



On the  
Same Page  
with "March"

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Widening the Bridge  
On the Night  
Shift

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 10 - NO. 23

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 8, 2012

## At the Leverett Sugar House



JOEY PARZYCH PHOTO

Ted Telega tends the fire beneath the evaporator at his sugar house on Route 63 in Leverett earlier this week. Telega's family has been making maple syrup in the county for more than a century.

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH** - Steam poured out of the Leverett Sugar House on Route 63 on a sunny March day. Peering inside the steam filled room, I found Ted Telega tending the fire.

Telega began sugaring in 1936 with his father in Sunderland, next door to George Hubbard's house. Steve Hubbard eventually built a house on the site where that first sugar house once stood.

Telega didn't seem to regret the demolition of that first sugar house. "It wasn't that great a sugar house, more or

less a shack with a dirt floor," he remarked, as sweet steam swirled up around his ruddy features.

Telega's grandfather and great grandfather sugared, going back over 100 years. Now Telega's sons Ted and Danny are taking over, with the help of his daughter-in-law, Priscilla, who was busy bottling syrup. It looks like the Telega family will be sugaring for another 100 years.

This is a new sugar house, built in 2006.

"We had another old sugar see SUGAR pg 10

## Fukushima ONE YEAR AFTER



COURTESY OF KARV.RU

Overhead view of the destruction at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power complex in March of 2011.

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
**MONTAGUE** - One year after multiple explosions and meltdowns wrecked three out of six General Electric Mark I boiling water reactors at Fukushima Dai-ichi on the northeast coast of Japan, Tokyo Electric Power's damaged facility is a scene from a post-apocalyptic science fiction novel. Massive water circulation pumps and pipes and decontamination filtration systems run round the clock in an attempt to keep the melted mass of reactor fuel rods in the damaged cores continuously cooled, to stop further massive releases of radiation from being released into the air, ocean, and food chain.

Over a hundred thousand Japanese villagers, farmers and fishermen have permanently evacuated their ancestral villages in the aftermath of the March 11th, 2011 nuclear catastrophe at Fukushima. The region's dairy herds have been slaughtered and left to rot. Produce is trucked in from other parts of the country, as the area's staple rice crop is contaminated with long lived radioactive cesium-137.

Children are prevented from playing outdoors for long periods of time. The surface soil of their school playgrounds has been scraped up by bulldozers and buried in an attempt to

isolate some of the radiation that has fallen on cities and towns around the stricken reactors.

Tama University Professor Hiroshi Tasaka, a key advisor to former Japanese prime minister Naoto Kan during the Fukushima disaster, warned last month Fukushima is "far from over."

Tasaka said official assurances of the complex's alleged safety were based on "groundless opti-

**Aerial surveys show the elevated fuel storage pool at Unit Three appears to have entirely collapsed into the rubble of the containment building.**

see FUKUSHIMA pg 12

## Conrad Birdie Will Take Turners by Storm



EMILY MONOSSON PHOTO

Ken Leng as Hugo, Kayla Drumgool as Kim MacAfee, Jesse Langknecht as Conrad Birdie, Christopher Gordon as Albert, Brooke Martineau as Albert's mother and Lauren Grimard as Rose prepare to light up the TFHS stage in *Bye Bye Birdie*

**BY SAMUEL LETCHER**  
**GILL - MONTAGUE** - Hello, Birdie!

Conrad Birdie will roar into town as Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School present *Bye Bye Birdie*, a musical that promises a rocking good time.

Conrad Birdie, Elvis's quantum counterpart, will turn the town of Sweet Apple, Ohio (Turners Falls' not quite quantum counterpart) upside down for at least a few days.

The show's director, Scott Halligan, takes on the dual role of stage director and music director, a feat not attempted in our school's recent history.

Though Halligan undoubtedly has his hands full, being a first year teacher and a first year musical producer at TFHS, the show is right on schedule and will be sure to turn the audience into a bunch of "Snarling, panting, raging jungle beasts."

Well... if not that, they will

at least be induced to fits of laughter.

As per usual, the set design this year is phenomenal due to the diligence and artistic genius of Mark Mailloux, who has been responsible for the high school musical sets for as long as this writer can remember. But while the set pieces send you back to the 1950s, it is the actors' prowess that makes you believe you're there.

