order issued to West Gill Road resident.

4:15 p.m. Officer requested to Barton Cove for suspicious person and motor vehicle.

6:40 p.m. Investigation of theft at an abandoned home on Main Road.

Friday, 6/7

5:10 p.m. Medical emergency on Mount Hermon campus.

Saturday, 6/8

1:30 p.m. Arrest of subject on West Gill Road for motor vehicle violations.

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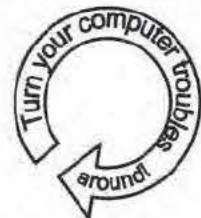
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The Patriot Act is at the Heart of the NSA's Snooping on Our Communications

At almost the exact moment that Bradley Manning was being hauled into his court martial on charges of "aiding the enemy, wrongfully causing intelligence to be published, and transmitting defense information," another citizen, Edward Snowden, was telling the *Guardian* that the National Security Agency (NSA) is spying on us. Like Manning, and like Daniel Ellsberg 40 years before them, Snowden chose to put his own conscience above his own personal safety – and his top secret security clearance – to expose what he felt was a grave abuse of power by his own government.

For years, many have suspected that the U.S. was conducting routine surveillance of its citizens. After all, the Patriot Act allows for such intelligence gathering. Few, however, until Snowden blew the whistle last week on the NSA operation, were aware of how extensive the metadata collection really was.

What we've learned so far is that the NSA for years has been collecting the phone records of hundreds of millions of Americans each day. Separately, an internet scouring program, code-named PRISM, allows the NSA and FBI to tap directly into nine U.S. Internet companies to gather all internet usage, including audio, video, photographs, emails and searches.

According to Glenn Greenwald, the *Guardian* reporter who broke the story, the practice began under President Bush but has expanded to a massive scale under President Obama. "The unlimited nature of the records being handed over to the NSA is extremely unusual," wrote Greenwald. "FISA court orders typically direct the production of records pertaining to a specific named target who is suspected of being an agent of a terrorist group or foreign state, or a finite set of individually named targets." In this case, the order was so broad that anyone, without cause, could be subject to monitoring.

The president has defended the snooping. Last Friday he told reporters: "With respect to all these programs, the relevant intelligence committees are fully briefed on these programs....I think, on balance, we have established a process

and a procedure that the American people should feel comfortable about....These programs are subject to congressional oversight and congressional reauthorization and congressional debate. And if there are members of Congress who feel differently, then they should speak up."

Some members of congress have decided to speak up. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) called for hearings. He was also among a group of senators who introduced legislation Tuesday to force the government to declassify opinions of a secret court that authorizes the surveillance. "The American people have the right to expect straight answers from the intelligence leadership to the questions asked by their representatives," Wyden said. Joining Wyden was Mark Udall (D-Colorado).

In a joint statement, Wyden and Udall wrote: "After years of review we believe statements that this very broad Patriot Act collection has been 'a critical tool in protecting the nation' do not appear to hold up under close scrutiny. We remain unconvinced that the secret Patriot Act collection has actually provided any uniquely valuable intelligence. As far as we can see, all of the useful information that it has provided appears to have also been available through other collection methods that do not violate the privacy of law-abiding Americans in the way that the Patriot Act collection does."

Our representative in congress, Jim McGovern, who voted against the initial Patriot Act and its renewal, told NPR's *Morning Edition* that he is deeply concerned that the monitoring crosses a line: "I think it's important now for this administration to provide briefings to people not just for the intelligence committee but for all members of Congress – and, quite frankly, there needs to be an explanation to the American people."

We couldn't agree more with these members of Congress. The central issue here, as they so clearly indicate, is the Patriot Act itself. Not only should Congress launch an investigation into the data mining, they should also begin efforts to repeal the Patriot Act.



SPY THEN

SPY NOW

C. SAWYER-LAUÇANNO ILLUSTRATION

Letter to the Editor

To: The Montague Board of Selectmen

On Tuesday May 7, 2013, Officers from the Montague Police Department were dispatched to the river bank near Unity Park on a report of a lost 9 year old child. It was reported that the child had left his grandmother's residence on his bicycle and he was angry with his grandmother. When the child did not return home within a half hour the grandmother went looking for him. The child's bicycle and helmet were located at Unity Park but the child was not found.

Sgt. Bonnett was the Sergeant in charge at this time and quickly took command of the situation. Sgt. Bonnett organized a very professional command post so that all officers could be accounted for and the search could be carried out in an organized fashion. Sgt. Bonnett called

in other off duty Montague Officers as well as the Turners Falls Fire Department for assistance in searching for the missing child. Officers from the Mass State Police, the State Police Helicopter as well as the Gill and Erving Police Departments also assisted in the search.

Within an hour the child was located unharmed at the pier area across from Unity Park.

It was reported that Officer Miner spent a lot of time with the family of the missing child and the family advised me that Officer Miner was very compassionate and helped them through this scary situation.

I would like to Commend Montague Police Sergeant Christopher Bonnett as well as Montague Officers Dan Miner, Jim Ruddock, Lee Laster, Pete Lapachinski, Mike Sev-

ene, Jamie Waitkus, and Dispatcher Cindy Hunter for their role in this intense and very emotional search.

I would also like to commend the Turners Falls Fire Department, the Mass State Police, Erving Officer LaFlamme, and Gill Sergeant Chris Redmond for all of their help.

The actions of all officers involved were an incredible example of how professional and caring each officer is. The officers were not stopping the search until that child was found safe.

I wish to personally Thank everyone involved.

– Sincerely,
Chief Charles Dodge

Montague Goes Medieval... and English

By MIKE JACKSON

Looking for a family-friendly foray into feudal times? To step onto the grounds of the Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club on Turnpike Road next weekend, June 22 and 23, will be to cross boundaries of time, space and disbelief, into an immersive, entertaining realm populated by jousting knights, dancing maidens, street wizards, and forest bandits. The third annual Mutton and Mead Festival aims to provide something for everyone – or indeed too much, says organizer David Agro, for anyone to completely absorb, "because we want them to come back again next year."

If the goal is to overwhelm, the

event's program provides some clues as to the strategy. Sixty roving actors will mingle with the crowd in full costume – their characters running the range from dukes, barons and ladies to rogues, orphans and wenches – while no fewer than twenty more formal performances, from jests to jousts, take place, including big shows each day on the field, tavern and stage.

The tavern is the Mutton and Mead Tavern, the central organizing theme for the festival event. The Tavern, besides serving ale, mead, and meat, and being located in Sherwood Forest, will be collecting food donations for the Food Bank of Western Mass. The Food Bank and the Montague Common Hall – for-

merly the Montague Grange, but recently renamed even in contemporary reality – will be the two main beneficiaries of the festival, which is run by a new nonprofit called the Knighten Guild.

Educational demonstrations, games, and a long register of food vendors and merchants all add to the period mayhem. Admission is \$15, \$10 for ages 7-12 and seniors, and free for orphans – er, kids – 6 and under. (See the ad on page 6 for a coupon for \$1 off admission.)

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday. Attendees are invited to come in costume or as they are. Visit muttonandmead.com for more information.


SINGERS from page 1

Montague Cultural Council is sponsoring the event, which begins at 7 p.m. For all these shows, local performers of all stripes – storytellers, musicians, dancers – are encouraged to get in touch with the traveling troupe (masswalkingtour@gmail.com) to be added to the night's festivities. They'll be checking their

email from the trail.

"I took the resonator off the back of my banjo, so it's lighter. I'm doing a kind of Civil War, clawhammer thing," said Mandeville. Camping each night and hauling the tools of their trade – a fiddle, ukelele, baby guitar, and the banjo – sounds like a romantic but unwieldy undertaking, but the tour has actually been scaled back from its first year.

In 2010, new to the idea, Richards and Mandeville walked across the state the *long* way, from Beckett to Somerville. But top to bottom is no small feat either, and readers here in Franklin County are encouraged to welcome them along the way and show them a good time.

For more information on the Massachusetts Walking Tour, visit masswalkingtour.org. 

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FAIRY from page 1

held last winter at the Montague Grange, led by Cynthia James, with Beverly Ketch, Rae Ann Jenks, Sylvie Jensen, and Alta Finn dancing in the style of Isadora Duncan.

James will make a special appearance at Saturday's festivities, visiting as a fairy queen in full regalia. She has danced since the age of twelve studying with the Imperial Russian Ballet, the Harkness Ballet School, The London Royal Ballet, and many others before studying the repertoire of Isadora Duncan. James continues to teach and dance in Western Massachusetts.

A festive picnic in the park will follow the fairy house events, and the loveliest picnic will be awarded a delicious pie from the Freight House.

Due to mowing considerations the fairy houses will be moved to the downtown planters in time for the upcoming Third Thursday event.

While the event is free, there will be a donation center to raise money for a load of compost for the new community garden, and a plant sale to benefit the upcoming Turners Falls Block Party.



Technology Upgrades for G-M School District

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

At the June 4 Gill-Montague school committee meeting, Marty Espinola, Acting Superintendent and Director of Teaching and Learning, presented a request for technology upgrades and new technology that he says reflect the district's highest priority needs. This would be a one-time expense, using revenue from school choice tuition. According to Mark Chapulis of The Management Solution, the request for \$235,196 for the new

technology would be reflected as a line-item transfer from teachers' salaries in the 2013 budget, subject to the approval of the school committee.

Chapulis assured members of the committee that this would not affect teachers' salaries in any way. He also said there were sufficient funds available in this year's budget for this expenditure. The use of school choice tuition for this purpose, Chapulis explained, is an appropriate use under Massachusetts Law.