This year's production features six seniors, five of whom are returning to the stage from previous shows. Christopher 'Topher' Gordon takes on the lead role as Albert Peterson, Conrad Birdie's manager and the president of the Almaelou Record Company. It is Albert's muse, Rose Alvarez (Lauren Grimard, sophomore) who acts as the catalyst for the whole show when she figuratively picks a name out of a hat. Unsuspecting Sweet Apple resident Kim MacAfee (Kayla

Drumgool, junior) is suddenly launched into the turmoil that is Conrad Birdie (Jesse Langknecht, senior.)

While nearly all of Sweet Apple is wrapped up in 'Birdie Fever,' some members of the normally staid community are incensed at the idea of their wives and children fawning over a visiting rock star. One such upright citizen is Kim's own father, Harry MacAfee (ahem, Sam Letcher, senior) who is pushed nearly over the edge of insanity by the unraveling of his carefully structured life, and the assumed decampment of his wife, Doris (Angel Renaud, senior) to the legions of Birdie followers.

Transport yourself to a time before Tweets, Facebook, MTV and auto-tuners and join the fun with *Bye Bye Birdie*, (book by Michael Stewart; music by Charles Strouse; lyrics by Lee Adams) on March 16th, and 17th, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, March 18th, for a matinee at 1 p.m., at the Turners Falls High School. Tickets available at the door.

# PET OF THE WEEK I'm Lovin' It



## Mama Love

I'm a 6 year old female shorthair cat named Mama Love. I am the sweetest girl you'd ever want to meet!!!

I was surrendered to the adoption center because my family could no longer care for me. I've been living in an office here and absolutely loooovve people! I'm a real lap cat and love to be petted - I'll just sit on your lap and purrrrrrrrr.

I could live with a calm dog who will basically ignore me, but would prefer a home with no other cats. Cats make me nervous and I tend to overgroom myself when I'm feeling scared.

If I sound like the cat for you, please come visit me - you won't be sorry!!!

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

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## NEW SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

### Historical Presentation and Nature Programs

Saturday March 10th the Library will have extended hours. At 1:30pm, a presentation, "Remembering Our Past, The Road to Freedom" will be given. This is a special one-hour program tracing the Franklin County Abolitionist movement through the story of the Leavitt/ Dorsey family in 1880's Charlemont, MA. The story presented by Bambi Miller and Mary Boehmer starts with their ancestors' role in the Underground Railroad using old letters, town records, deeds, books, daguerreotypes and memorabilia. There will be a Q & A and refreshments.

March 13th, 20th, 27th, & April 3rd, 2012 from 3:30 - 4:30 a children's program

"Nature Detectives" featuring Dawn Marvin Ward will be presented (Rain or Shine!) Explore the wonders of the world of nature.

March 13th: *Tracking Tricks*  
March 20th: *Who's Hiding There?*

March 27th: *Animal Architects*  
April 3rd: *Nature Hike/Mural*

Pre registration is required. Contact Gillian Budine, Community Network for Children Program Coordinator at 978-544-5157 or Budine@erving.com by March 12th. Provide the name of your child, age, and phone number. If they are riding the bus from Swift River School a note must be provided to the school.

## CARNEGIE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

### Dinosaur Days

TURNERS FALLS- Fifty people attended the "Dinosaur Days" program at the Carnegie Library on Saturday, March 3rd. Dawn Marvin Ward discussed dinosaur information, and then the participants

enjoyed a number of activity stations. The program was funded by the Montague Cultural Council, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



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## SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES - March 12th to 16th

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

**Monday, March 12th**  
AARP Taxes by appointment  
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic by appointment  
10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle  
**Tuesday, March 13th**  
10:30 a.m. Seated Health Program  
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting  
1:00 p.m. RAD Class  
**Wednesday, March 14th**

9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic by appointment  
10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
11:15 a.m. Friends' Meeting  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, March 15th**  
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi  
1:00 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, March 16th**  
10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

**ERVING** Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For Center and program information, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at 413-423-3649. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at 413-423-3308, for meal information and reservations. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Please call the Senior Center to confirm activities, schedule and to find out when the next blood pressure clinic will be held.  
**Monday, March 12th**  
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi



Swan on the canal on Migratory Way.