Technology Manager Darin Pawlus presented the following department requests to the school committee:

- Two replacement modules for the network server, which he said are of critical need – \$4,000 each
- One IBM Blade Center for the network – \$15,000
- One IBM SAN Unit to expand network backup – \$20,000
- 10 AeroHive wireless access units – \$1,000 each
- 100 replacement hard drives for older computers – \$60 each

- 80 laptops to replace our older laptops that won't run Windows 8 – \$500 each

These purchases will expand computing capacity for both students and staff. Espinola said the school has aging workstations and the students are using very old hardware (computers). Older computers will be recycled down to students in the elementary schools where possible.

Requests from the teachers are:

- 11 SmartBoards for teachers who have requested them – \$2,670 each, including installation
- 25 updated graphics comput-

ers for the high school Graphic Arts lab – \$1,300 each

- 40 replacement laser printers – \$209 each
- 75 replacement monitors – \$110 each

Espinola said there are 20 iPads on each cart. The carts are kept stored and then moved to classrooms as requested by teachers. The new graphics computers will make possible the expanded graphics programs the high school hopes to offer next year.

see SCHOOL page 8

GILL from page 1

proved by majority vote, and the article unanimously, but only after considerable disagreement over the merit, not of the officers themselves, but of the process by which the raises had been deemed appropriate. Comparing the part-time positions to positions on the town's wage scale, and to similar ones in other Franklin County towns, convinced the personnel committee but not the finance committee. "I'm not saying one number is fairer," said Fin Com member Tupper Brown, "but that we should have a rational process."

The real breakdown in process, though, came in Article 12, the omnibus FY'14 budget. Finance committee member Valeria (Timmy) Smith moved to "open the omnibus" in order to allow, as she said, a discussion of the police department's line item. An extensive discussion developed around procedural implications, or wisdom, of approving such a motion. As town counsel Donna MacNicol and others slowly came to clarify, individual lines can be "severed" from such omnibus articles, creating separate motions, but to open an omnibus is to open a Pandora's Box of potential – though not mandatory – discussion of its every line.

A standing vote of 38 - 16 eventually decided that the omnibus would not, in fact, be opened, and while selectboard member Anne Banash moved to sever lines that needed adjustment to reflect the Town Clerk's and Treasurer's recent raises, nobody ended up moving to sever the police department budget after all. Its full \$181,827 -- the same sum as in FY'13 -- was left intact and undiscussed in the omnibus, which passed, finally, unanimously.

The total FY'14 budget approved for the town of Gill, including the omnibus budget and the treasurer and town clerk's severed salaries, is \$1,458,479.17, up 3.2% from the previous year. \$1,379,437.17 of this, 0.8% more than last year, will come from taxes.

Gill's total FY'14 budget will be \$1,458,479.17, up 3.2% from the previous year.

As it was noted that some residents had slipped away over the course of that procedural wrangling, a newfound determination and focus set in, and the second half of the meeting's articles were dealt with somewhat more quickly.

Incoming Gill-Montague Superintendent Michael Sullivan was on hand to introduce himself during discussion of Article 13, which would appropriate \$1,439,343 to cover the town's assessment and debt service to the school district. "Gill is a place I've come primarily for camping and canoeing with my kids," said Sullivan, a resident of Northampton who has been working as an assistant superintendent in Longmeadow. "I'm looking forward to this being the beginning of a long conversation I hope to have with you, for years to come." Gill welcomed Sullivan with a round of applause, and unanimous approval for the spending.

Article 16 addressed funding for the Cooperative Public Health Service, a program of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments in which Gill and nine other towns

share costs for services including a regional health agent and public health nurse. The startup grant for the program ran out and FRCOG is looking to the towns to step up their contribution. Gill's assessment is increasing from \$6,804 to \$10,206 this year. The nurse runs a walk-in clinic in Conway, Deerfield, and Shelburne Falls.

Phoebe Walker, Director of Community Services for the program, gave a brief presentation and answered questions about the arrangement. She came armed with signs that residents can post on local trails, educating the public about tickborne disease. Lyme disease, according to Walker, accounts for a staggering 50% of all communicable disease the CPHS encounters in the county. In response to a question from John Ward, Walker noted that the walk-in clinic is not equipped to perform blood tests for Lyme. The article passed unanimously.

A majority vote defeated \$3,000 for the Recreation Committee. That committee needs more than its one member to function, and while both the selectboard and finance committee asked for a "no" vote, it had been put on the warrant to draw attention to the lack in membership. Speaking for their respective boards, Banash and Brown established that if someone were to step up, money for activities such as soccer or basketball is still available from a revolving fund, and the committee's budget could be granted at special town meeting in the fall. Those interested can contact the acting Chair, Nathan Duda.

Article 19, requiring a 2/3 majority to borrow \$155,000 for a dump truck, got the votes it needed.

Once again, the topic came back to Gill Elementary. Since Article 4

passed, Article 20 would appropriate the remaining \$45,000 needed to pave and regrade the school's parking lots, driveway, and basketball court, which currently serves as the turnaround for school buses. The school has installed a guardrail in the lower parking lot, and Colleen Lilly and others questioned whether that lot is up to code for the number of parking spaces it contains. Constraints of space and visibility, said Lilly, create a hazard, and she herself has at times collided with other vehicles when backing up in the lot.

A motion to fund the defunct Recreation Committee was put on the warrant to draw attention to its need for new members.

Brown suggested that, since doing the whole project all at once would save money, the question might be deferred to special town meeting. Smith and selectboard member Randy Crochier also wondered whether it might need to wait until more is known about the project's necessary scope. In the end, though, the motion passed by majority vote.

Two articles were passed over. The Annual Reports are not finished, and so could not be discussed. Also, the Capital Improvement Planning Committee did not make a report, though Randy Crochier noted that upcoming capital expenses are sure to include a fire truck, and upgrades at the school, particularly to the

floors.

Asked about what upgrades to security the district is looking at for Gill Elementary, Crochier replied that new locks, not considered a capital improvement item, would be likely, but that it is unknown whether new doors will be called for: "The last thing I've heard from the schools was they weren't interested in doors, but it's kind of a moving target." Schools the nation over are scrutinizing their vulnerability in the aftermath of December's mass shooting tragedy in Newtown, CT.

Despite the procedural tangles, grumbling, difficulties in the sound system, and murmurs of longer-running controversies, Tuesday's town meeting was done and over in a little over two and a quarter hours.



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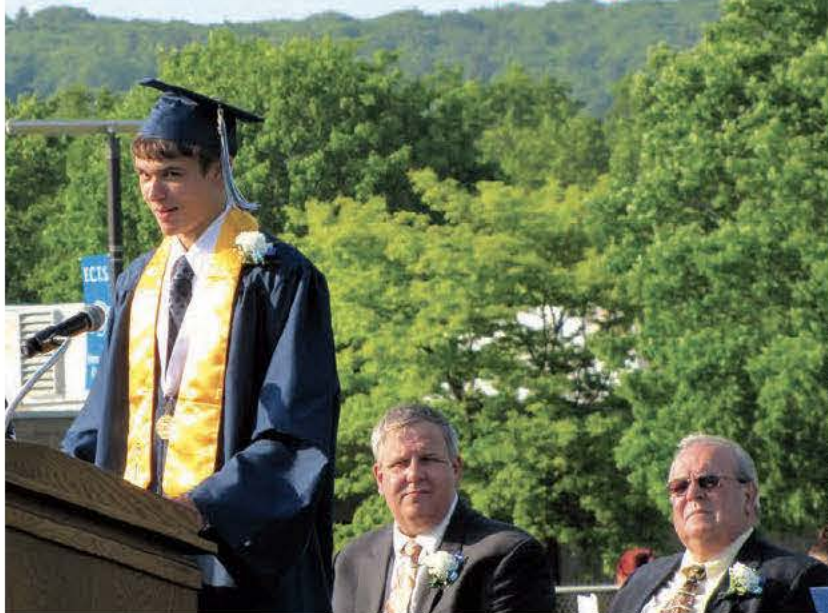
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Franklin County Technical School Students Urged to Embrace New Beginning



Robert Slowinski, senior class valedictorian, spoke at the ceremony.

By MICHAEL REARDON

TURNERS FALLS — Franklin County Technical School Class of 2013 valedictorian Robert Slowinski of Colrain had some simple, yet profound words for his classmates during his graduation speech held at the school on Friday, May 31.

"The 16th president of the United States Abraham Lincoln once said, 'Whatever you are be a good one,'" he said. "You have a huge head start

on life that many others do not. You have spent the last four years training for entry into the workforce. You have all of the tools necessary to start a successful career. Don't throw them away."

The 112 members of the class of 2013 received their diplomas outside on a sunny and hot evening surrounded by hundreds of family members and friends. The ceremony was at various times lighthearted, respectful and celebratory.

Principal Richard Martin kicked things off by emphasizing that the graduates were embarking on a new beginning in life whether it be "starting your career at a hospital, salon, or restaurant, while others venture into making houses, wiring buildings, or installing plumbing at a construction site."

Martin noted that 56 percent of the class will go onto pursue additional education at colleges, universities or technical training institutes, including Greenfield Community College, University of Massachusetts, Johnson & Wales University, Colby-Sawyer College, and many more. Ten percent of the graduating class will be joining the military.

"The beginning of the rest of your life begins after high school graduation," Martin said. "You will begin new relationships, while maintaining the ones you have established here at Franklin County Technical School. The most important new beginning is not when you succeed at the expense of others, but when others succeed because of the time and expense you put into them. That truly is a new beginning."

FCTS Superintendent James Laverty handed out awards to a number of students. Slowinski, the valedictorian, won the MVA Outstanding Student of the Year Award; Dawna Gorman of Sunderland received the

MVA Presidential Certificate of Merit; Virginia Lingwall of Sunderland was presented with the MVA Vocational Technical Student Achievement Award; Melissa Leary of Northfield was the recipient of the MSSA Student Achievement Award; and Malorie Savage of Orange won the Superintendent's Award.

Mykayla Coburn of Colrain is the class salutatorian.

The ceremony featured two commencement speakers, FCTS English teachers Dean Scranton and Heather Richards who humorously spoke about their friendship despite a wide gap in age and experience. Scranton, 65, is retiring after more than 20 years teaching at the school.

Scranton and Richards concluded their remarks by saying that the message of their speech was that *they* were the message.

"We became friends because we were open to the opportunity of being friends, despite all of our differences," Scranton said.

Added Richards, "We chose Tech because we were open to the opportunity of teaching at such a unique and special school."

"We hope that you will open yourselves to all of the doors that you'll find in front of you," Scranton said, "and have the courage to walk through them."

Following the ceremony, Rebecca

Brisson, 18, of Charlemont, said she was "sad and excited" to be graduating from FCTS. Brisson, who was in the carpentry program, is attending Colby-Sawyer College in the fall to study sociology.

"I'll miss my friends at Franklin County Tech," she said. "I was really close to everybody in my carpentry shop."

Rebecca's mother, Jeanne Brisson said she was proud of her daughter, but also sad that she was leaving the school.

"I love Franklin County Tech," she said. "It's a close knit community. It's a very diverse and accepting school."

Tricia Woods, 17, a carpentry student from Greenfield, said graduating was "the best feeling ever." She said she was excited for what the future holds.

"This school gives you a lot of great opportunities that I wasn't open to before," Woods said.

Kyle Taylor, 18, of Ashfield, said it was a long road to graduation, but he would recommend the school to anybody.

"The teachers are great," said the electrical student and National Honor Society member. "I thank all of my teachers who helped me through this."

Michael Reardon serves as public relations consultant at FCTS.

A Father's Day Tribute to a Yankee Doodle Dandy



By LYN CLARK

He was made of stern stuff, a man of iron. Ours was not a cuddly relationship. Born on the Fourth of July in 1887 into a Victorian household, his ideas of childrearing did not include playfulness — that was left to the womenfolk. He was a calm, upright, fiercely respectable lawyer and judge, fair in all ways, a man

whom others admired tremendously. He never raised his voice; he never had to. He was not a vain man, but with jet black hair and startling cornflower blue eyes, he must have left legions of women with broken hearts simply because he could not be theirs. He was drop-dead gorgeous. And he was my Atticus Finch.

But Walton Clark was so much more. I think that little children see their parents only as they relate to themselves and not as whole people with internal and external lives quite separate from their own. Only as an adult did I start to put the pieces together that made this man whole, and begin to realize how remarkable he really was. Urged by his father to study law, when his heart's desire was to be a scientist, he made a pact with him. He would attend law school if he could have his father's blessing to take a year off from his studies and disappear into the Wild West. (He stuck to the bargain — he was that kind of guy — and he later practiced law until he was eighty years old.)

It was still the first decade of the 20th century, and he was just a teen-

ager, when he struck out on his own. He worked in Colorado in a gold mine; he slaved with horse and plow to build the 17-mile Drive on the Monterey Peninsula in California; he tended sheep on a tramp steamer to Alaska. Often exhausted, sometimes hungry, always resourceful, he embraced the very physical demands placed on him and considered it the making of him, a rough eye-opening introduction to people unlike any he had known and places that he would never forget. He would have scoffed at today's body builders and fitness gurus, but for the rest of his life he daily pushed his body to its limits.

When it appeared that the United States would enter World War I, he single-handedly raised a company of over 135 men, trained them, and in 1917 commanded them as Major, and later as Lt. Colonel in France, fighting in Champagne, Lorraine, and the Battle of the Argonne Forest.

The practice of law may have been his vocation, but his avocations pulled him out of the dusty law library and courtroom into the natural world he so relished, often drawing us after him, scrambling to

keep up. He was an avid oarsman (sculler) as a young man and then a kayaker. Once a week during my childhood, summer *and* winter, he kayaked in his Klepper Aerius from the Connecticut Shore across the Sound to Long Island, some 15 miles there and back. He was also an avid mountain climber who was at home in the Presidential Range of New Hampshire, his personal playground. Sometimes with friends and family, but more often alone, he leapt up trails through the forests, and across ledges, summer and winter, often sleeping rough, even in blizzard conditions on Mount Washington where the men in the Weather Station on top came to know him. ("Success, Lyn," he told me, "is all in good preparation.") He delighted in meeting fierce weather head on, and when the wind and the waves became excited, so did he. He taught us to love what was wild, be it weather or creatures. He was a student and then teacher of physics, meteorology and celestial navigation.

And so, it came as no surprise to those who knew him best, that when he was 68 years old he contracted with a ship builder in Maine to build him a 20-foot ketch (double-masted

sail boat without auxiliary power, and no way to radio for help), and without telling family, and leaving a letter for my mother explaining his decision, he set sail one foggy morning for Europe — alone, as usual. My sister in California heard it on the radio and called me. My mother went to bed with a migraine. The Coast Guard when it heard, too late to intervene — even if it could have — was not pleased.

And no, he didn't die in the attempt, nor did he reach Europe, but some 500 miles out, realizing that there was no way could he attain his goal in the time he had allotted from his law practice, he turned around and returned. He made a second attempt when he was 70, but the hull sprung a leak, and returning he became shipwrecked on a small island off the coast of Maine and spent the night with a bottle of whiskey he had taken with him "for medicinal purposes." He was never a drinking man, so it told me the depth of his disappointment and frustration, although he never complained or even discussed his feelings relating to what he must have considered a bitter failure. Typically, he faced up to it alone, and facing the inevitable, gave the boat to the Sea Scouts, continued to kayak until he was 95 years old on lakes, rivers and the ocean. When he was 99, I lectured him on his bad eating habits (he had a passion for McDonald's milk shakes). He leveled a gaze at me with those incredibly blue, piercing eyes, and just smiled. He still had a full head of hair, now snow white, and still enjoyed perfect eyesight, and perfect hearing. He died just three months shy of his 100th birthday. Hey, he might have lived to 110 were it not for those milk shakes, mightn't he?

It comes to all of us after a while, that realization that our parents have inner lives just as we do, dreams realized and unrealized, thoughts and beliefs that intentionally and unintentionally spill over to us and we absorb. Their influence, for better or worse, is profound, and like it or not we carry them with us, inside of us long after they are gone. In that respect, I got lucky. Thank you, Dad.

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Turners Falls to Mt. Everett, 3-0

By DAVID DETMOLD

After a convincing 8-0 rout of Granby at the Western Mass semifinals on Thursday, June 6, post-season play for the Turners Falls girls softball team came to a disappointing end on Sunday, at the Western Mass Division III finals at UMass, where the Turners team fell to the Mt. Everett Eagles, 3-0. The loss put an end to Turners' nine straight years of claiming the Western Mass softball championship trophy.

After their first two batters, Jenna Putala and Dakota Smith-Porter, connected for singles in the first inning, Turners went hitless for the remainder of the game. No matter how hard they battled, and the number of foul balls was testament to their tenacity, the Turners girls just could not hit the fastball of Mt. Everett hurler Alicia Bazonski. Although they played well in the field, executing two double plays and allowing just five hits, they did make three errors – and it was those errors that cost them the game.

Mt. Everett got off to an early lead in the second inning when lead-

off batter Sam Hoover drew one of only two walks Turners pitcher Smith-Porter gave up that day. Her sister Alex sacrificed with a bunt to the mound, moving the runner to second.

Then Turners made their first fielding error of the day, when Emily Coon smacked a line drive down the left field line, and Amber Caouette could not get it in her glove. By the time she fielded it, Hoover had rounded the bag at third and headed for home. Smith-Porter recovered by fanning the designated hitter and forcing the next batter into a pop out at third.

After giving up two hits in the first inning, and allowing Brittany York to get to first on an error, as she drove a hard grounder under the glove of the third basewoman, Bazonski dominated the game, retiring the next 13 Turners batters in a row. Not until Smith-Porter got on in the top of the sixth, with an error at second, did Turners see another runner on base. T.J. Sanders took Bazonski's measure for the second and last base on balls the Eagles' pitcher allowed that day. But Turners, down

by one, with one away, was unable to bring the runners home.

Mackenzie Salls almost broke it open with a shallow pop fly to left field. Three Mt. Everett players converged on it, and no one called it, and for a brief moment it looked like it might drop. But at the very last moment, shortstop Emily Coon made a diving shoestring catch, and came up with it, dashing Turners' hopes for a late inning rally. Catcher Morgan Ozdarski fell behind 0-2 and then battled back hard, fouling one pitch after another away until the count was full, but then grounded out to the pitcher to end the inning.

It was Ozdarski, by the way, that made the most brilliant defensive play for Turners in the bottom of the fourth, after Bazonski had drawn a walk from her rival, and her courtesy runner had advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt. With one away, Alex Hoover swung at a high 0-2 pitch from Smith-Porter and dropped it into shallow left field. With the runner rounding third, Caouette fielded the ball and had it into Ozdarski's mitt before the runner even came

near the plate. Ozdarski put the tag on her, and whipped the ball out to Putala at second, for a brilliant double play.

Putala was responsible for Turners' second double play in the bottom of the fifth, when Smith-Porter, with one away, hit the Eagles' designated hitter, Kersten Cutlip, with a low inside fast ball. Brooke Moorehouse got to the plate, knocked a slow grounder to Putala, who put the tag on the runner and fired to first for the third out.

And so it went, with strong pitching by Bazonski and Smith-Porter, who struck out two, and strong fielding by Turners keeping the game in play, 1-0 Eagles, until the bottom of the sixth inning, when Haley Finn hit a slow grounder to shortstop Sanders, who threw high, over the glove of Mackenzie Salls at first to start things off for Mt. Everett.

Morgan DeGrenier telegraphed her intent to bunt, and proceeded to do so on the next pitch, dropping the ball in the dirt in front of the plate, where Ozdarski scooped it up. But her throw to first was high over the head of the fielder, and proceeded down the right field line past Brittany York, allowing Finn to score, and DeGrenier to stretch her paltry

bunt all the way to third base. Natasha MacLeay then sacrificed to first, scoring the runner, and giving Mt. Everett a 3-0 lead.