## Leverett Hosts Union 28 4th - 6th Graders to Celebrate Reading

**BY PATRICIA PRUITT** - On Friday, March 9th, from 5:45 - 8:15 p.m. students from Swift River and Shutesbury elementary schools will gather at the Leverett Elementary School to celebrate their joy in reading a minimum of five books out of 25 titles selected as worthy of the Massachusetts Children's Book Awards.

Fourth, fifth and sixth grade readers from the three schools will join the party for an evening of games and thought provoking activities based on the books themselves. For example, one fifth grade teacher has developed a wacky ball game to be played in the gym, based on the book *Zorgamazoo*, written completely in rhyme.

Prior to this evening of celebration, readers at the three schools engaged in a Battle of the Books that had students frame questions to test other students' knowledge of their reading. A correct answer earned the student a point. Eventually each school had a high scorer. These readers then continued the Battle of the Books with the winners from the other two schools via Skype.

Parents contribute to the festivities in a number of ways. Beyond supplying refreshments

for hungry, thirsty readers, parents will also participate in activities linked to specific books. One parent will be a palm reader based on the book, *If You're Reading This Too Late*. Another will tell fortunes based on the title, *The Magic Elephant*. Yet another will teach card tricks.

Susan Wells, the Leverett Elementary librarian, says this has been a great party for several years running. She wished to acknowledge the donations of several businesses that help make it possible: the Leverett Village Coop; Stop & Shop; Big Y; Panda East; BJ's; and Hannaford's of Orange.

It was evident from Wells' enthusiastic description of Friday's event that a grand celebration of reading was in the cards for the students from Leverett, Shutesbury, and Swift River.

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JESSICA LARVIN ILLUSTRATION

## Local Briefs

**COMPILED BY DON CLEGG** - Dr. Seuss Literacy Night will be held at the Sheffield School on Tuesday, March 20th, at 6:30 p.m. Families will listen to guest readers in Dr. Seuss stovepipe hats who will share literacy and art activities with the children. In the second half hour, families will proceed to the auditorium for a reading of *The Little Yellow Trolley Car* by local author Marie Bartlett, who will share her experiences in writing the book. Dr. Seuss's birthday cake will be served in the cafeteria and each family will go home with a copy of *The Little Yellow Trolley Car*. The evening is funded by the Gill-Montague Education Fund and Title I.

**Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity** will be holding a volunteer orientation and build-

ing party on March 17th in the community room of the Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A, in Turners Falls from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. This orientation will provide an overview of Habitat's work in the Valley, and present people with options on how to get involved. After the orientation, there will be an opportunity to join a community work party at a Habitat home in Montague City, to help with painting or hanging dry wall from 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

On Saturday, March 10th, residents living downstream from the Vermont Yankee nuclear facility will be commemorating the anniversary of the Fukushima disaster and calling for Vermont Yankee to be shut down. The event, called "Downstreamers Remember

**Fukushima,"** organized by the Sunderland Safe Energy affinity group of the SAGE Alliance, will start at 1:00 p.m. at the corner of Route 47 and Route 116 in Sunderland.

Participants in the rally will walk across the bridge in a symbolic expression of what the river means to downstreamers and the importance of protecting the river from the dangers of the nuclear plant located just a few miles upstream. Speakers will address the topic of closing Vermont Yankee on schedule this year. For more information, call Emily at 413-422-1169.

On Sunday, March 11th, from 9:15 a.m. until 9:30 a.m. on the town common, the Wendell based Water, Roots and Branches affinity group is observing the first anniversary of the global disaster at Fukushima, Japan. The gathering will begin in silence. The public is invited to offer a poem, song or prayer. If you like, wear white in solidarity with the people of northern Japan.