As it turned out, that was more than enough to dim the hopes of Turners Falls. When they got up for their last at bat, with coach Gary Mullins pacing in front of the dug-out, time had all but run out for the home town team.

Brittany York gave it her best shot, and almost beat the throw from shortstop after connecting solidly with the first pitch from Bazonski. Some might say she did beat the throw, but not the first base umpire.

Breanna Breault took a strike and then hit a line drive that made hearts leap in the Turners' stands. It made the third baseman leap too, and darn it all, she came down with it. Amber Caouette battled Bazonski – who had an aggressive habit of snarling “Aaugh!” after releasing each pitch, in a further attempt to intimidate the opposition – to a full count.

Then she went down, looking at the last strike, and the Turners fans issued a collective groaned: “Aaugh!” as if echoing, in a minor key, the battle cry of the triumphant pitcher for the Mt. Everett Eagles, who had dashed their hopes at last.

Dakota Smith-Porter Will be Playing Softball for UMass Next Year

By COURTNEY EUGIN

TURNERS FALLS – Dakota Smith-Porter, ace Turners Fall High School pitcher, and a 2013 graduate, was awarded a softball scholarship to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Smith-Porter has been playing softball since the fourth grade, and it has become her passion. Until her sophomore year she played volleyball for Turners Falls. “I stopped,” said Smith-Porter, “because I wanted to focus more on softball pitching, joining different travel teams during the summer and getting more competitive.” This past summer Smith-Porter took part in the UMass softball camp where she was coached by UMass coaches and former players on the team. She said, “There they started getting interested in me.”

Smith-Porter has been participating in softball camps during the summers. One day when Smith-Porter went to Boston to visit colleges and explore all her options after graduating from high school she got a surprise. “I was walking in Boston wearing a softball shirt, and a guy came up to me and asked, ‘Are you looking for something?’ and then asked, ‘Do you play Softball?’ He introduced himself to me saying he was Emerson College’s Softball



DAVID DETMOLD PHOTO

coach and coach for the travel team, ‘Polar Crush Gold’. He asked me to come and try out for them.”

Smith-Porter agreed, and easily won a place on the team. She will

be playing for “Polar Crush Gold” for the first time this summer. She also joined “Planet Fast Pitch” where she works on her pitching skills.

To get UMass to notice her she kept contacting them through email mentioning everything she was doing to prepare herself for college softball, and telling them about all the camps and clinics she was doing. When she talked to the UMass coaches, Smith-Porter said they told her, “Participating in the camps was key.”

When Smith-Porter got the definite offer from UMass, they informed her, “The big thing we like about you is that you are a good student.” They had also mentioned that they “wanted her for who she was and they knew she was already a good player but wanted to cultivate her into an even better one.”

In reacting to receiving this astounding scholarship, Smith-Porter said, “I am very fortunate and grateful that I was able to follow my dream.” She’s always wanted to attend the University of Massachusetts and play soft-

ball there. UMass softball is ranked in the top thirty in the country right now.

Smith-Porter will start softball in August, and begin her first year of college in September. She intends to major in Psychology. My best

wishes go out to Smith-Porter to accomplish even more of her goals and dreams; I know she will accomplish them all.

Courtney Eugin is the Montague Reporter’s TFHS intern.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Medical Marijuana Moratorium Munched

By DAVID DETMOLD

The Gill selectboard on June 3 chewed over the possibility of imposing a year-long moratorium on the siting of any potential medical marijuana dispensary within town borders, which would allow the planning board time to consider the zoning issues involved in locating such a facility. But in the end the board decided to bag the whole idea for the time being, since it was too late for the planning board to hold a public hearing before town meeting on Tuesday, June 11.

Medical marijuana entrepreneurs do not appear to be holding their breath in anticipation of the town revising bylaws to accommodate them anyway. As selectboard member Randy Crochier pointed out, recently released regulations from the state Department of Health require anyone hoping to open a dispensary to post a half million dollars in escrow, to ensure reliability of supply. Leave it to the bureaucrats to bring you down.

Crochier said state law will not allow a town to prohibit the siting of a medical marijuana dispensary within its borders, and no moratorium longer than one year will be permitted.

He noted that 70% of Massachusetts voters approved the citizen initiated referendum legalizing the medical use of pot in the Commonwealth (although 47% forgot which way they voted after leaving the polls).

Crochier said registered patients would be able to purchase up to \$4,000 worth of weed from a dispensary at a time. As many as five dispensaries are allowed in any county, so patients won't have to drive too far to get it. He said the state considers ten ounces of pot to be a 60 days supply. (Whoa! What are they smoking out there in Boston?)

Considering the amount of green stuff involved, should dispensaries be simply zoned commercial? Or agricultural?

"If there's a growing component involved," said Ann Banash, "and there has to be... how do you make sure there's no access to it for someone driving by?" (Wait. Isn't that the point?)

A few minutes later, Crochier responded that state regs require dispensaries to be locked after hours and equipped with security cameras.

He also said the local board of health might need to get involved, since "there may be a food production

component." Brownies were not mentioned, but lollipops were.

The discussion about Gill's position on medical pot came up because both Crochier and town administrative assistant Ray Purington attended a workshop on the issue sponsored by the Franklin Council of Governments on May 29.

Crochier said it was the heaviest attendance he had ever seen at a FRCOG symposium. He said the lawyers who were on hand to explain the new state regs told the audience the number one question they get asked at these forums is: "Did you bring any samples?"

In other news, the board declined to include an article allowing for Gill to negotiate for municipal net metering of solar energy on the upcoming June 11 annual town meeting agenda.

Claire Chang, of the Gill energy commission explained: "The requirement for a 20-year contract is too long. We don't have to do it now. And we want to pursue solar photovoltaics on the Mariamante parcel," instead.

The town hall roof is nearly done, Purington told the board. The anticipated cost will be \$52,780, about \$10,000 less than town meeting appropriated for the job.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Board Meets with Access Advocates, Outside

By JOSH HEINEMANN

On the second evening following a four-hour-long annual town meeting, the Wendell selectboard met for their regularly scheduled meeting on June 5 and, after concluding their business in the selectboard office, moved to the town hall to meet some citizens who had concerns about access to town buildings. They brought with them a proposal for a Wendell Access Committee (WAC).

After the selectboard entered the town hall they agreed to go outside to meet the citizens, and so brought folding chairs outside, forming a circle in the parking area in front of town hall and the police station. The evening was mild, and mosquitoes stayed away as darkness fell and the issues were raised.

Betsy Ames interpreted the signing of Sharon Wachslar, whose sore voice was barely audible. The proposal was also available with precedents and details in a type-written handout. The idea is to have a five-member committee that includes disabled people, family members of disabled people, and normally able people. The committee's job would be to ensure access and the needs of people with special sensibilities before work on a project gets started. Through Ames, Wachslar said she was overwhelmed by the number of people in the circle: close to a dozen, with three board members, people who came with Wachslar, three members of the press, and members of the kitchen design group.

Selectboard chair Christine Heard's first comment was that finding volunteers to work on town committees is almost a full-time job, and she wondered if five people could be found. Wachslar said that some people already had expressed interest. Selectboard member Dan Keller said he liked the idea in principle, but that there are a number of legalities to be worked out. Heard said that things should be done, "in the right way," and that takes some time.

Keller mentioned that until recently, a speakerphone was used at town meetings to

allow one disabled person to take part, but that town counsel confirmed that state law requires a person to be present at town meeting to vote or to speak. Participation at a selectboard meeting by speakerphone is allowed.

The circle dispersed, with people bringing their chairs back into the town hall.

The meeting opened with treasurer Carolyn Manley going over a draft of proposed changes to the town's personnel policy for them to review and for town counsel to review before the next meeting.

Solar Progress

Dave Mascorro of Envirohealth gave the selectboard an update on progress on the 2-megawatt solar generating station that Envirohealth is asking Wendell to host. Envirohealth is investing \$50,000 to \$60,000 for the impact study phase. Property tax for the facility needs to be resolved with the town; other towns have arranged for payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT). Envirohealth needs National Grid to give them a price for connecting to the grid, and if that comes by July or August, Envirohealth is hoping to be generating electricity by December. If there is too much delay, the installation will be built in spring.

Envirohealth will pay Wendell rent for every kilowatt of electricity it produces, but will not give Wendell a discount on its electric bill, because Seaboard Solar, for which Wendell is hosting 8 megawatts, is already giving that discount. Envirohealth will start making its rent payments on schedule whether its project is producing electricity or not.

Town Vault Issues

Town clerk Gretchen Smith brought up the fact that temperature and humidity in the town vault went up after months of being kept under control by the dehumidifier. The cause may be frequent opening of the door in the recent rainy weather. Keller said that he has some ideas for adjusting the humidity, and that he recommended a box of baking soda, changed regularly, to control the odor.

Good Neighbors

The president of Good Neighbors, Nancy Graton, and other Good Neighbors officials gave an overview of Good Neighbors' operation. The food pantry is open to everyone, regardless of income, except for a limited amount of USDA food from the Food Bank that is income-eligible. They have 12 drivers, 8 of whom are regular, who make weekly trips to 10 local stores that otherwise would have to dispose of an astonishing amount of food.

Local garden surplus will be available, and soon, so will produce from Wendell's Stone's Throw Farm. For a voluntary donation of \$5, a Wendell or New Salem resident can enter the town hall every Sunday and get a week's food. 148 households are members, and the town hall is full every Sunday. Leftovers are given to other pantries, or a farmer who feeds the best to livestock, and composts the rest.

Asked by Heard why Good Neighbors is so successful when other food pantries are struggling, Graton answered that they take calls and donations on Sundays when stores are clearing out, and that they have a high quality of volunteers, including dedicated drivers.

She said that with selectboard permission Good Neighbors will pay for wiring that will allow their refrigerators to be moved into the front room, allowing work on the town hall kitchen to start, and with a grant will replace an old inefficient refrigerator with a new Energy Star model.

Good Neighbors member Rosie Heidkamp concluded, saying, "So we can go ahead with the changes and repairs?" Board members made no objection.

The selectboard accepted a bid of \$1,465 from Tri County Construction to build a fence to screen the town hall from a neighbor's property. Selectboard member Geoffrey Pooser added a reminder that the neighbor be notified, as agreed, before work starts.

The selectboard concluded their meeting in the town hall with an executive session, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

New Key Employees Must Reside in Erving if New Bylaw Passes

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the Erving selectboard finalized the three warrant articles for the June 24 special town meeting (STM). The STM will decide whether to authorize \$67,236 for the former Usher Plant redevelopment project, and \$50,000 for Erving Elementary School (EES) security measures. The third article is a bylaw requiring key town employees to reside in town.

The Usher Plant Re-Use committee met jointly with the selectboard to present their proposed budget, which includes money for roof repairs to the former boiler building, a planning consultant, an evaluation of environmental permitting issues, surveillance cameras, an LCD projector and screen, and movable lighting.

The EES security measures include barrier poles to prevent cars from driving into the building, a barrier gate for the playground area, and new signs. The recommendations are the result of an audit of the school by a state trooper.

Article 3 of the warrant establishes a residency requirement for the police chief, fire chief, highway superintendent, and town administrator.

Appointees to these positions after passage of the bylaw will have 6 months to acquire residency in Erving. Current employees in these positions will not be affected by the bylaw.

The STM will be held Monday June 24 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

In other business, the selectboard prepared questions for Hampshire Power about the proposal to switch from National Grid and WMECO to Hampshire Power as the residential electrical supplier. Under the Hampshire Power municipal aggregation program, HCOG would buy electricity in bulk and sell it to Erving residents and small businesses. Hampshire Power says that this is likely to result in lower electric bills for consumers. If the selectboard enters into a municipal aggregation contract with Hampshire Power, WMECO and National Grid customers would automatically become Hampshire Power customers. In order to stay with WMECO or National Grid, the customer would be required to actively opt out of Hampshire Power.

The board wanted more information about whether a National Grid or WMECO customer who becomes a

Hampshire Power customer can switch back to National Grid or WMECO and retain the same pricing plan they had with the original company.

Other questions from the board included: *Will the rates be the same for both sides of town?* and *Will the town need to sign one contract or two, one for WMECO and one for National Grid?* The board also requested copies of the "opt-out" letter and sample bills. Town administrator Tom Sharp will email Ken Elstein of Hampshire Power and provide the answers to the selectboard.

The selectboard accepted the resignation of Norma Charbonneau of East Prospect Street from the Council on Aging.

SCHOOL from page 5

Shelly Clark, member from Montague, commented that the price for the SmartBoards was very reasonable. Espinola said, last year the district got ten SmartBoards for teachers who requested them, and they've been very happy with this unit.

Other teachers who were not sure how they felt about this new technology were

now interested in getting them for their classrooms. The SmartBoards replace projectors whose images are not as sharp as those on SmartBoards.

The requests from the Network Manager total \$95,000, and requests from teachers total \$140,196. The grand total is \$235,196. The school committee approved this request unanimously.

The school committee also voted to approve questions for a survey to be posted on the district website. The stated purpose of this survey is to "increase and improve communications between the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee and the community."

School committee chair Joyce Phillips asked the community to please take part in

this survey and emphasized that everyone is invited to participate whether or not they are involved directly with the schools. A link to the survey can be found on the district website, www.gmrtd.org.

The next regular school committee meeting will be held on June 25, 2013 at Turners Falls High School at 7 p.m.



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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on June 12, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Gee Accepts Top Slot at GMRSD

On Wednesday, the Gill-Montague schools received the news that Sue M. Gee will assume her duties as the new Superintendent on August 1. Patricia Crosby, school committee chair, said the committee "got a really strong sense of leadership in tough times" from Gee. "She has worked nationally to lead administrations through the process of school reform... She is the best educator we could find."

Airport Expansion Panned

The public hearing on Monday to discuss the planned expansion of the Turners Falls airport proved to be a lively affair, attended by more than thirty residents. At times

it seemed that two separate meetings were taking place in the same room, one attended by the commission and the other by the residents. Michael Naughton asked, "Do we really need this facility in this location?"

Town Coordinator Search Continues

The selectboards of Wendell and New Salem met together on June 4 to narrow the field of applicants for the position of town coordinator. Donna Walters was hired for the post in mid-February, but quit at the end of March, citing a lack of office equipment and furniture. The temporary absence of a coordinator has proven to be a challenge.

Art Auction at Studio B

This Saturday, art donated by area artists will be auctioned at the

old firehouse at 24 Third Street. The featured work of the night is *The Bridge*, a 4' x 8' woodcut print on fabric, so big the town of Montague had to help print it with one of their steamrollers in Peskeompskut Park. The lead artist, Jeremy Latch, had help with the carving from teens of the Brick House's Hot Spot Teen Center.

Erving Sells Crown Vic

In open session, the selectboard made a motion to accept sealed bids for the 1999 Ford Crown Victoria formerly used by the chief of police. The board established a minimum bid of \$4,500 and said the bids would be opened on July 14. The auto was recently taken out of service when the town acquired a new four-wheel drive Ford Expedition.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Bids Reviewed for High-Speed Fiber Buildout

By DAVID DETMOLD

The selectboard discussed the latest bids to install the first municipally owned and financed high speed fiber optic network in Western Massachusetts; Leverett's trailblazing effort would provide broadband internet access to each and every household and business in town that wants the service. The first round of bidding, which ended in early March with the town awarding the bid to G4S, the same company that is providing "middle mile" connectivity for Leverett and over 100 other Western and Central Massachusetts communities, under contract with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, for \$2,751,261. In 2012, town meeting approved borrowing up to \$3.6 million to bring universal high speed internet to Leverett.

The Massachusetts attorney general's office tossed out the first bid offering a few weeks later on technical grounds. On June 6, the town opened the second round of bids, and again found a company called Millenium to be the lowest bidder – at \$2,275,731. The town had rejected Millenium's first bid as incomplete, and selectboard member Peter d'Errico, who is spearheading the effort to establish the town's broadband network along with the broadband committee, again on Tuesday expressed some doubt that the smaller company had the proven track record to accomplish the job.

This time around, perhaps because of tightened technical specifications in the bid, G4S came in with a substantially lower bid than in the first round – offering to do the job for \$2,298,762.

The board intends to consult with the attorney general's office before awarding a contract to the lowest competent bidder.

D'Errico said the town is still examining possible sources of state funding to assist with the project, "but we are not waiting for that." The target date for completion remains 2014.

Pond Spending Approved

In other news, the selectboard approved spending \$200 to assist the Friends of the Leverett Pond in applying the herbicide Renovate Max-G (described as pelletized, granular, 2,4-D BEE mixed with Triclopyr) on invasive weeds in the pond, in a multi-year program approved by the conservation commission and the Department of Environmental Protection. Lakeside residents are advised to cover their flowers

and garden plants to coincide with the herbicide's application, generally within 30-50 feet of shore. The treatment will be followed up with an hour or two of "weed raking" with a hydro-rake to remove the root systems of the dead milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed and "other nuisance aquatic vegetation."

The pond is a popular destination point for hikers, kayakers, and bird-watchers; the fire department also uses it as a potential filling source for tankers. The selectboard will ask the fire department to contribute funds towards the rental of the hydro-rake.

School Matters

The board sent letters to local legislators "to protest the decrease in charter school reimbursement being proposed in both the State House and Senate," saying "Leverett and other towns are already struggling with school budgets, having to cut programs in order to fund charter schools, ever-increasing special education costs and implementation of state mandated programs such as Common Core."

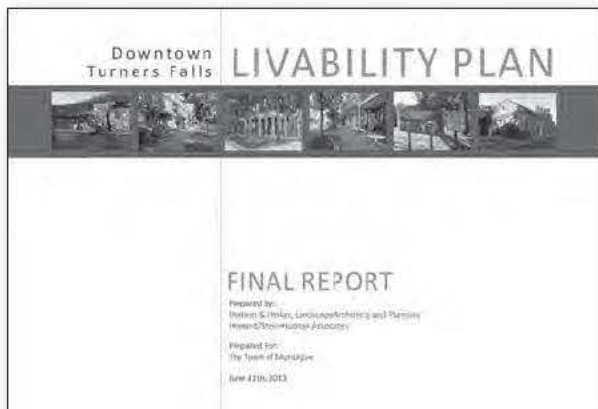
The board also sent a letter to Maria Geryk, superintendent of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, protesting the insufficient advance discussion of capital spending on projects like new tennis courts for the middle school (\$306,000) and renovations to the boys locker room at the high school (over \$200,000) at a time of ongoing budget austerity, program cuts and staff reduction.

Laurel Kahn has stepped down as the chair of the Leverett community preservation committee (CPC). The selectboard praised her efforts in that role.

Board member Julie Shively said ongoing negotiations over the precise terms of an affordable housing deed restriction has so far prevented the town from implementing its plans to make CPC funds available to applicants interested in accessing town funds for affordable housing covenants. By law, at least 10% of monies raised through the voluntary, town approved 2% surcharge on property tax bills under the Community Preservation Act – which provides state matching funds for approved projects – must be spent on affordable housing. Shively said the town has at least \$80,000 set aside to assist with affordable housing projects in town, and potentially larger sums are available through the CPC.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Livability Study of Downtown: A Plan for the Next 20 Years



By PATRICIA PRUITT

The centerpiece of the June 10 selectboard meeting was town planner Walter Ramsey's presentation of the Downtown Livability Study for the selectboard's approval and acceptance. The document is a hefty 155-page study providing the town with a thorough look at the downtown business and residential district. Not since Alvah Crocker surveyed Turners Falls for a manufacturing site has the downtown been so closely scrutinized, measured, and evaluated for its conduciveness to civic life and commercial growth and sustainability. Although the companies of Dodson & Flinker, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates and Dietz & Co. guided the evaluation process, they were led by citizens representing every aspect of the population of downtown and formed into two groups: a 12 member Advisory group, and a 30 member working group of citizens, representing stakeholders and interest groups in downtown Turners.

Ramsey went on to describe sev-

eral of the goals identified through these meetings. They ranged from enhancing connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, to increased handicap access, to improved appearance and accessibility for Avenue A businesses, expanded support for downtown events to improved services such as trash collection in alleyways, more transit service, and community gardens. It included a suggestion for developing a Joint Downtown Partnership with a downtown manager to refine marketing, and support retention of businesses. Another goal was to enhance the gateways to Turners Falls as a way to pull vehicles/visitors off Route 2. These efforts would be enhanced by the creation of overnight accommodations for folks wanting to spend more time in the area. Another goal was the expansion of private-public cooperation through such avenues as the development of the Strathmore, and the increasing of market-rate housing without pushing out affordable rentals.

A hard copy will be available to the public at Carnegie Library on Monday June 17 as well as in Town Hall. It is available online at the town's website: http://www.montague.net/Pages/MontagueMA_Planning/TF%20Final%20Report%206112013.pdf

The board of selectmen accepted

and approved the Livability Plan unanimously, with Pat Allen adding her appreciation for the great work done to realize the final plan.

Ramsey pointed out that the town has already begun moving in the direction of the plan through negotiating with Powertown's HallKeen Management to turn street level windows back into store fronts, and the effort to replace street lighting on Avenue A with historically-compatible style fixtures, but environmentally friendly with less-costly LED lighting.

Ramsey added that he is extending a request for expressions of interest in St. Anne's and the rectory. He is looking for letters of interest and will hold an open house of both properties to those who have sent a letter.

Frank Abbondanzio asked the board to approve the newly renegotiated three-year lease with the Colle tenant, New England Foundation for Children. The board unanimously approved and signed the lease.

In other business Mark Fairbrother was appointed the regular BOS representative to the FRTA Advisory Board from July 1 until June 30, 2014, with Chris Boutwell as the alternate. Kevin Hart was appointed as Chestnut Hill representative to the Broadband committee until June 2014.

A permit to use Peskeompskut Park was granted to the Big Brothers Big Sisters for June 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. with a rain date of July 10. It will be an ice cream social.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

A Rash of Petty Larceny

Monday, 6/3

11:05 a.m. Report of sick woodchuck at Warner Street residence.
1:19 p.m. Report of loud music in Northfield Road area. Checked area. No music playing.
10 p.m. Dispatched to area of Dorsey Road. Report of subjects breaking & entering into vehicle, and other subjects chasing them.
11 p.m. Arrested [redacted]

for breaking & entering into a motor vehicle and larceny of under \$250.

Tuesday, 6/4

10 a.m. Report of dog bite on Briggs Street. Report taken.
11 a.m. Medical emergency at Farley Ledges for injured hiker. Assisted on scene with Erving Fire.
3:30 p.m. Report of loose dog on West High Street. Located same and advised owner of leash law and town dog registration.

Wednesday, 6/5

8:45 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Route 2 at Christina's. Removed same.
1 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for breaking & entering into a motor vehicle, larceny under \$250, and furnishing alcohol to a minor.
1 p.m. Criminal application issued to an 18-year-old for reckless operation of a motor vehicle, speed greater than

reasonable, leaving the scene of a property damage accident, disorderly conduct, and disturbing the peace.

Friday, 6/7

9 a.m. Criminal complaint issued to [redacted] for larceny of library materials under \$250.
9 a.m. Criminal complaint issued to [redacted] for larceny of library materials under \$250.
10:30 p.m. Medical emergency on East Main Street. Assisted on scene.
Saturday, 6/8
8:42 a.m. 911 call from Public Works Boulevard. Found to

be a problem with the phone line.

6:33 p.m. Report of gunshots in area of Mountain Road. Caller believes it may be someone target practicing.

7 p.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with suspended license, expired registration, and having failed to get her vehicle inspected.

Sunday, 6/9

8:15 p.m. Loose dog on Lillians Way. Owner to be contacted.
8:55 p.m. Neighbor dispute on State Road. Spoke with both subjects. Dispute was verbal.

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ZONING from page 1

In the progress of that case in Franklin Superior Court, Roberts and the ZBA were required to undertake mediation in closed session in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

Conditions for Possible Settlement

At the outset of Tuesday's hearing, the ZBA, with town attorney Donna MacNicol advising, outlined a list of conditions that Roberts and the board had arrived at as the basis for a possible settlement.

Those conditions included: that Roberts begin gravel mining operations at the west side of the Bryant land, beyond the power lines; that within a year he erect a berm, five foot high white fence and plantings to screen the operations from view of Route 63 and neighbors; that he mine no more than one contiguous acre at a time and "reclaim" one acre of mined land simultaneously, starting with his current gravel pit; that the depth of future mining not exceed the depth of his current pit (about 35 feet); that he provide a hard surface to the single access road, the one currently in use, to reduce dust; that he limit hours of operation to weekdays between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.; that no more than four trucks an hour or 18 trucks a day enter the site; that all equipment be stored out of sight when not in operation; and that mining, as it proceeds easterly toward Route 63, stop at a line 300 feet from the road.

A small, wedge-shaped triangle of land angling back to a point adjacent to the current pit was the subject of some dispute, as an exception to the 300-foot setback condition.

The proposed compromise failed to quell the neighbors' opposition. They argued that expanding operations at the site would lead to more noise and dust, detract from the

character of the neighborhood, and endanger the purity of the underlying aquifer.

Attorney MacNicol told the board the applicant would have to pass another hurdle, including an environmental impact assessment, to mine gravel on Bryant's land which is in an aquifer protection zone, even if the board settled the present suit and issued a special permit for the expansion.

Among the nine abutters who had prepared formal testimony for the board, two were ZBA members who had recused themselves from the special permit decision in 2010, due to their conflict of interest as abutters or near neighbors to the Roberts gravel pit.

A Recused ZBA Member Speaks

One of these, Richard Godsey, dispensed with written testimony on Tuesday to speak off the cuff to his fellow board members.

Godsey said, "I have lived here since 1969. I joined the ZBA in 1979, and have served as chair. I have a history with this property. Roberta's father had a gravel pit in back of the riding stables. In the early '80s, Roberta asked for permission for a soft serve ice cream stand she intended to call Sister Softee. I was disappointed when it wasn't there."

Godsey went on to talk about how Roberts acquired land adjacent to Bryant's property and gradually expanded gravel mining at the site, coming closer to Route 63. When neighbors complained about the increase of trucks and noise, the building inspector issued an opinion that the site was grandfathered in as a gravel pit that had not been discontinued for more than two years at a time. Three summers ago, Roberts stepped up use of the site, bringing fill from construction at UMass. At

this point, the building inspector issued a cease and desist order against the operations at the site, which led to Roberts' special permit request in 2010. Godsey called the increased truck traffic up and down Route 63 at that time "terribly disruptive."

Godsey said town attorney MacNicol at that time explained that the building inspector had been wrong in the earlier opinion that gravel mining was "grandfathered in" at Roberts' site. He said, and MacNicol confirmed on Tuesday, that under the zoning bylaws, a site is only grandfathered in its original footprint, and Roberts had already expanded the gravel pit far beyond the area Bryant's father had used.

"That changed the nature of the whole case," said Godsey. "We don't hear any more about grandfathering. Richie did it [expanded the operation] on good faith. The building inspector said it was grandfathered."

Godsey continued, "I'm going to ask you to say 'No,'" to further expansion of the gravel pit. "It will not be an injustice to Richie Roberts. He was able to expand once before with no conditions. Had he come to the board, there would have been conditions," in the prior expansion. "We would not have let him come so close to Route 63."

Godsey said he had viewed the contour of the current pit, and found it to be, "a very attractive site for gravel. It's level. It's clean. It's at least 35 feet deep. But it's not a good place for a gravel pit for Leverett."

"We've always looked at the interest of the town. I agree with the abutters' concerns about the traffic and noise. And the aquifer is a huge problem. We take it for granted we won't be like the West, where aquifers are drying up. Whatever happens, this has to be done very carefully. We gave Richie permission to

have his business at that spot with no conditions. But times change, and businesses change."

In a town characterized by short vistas of hills and forests, the Bryant land offers a unique viewscape of Mt. Toby. Godsey summed up, "It's a beautiful piece of land. It's a shame to lose it. You could still see Mt. Toby, but we'd have to wait for the next ice age to come to sweep enough gravel down to reclaim it. It's hard to say, 'No,' but the best thing you could do in this case is say, 'No.'"

Roberts, pointing to the site plan drawn up to reflect the proposed conditions of settlement, indicated the area in front of the riding circle, and said, "This is going to be field for years." He said the excavation of gravel from behind the riding ring, where gravel mining would be initially confined under terms of the proposed settlement, would take a long time to complete. "I'll never see the end of it."

Members of the ZBA will tour the site on Thursday at 11 a.m., and will meet again at 8 p.m. that same evening to deliberate on the proposed settlement, having had time to review the testimony of the abutters and the record of the November 2010 decision, as newly appointed ZBA member attorney Danielle Barshak had requested.

Legal Advice

MacNicol said a two-thirds majority (four yes votes among the five non-recused members) would be needed to settle the court case and to issue the special permit.

The abutters compiled a list of more stringent conditions for the ZBA to consider, including limiting hours of operation from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, and limiting truck traffic on the narrow, dirt, Jackson Hill Road, which provides the most direct route from Roberts' home to

the gravel pit.

Richie Roberts, Jr. said it was not possible to execute a right turn at the south end of Cave Hill Road, or to get certain equipment under the railroad bridge on North Leverett Road, leaving Jackson Hill Road as the only viable route to the family business.

Residents Speak

Residents of Jackson Hill Road spoke of being scared to drive to their homes, or bike or walk with their children, for fear of being run off the road by heavy machinery.

Richie Roberts said, "We do not speed on Jackson Hill."

Recused ZBA member Bruce Cohen, who also lives near the gravel pit on Route 63, said, "I can feel my house shake when the big trucks go by, gearing up and gearing down. It's a 210-year-old house."

He also said he would "obviously vote against" the proposed settlement, but for his conflict of interest. He added, "I see conflict of interest everywhere on this board."

His wife Tina said, "I feel the quality of our lives is being sacrificed for maximal profit by the Roberts. This is our neighborhood. We live here."

Blair Maerowitz, of 473 Long Plain Road, asked what the term reclamation meant in relation to the gravel pit. MacNicol explained reclamation would mean adhering to defined slopes down to the present approximately 35-foot depth, covering the strata there with four inches of topsoil, and reseeding it.

Maerowitz said he was in favor of entrepreneurship and supported local businesses, but asked the board to "consider this issue as a conflict of interests. I don't believe my community values the business interests of a few over the investments and lifestyles of its residents."



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Conflicts With Animals, And Among Humans

Sunday, 6/2
6:12 p.m. Assisted with a custody dispute on Second Street.
6:43 p.m. Fire investigation on Federal Street. Caller reported explosion sound, electric pole on fire, and a power outage. Fire Department and WMECO responded. Branch fell on the wire and caused a popped fuse.
Monday, 6/3
12 noon Officer wanted at Food City to identify a subject to file a trespass order.
1:12 p.m. Caller on Winthrop Street said her daughter was threatening to take her vehicle. Moments later, the daughter left in the vehicle and headed east on Route 2 at speeds of 80 mph, refusing to stop. Vehicle crashed in Templeton. Driver taken to the hospital in Gardner with minor injuries.
5:28 p.m. Loose puppy on Turnpike Road. Unable to locate.
6:06 p.m. Breaking & entering and burglary reported at

Fifth Street.
9:54 p.m. Neighbor disturbance at 79 Second Street. Peace restored.
Tuesday, 6/4
5:05 a.m. Caller reported a deer in the middle of Montague City Road near Farren Care Center, obstructing traffic. The deer moved along shortly.
8:06 a.m. Two separate 911 calls for domestic disturbance on Avenue A. Subject gone upon officers' arrival.
9 a.m. [redacted], arrested at his home at [redacted] on a straight warrant.
10:50 a.m. Caller reported his wife struck a deer at Routes 63 & 47, around 9:10 a.m. Caller advised to call from the scene of the accident when possible.
5:34 p.m. Larceny reported at 66 Second Street. Advised of options.
5:43 p.m. Larceny reported at Sheffield School. A bike was

stolen from a rack. Referred to an officer.
8:54 p.m. 911 call from Second Street. Confirmed it was a child playing with the phone.
9:21 p.m. Initiated warrant arrest on Maple Street.
Wednesday, 6/5
9:34 a.m. Trespassing reported on Migratory Way. Services rendered.
12:43 p.m. Caller reported seeing a photograph of a naked woman, on the ground next to a very large tree on First Street near Unity Park. Referred to an officer.
2:02 p.m. 911 call for a domestic disturbance near Walnut Street and Turnpike Road. Arrested a 20-year-old L Street resident for domestic assault & battery.
3 p.m. Young women or girls reported yelling obscenities at G and 11th Streets. They had dispersed upon officer's arrival.
5:58 p.m. Three teenaged girls reported trying to instigate a

fight on G Street. Dispute was over a boy two of them used to date. Girls advised not to return to the Patch that night. Officer also spoke with their parents.
6:51 p.m. Larceny of medication reported at the Franklin Emergency Shelter.
9:58 p.m. General disturbance involving underaged drinking reported on Turners Falls Road. Officer investigated, did not find underaged drinking.
10:01 p.m. Baby raccoons found on Fourth Street. Consulted with environmental police and advised caller of options.
10:30 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on corner of Greenfield and Hatchery roads. [redacted] arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor, failure to drive in the right lane, and operating to endanger.
Thursday, 6/6
2:39 a.m. Party sleeping in car

at old bridge abutment at First Street. No action needed.
3:59 a.m. General disturbance, [redacted] Fourth Street. Peace restored for now.
9:53 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Alice Street. Verbal only.
11:55 a.m. Larceny, [redacted] Fourth Street. Services rendered.
4:15 p.m. Dog attack reported, Hillside Avenue.
6:08 p.m. General disturbance, [redacted] Millers Falls Road. Peace restored.
6:25 p.m. Domestic disturbance, Fourth Street. Peace restored.
6:29 p.m. Summons issued for shoplifting at F.L. Roberts.
7:14 p.m. Caller from Seventh Street reporting son being bullied at school. Report taken.
Friday, 6/7
3:23 p.m. Accident with property damage reported in front of Scotty's. Citation issued for failure to use care in starting.
4:41 p.m. Minor two-car accident at School and Main Streets.
10:16 p.m. Hit and run accident in front of [redacted] Greenfield Road. Summons issued to a minor for leaving the scene of an accident

with personal injury.
11:21 p.m. General disturbance complaint in Millers Falls regarding idling train. Report taken. Contacted Pan Am.
Saturday, 6/8
2:06 p.m. Harassment prevention order violation reported on Turners Falls Road. Services rendered.
5:22 p.m. Summons issued to a minor on Millers Falls Road for speeding, and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.
9:46 p.m. Fight on Fourth Street. Investigated.
Sunday, 6/9
1:18 a.m. Larceny reported in alley between Third and Fourth streets. Report taken.
5:14 p.m. Animal complaint concerning pitbull in vicinity of Fifth Street. Referred to an officer.
8:35 p.m. Stop sign reported missing on Old Sunderland Road. Referred to another agency.
8:50 p.m. Sick skunk reported in driveway at 6 Main Street. Services rendered.

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EVERY SUNDAY

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

EVERY TUESDAY

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kiddleidoscope*, environmental program for ages 3-6 and their adults. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., free.

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

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

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

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

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

EVERY THURSDAY

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

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

ART SHOWS:

Great Falls Discovery Center: *Paintings & Photography by Nicole Werth*. Through June 30.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Ce-*

lestial Cafe featuring three-dimensional collage by artist *Emily Goodwin*. Now through June 22.

LOCAL EVENTS:

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Burrie & Friends*, progressive folk, 8 to 10 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Uncle Hal's Crab Grass Band*, funky-tonk. 8 p.m., free.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

Great Falls Coffeehouse, Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Mark Mandeville & Raienne Richards*, folk duo playing americana and old country. 7 p.m., free.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Juke Joint Jazz* with the *Joe Belmont Jazz Guitar Trio*. 8 p.m., \$ Flywheel, Easthampton: *Neutral Fixation, Blessed State, Sycamore, Mal Devisa, and Christian Businessmen*. Punk rock, local and touring. Substance free. All ages. 8 p.m., \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Eric French*, blues, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Ottomatic Slim*, chicago-style blues. 9 to 11:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Benny Lava Band*, classic rock. 9:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Something Else*, jazz-groove, with *AstroBeast*, afropop-inflected dance music, and *Sitting Next to Brian*, percussive pop. 9:30 p.m., free.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *The Wendell Misfit Prom*. Parade from Wendell Center at 6:30 p.m. This year's theme is "Wild Things." Deja Brew backyard admission is a \$15 donation, to benefit the Senior Center. No cover in the pub.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Brook Batteau*, alt. rock dance pop, with special guest *Al Giordino*. 7:30 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *The Boxcar Lilies*, CD release party. 8 p.m., \$

Pushkin Gallery, Arts Block, Greenfield: *deturtle*, fusing a jazz guitar trio with a classical string

trio for gorgeous, genre-busting fun. 8 p.m., \$

Montague Bookmill: *Diane Cluck*, Virginia-based singer-songwriter-guitarist, playing with cellist *Isabel Castellvi*. 8 p.m., \$

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rockit Queer*, dance party, with *DJ Funkadelic Fern*. 9:30 p.m., \$

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *AfterGlo*, current & classic rock. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Adam Bergeron*, instrumental, 3 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Northern Routes presents the *Black Twig Pickers*, appalachian old-time band from Virginia but on Thrill Jockey, with a weird welcoming committee consisting of *Matt Krefting, Aaron Rosenblum, and Byron Coley*. If you only see one show this week... 9 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *The Last Trio in Paris*, 8:30 to 10:30 p.m.



Virginia-based Black Twig Pickers bring their highly acclaimed, sometimes experimental take on old-time music to the Rendezvous this Sunday at 9 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 17

Flywheel, Easthampton: *Cheap Time (TN), Imaginary Pants (ex-Softies), and Longings* (new band from local bigshots). Punk, garage rock, pop. 8 p.m., \$

TUESDAY, JUNE 18

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Fancy Trash*, indie folk rock, with special guest *Wishbone Zoe*, indie junkyard rock. 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19

Evangelical Congregational Church, 4 East Main Street, Erving: *Massachusetts Walking Tour*, see pg. 1. 6 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Una Jensen*, pop rock, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Hidden Valley Memorial Forest, Wendell: *Massachusetts Walking Tour*, see pg. 1. 6 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Ted's Trio Jazz* with *Ted Wirt*. 7 p.m.

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

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

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Family Solstice Night* with *Stephen Katz, Jim Matus, Dan Kennedy*, and more. 5 p.m. to midnight, \$

Road, Montague: *Massachusetts Walking Tour*, see pg. 1. 7 p.m.

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Arthurian farce. 1975, PG, 90 minutes. Music at 7 p.m.: *Chris Scanlon & the Other Guys*, pop. Screening at 7:30 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *The Host*, indie, 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Carrie Ferguson Band*, melodic folk-pop, with Amherst sibling duo *June & the Bee*. 8 p.m., \$

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: Northern Routes presents *Land-ing, Area C, and High Aura'd*. Drones and jams from far-off lands. 8 p.m., \$

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

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Haste!*, gypsy punx, with *Bright Lines*, rockers. 9:30 p.m., free.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Groove Prophet*, classic rock. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: For the Sake of Song, multi-act music performance featuring *Patrick Coman, Jenée Halstead, and Susan Cattaneo*. 7:30 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Trailer Park*, "barbeque music" with saxophones, with *Becca and the Big Wigs*. 7:30 p.m., \$

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Arthurian farce. 1975, PG, 90 minutes. Music at 7 p.m.: *Rob McWilliams Project*, barbershop quartet. Screening at 7:30 p.m. \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Doug Hewitt Group*, classic rock dance party, 9 to 11:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *boomboom*, eclectic DJ dance party. 9:30 p.m., free.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Haywire*, country music. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Flint Blade & Honeydew*, mostly instrumental, 2:30 p.m.

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

MONDAY, JUNE 24

Peskeumpsut Park, Avenue A, Turners Falls: *Montague Community Band*, in the bandshell. Bring supper, blankets and lawn chairs. 7 to 9 p.m. Free.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Liberty Bell Project*, four singer-songwriters from Philadelphia, with *Bulldog*. 8 p.m., \$

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Katie Sachs*, Greenfield-based singer-songwriter, with *Wishbone Zoe*. 8 p.m., \$

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By LESLIE BROWN

While our garden space is primarily filled with vegetables, it has been my pleasure over the years to edge this growing plot with flowering perennials: Peony, Lily, Butterfly Bush, Iris, Baptisia and especially bush roses. My favorite is a red beach rose grown from the seed of a hip plucked at our honeymoon cottage over thirty-five years ago.

Now, of course, the existent bush is several generations of grandbabies later. Still, each year that there has been more dead growth to remove I have been heartened each spring by this hardy plant's production of new shoots. It is so vigorous this year as to be a whole new bush of fragrant, bright pink blooms. I can recommend this rose; it is very hardy and requires little tending. I have never fed it and simply cull out dead growth and the stray shoot of a small tree or weedy vine each year.

Imagine this plant growing in the sand at the edge of the ocean and you will have a notion of how hardy it is. Each year it sends out new shoots underground, thus perpetually creating a larger bush as well as replacements for those which have died back. I did wonder if they would miss the salt breezes and continuous moisture. Perhaps the summer's frequent foggy mornings here at the edge of the Connecticut have been an adequate substitute.

The growing method was simple: harvest the ripest red hip you can find, cut it open and pull out the seeds. Dry them on a paper towel until they can be readily separated from the flesh of the hip.

In the late fall, I cleared a planting site of weeds, pressed the seed into the dirt, covering it lightly with more soil. Then I covered this mini-greenhouse with a piece of roofing material to keep the seed pressed to the soil and to prevent cats, birds or any other interested parties from digging them up. Come spring I gently peeled back the roofing to reveal a score of tiny seedlings.

Overwintering cracked the seeds and encouraged sprouting, the other protections worked and we simply continued to tend our new seedlings

until they were well established. Voila, a beautiful bush commemorating a special time in our lives.

When you are traveling and encounter a new flowering plant of interest, there's no harm in trying to harvest a bit of seed to see if you can make it grow in your flower garden at home. Just check out the growing habit; if it spreads readily consider where and if you might want it in your yard.

A friend once gave me some Bee balm and I neglected to ask anything about it. As many gardeners already know, this is in the mint family and consequently spreads unbelievably. It has taken me years to pull it out to a level of containment in my perennial bed. On the up side, I planted many rejects near the roadway abutting my property, and this prolific bee and butterfly gatherer has delighted many who walked by as well as attracting pollinators to my garden.

Over the years we have also enjoyed planting English bush roses, especially those with high fragrance and the habit of repeated blooming. Our favorites so far are: Crocus rose, Sweet Juliet, Heritage and new last season, an old fashioned Moss rose. These beauties are hap-

py when I feed them with organic matter, but are not frumpy if I forget. They are all heavy with bloom now and will have a second spurt again at the end of the garden season. They are truly at their best now in apricot, pink and white, blemish free before the onslaught of Rose and Japanese beetles. Their heady fragrance enhances the time I spend on hands and knees weeding.

The peas are in bloom as are the strawberries (although we are snipping the strawberry blossoms this first year to allow all of the plant's energy to go into the growth of roots and leaves). We are still harvesting asparagus, thicker shoots now and seem to be ahead of the asparagus beetles as we harvest half a dozen new stalks each day but only two or three beetles.

We have certainly had plenty of rain! Last month, five and a half inches, so far this month another two and a half with a similar amount scheduled to fall tonight. Honestly, the tomatoes look a bit peaked; at least we know that when we leave home for a few days' camping soon, we needn't worry about the garden drying out.

However, it seems that of late the summers have been too wet and

cool for my tomatoes and the crop has been disappointing. Unfortunately these plants continue to take in water well beyond their need like an inveterate drinker with similarly poor results!

Do what you can to plant your tomatoes in an area with good drainage and then hope that Mother Nature provides more heat than rain. You can always water them when needed, but it's hard to wring them out or fake the sun if it doesn't appear.

Last weekend, two graceful young deer fed in the weeds at the edge of the yard. "More ticks!", my sister groaned when I told her about them, but I thought they were lovely. After they gracefully bounded elsewhere, I noticed an immensely obese woodchuck grazing on the clover which proliferates in the lawn. With our new fence in place I can afford to be relaxed with the wildlife right in the yard like members of the family.

These are all the challenges of the New England gardener: too much moisture, not enough; too hot and humid, too cool; chewing insects, munching varmints, and weeds, weeds, weeds. If these troubles sink you, you were not meant to be a gardener. Gardening in this country requires the fortitude of early settlers and the constant interest in finding a way to best them all next time.

Enjoy your successes and take your failures in stride and above all, happy gardening!

Gill Logs Feed the Canadian Market

By JOSEPH PARZYCH

Mike Stange and his son Zach of Athol have teamed up to operate a mechanized logging operation in a wood lot on Main Road in Gill, once Warren's pasture, now land of Patricia and Michael Hisz of Mountain Road. The Stanges first cut the trees off at the stump with a Bell feller-buncher, a four wheel drive tractor with hydraulic arms that grasp the tree trunk while a circular saw with fearsome teeth takes out huge bites of wood, felling the tree quickly. The machine operator then cuts the tree into log lengths.

Hemlock and certain other

logs lose their limbs to a de-limber, which snaps off the limbs flush with the surface of the log. Large branches require the Stanges to cut them off with chainsaws. Once the machine operator cuts the logs to the desired length, he bunches them for pickup with the huge tongs of the Stanges' John Deere 640 skidder, and skids them down to the roadside. For smaller logs the Stanges use their Valmet 544 X log carrier, equipped with tongs at the end of a swinging boom and a cradle in which to carry the smaller firewood logs. The Stanges use the Valmet carrier's tongs and boom to stack the logs at roadside.

Much of the Stanges' success depends on sorting and grading of logs. Hemlock logs are destined for shipment to Canada. Building inspectors in the U.S. don't allow builders to use native hemlock. The Canadians love hemlock, are willing to pay a premium price, and are looking to buy more.

Pine logs are also desirable in Canada. They are sawn into boards, or for millwork lumber for doors, windows, and trim, often returning to the U.S. as lumber, or finished goods. Canada is forested predominately with maple trees, whose leaf is the national symbol. Soft wood is scarce.

Former purchasing agent Mike Stange has a good grasp of merchandising his logs. Though logs generally bring more money on the Canadian market, certain types of logs bring more in the U.S., making sorting and grading an important part of the Stanges' operation.

Less desirable logs are considered "pallet grade," though they are often utilized for flooring as well as for making pallets. Some logs in this classification may go into firewood. Homeowners like smaller, 6" to 8" diameter logs for easier splitting. Firewood processors like larger logs for faster production. The wood processing plants quickly cut the firewood logs into stove lengths. The chunks drop down onto a conveyor belt that feeds them to a splitter, splitting the chunk into multiple pieces with one quick thrust of the splitting head. The pieces drop onto another conveyor, loading a truck with more processed firewood in a few minutes than a man can produce in days of manual labor.

Pulp logs go to Cersosimo Industries' processing and shipping plant in Brattleboro, Vermont. The logs are cleaned, de-barked, and chipped into wood chips for transport to pulp mills in Maine and New York State.

Some of the pulp may come back to paper mills in Massachusetts.

Crooked logs often go to Maine, Glen Falls, NY, or Fitzwilliam, NH for wood pellet manufacture, and may eventually be shipped back in 40 lb bags to places like Home Depot, Tractor Supply, hardware stores, and fuel oil companies in our area.

Mike Waterman of Northfield, MA, loads logs destined for Canada on his logging truck. He transports them to Richard French's yard on Main Road in Gill, to stockpile for loading onto tractor trailer trucks bound for Canada. Included in the stockpile for shipment to Canada are hemlock logs from a lot on land owned by Emily and Richard French on Mountain Road, being cut by Dan Lashway of Goshen, MA, according to Stange.

"So far, ash borers and long-horned beetles have not reached this area, yet," Stange said. "But they are wreaking havoc in the Worcester area." Entomologist William Wallner, a professor at Yale, testified before Congress, decades ago, about the threat of these invasive insects coming into the U.S. on wooden pallets with goods imported from China and other countries, and sought to get wood pallets banned. Corporate lobbyists wooed lawmakers into shooting the legislature down.



Mike Stange stacks logs with his Valmet 544X log transporter, on the woodlot of Patricia and Michael Hisz.

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