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

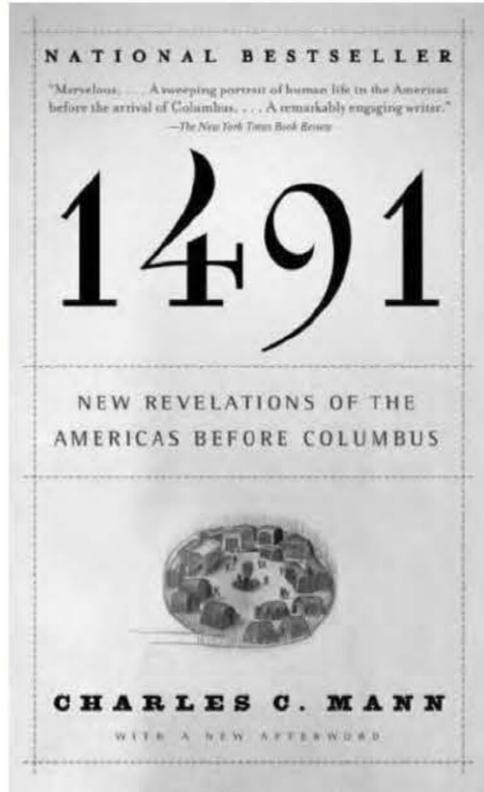
## Sustainable Agriculture in Pre-Columbian America

**JONATHAN VON RANSON AMHERST** - Before Columbus's arrival, the Americas as a whole, including our own East Coast, were largely pastoral. Hardly the deeply forested, modestly hunted and foraged wilderness some of us picture. On the southern continent, the Amazon basin con-

tinents... starting 450 years ago. That was the real onset of globalization.

New research, assembled into a best-selling 2005 book by Charles C. Mann, *1491 - New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus*, shows pre-Colonial civilization in the New World to be sophisticated, assertive and widespread. Some, including the author, feel the long-buried facts may point to new possibilities of ecological sustainability.

In an information-packed but highly accessible talk on March 6th at UMass, Mann, who lives in Amherst, conveyed data from the last 30 years of anthropological and archeological research, much of it in North and South America. This description replaces the Eurocentric and Christian perspectives that have bleached much of the local color out of our history texts. What happened,



tained vast, heavily farmed areas for thousands of years before it became the monolithic rainforest we idealize and try to protect and recover today.

And while you're adjusting your pre-Columbian picture, consider that a Peruvian mountain of silver, along with rubber from two latex-producing plant varieties native to South America, precipitated an upheaval involving slavery and deforestation that shook five

Mann suggests, is that Western ethnographers and historians misrepresented native practices, then popular culture compounded the error by idealizing them.

Early in his talk Mann referred to physicist Richard Feynman, who said, "Nobody understands quantum physics. That's why we're studying it."

Mann added, "Nobody understands sustainability. I don't really understand it, I just try to offer see SUSTAINABLE pg 10

## Retired Montague Police Chief Tapped for Grand Marshal

**BY MICHAEL NELSON MONTAGUE** - Retired police chief Ray Zukowski has been retired for a few months now, but his 36-year presence in the town has not at all been forgotten. On Saturday, April 14th, Zukowski will be celebrated as the Grand Marshal in the second annual Franklin County Spring Parade.

By coincidence, the parade will pass one of Chief Zukowski's landmark achievements during his long service. For decades the deteriorating police department was housed in the basement of the town hall. In 2010, the new Montague safety complex on Turnpike Road was completed. The parade participants will march by the front door of the

new safety complex, and salute Chief Zukowski for his many achievements.

The parade will take place April 9th, on the Hill in Turners Falls. It will make a three mile loop, beginning at 1 p.m. at Sheffield School on Crocker Avenue. The parade will take a left onto Montague Street, left again on Turnpike Road, past the Turners Falls High School, and take a left onto Millers Falls Road. At Scotty's Convenience Store, the parade will turn left onto High Street and end back at Sheffield.

Residents who live along the route are encouraged to invite friends and family over to watch the parade from their front yards.

Think of it as Super Bowl Sunday, except the action is live in your front yard, a perfect occasion for a barbecue with friends.

Organizations interested in being a part of the parade should contact Nelson at 413-522-0712 or [michaelnelsonmba@aol.com](mailto:michaelnelsonmba@aol.com).



Police Chief Ray Zukowski

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## Drone Warfare on the Increase

BY JIM CASON

WASHINGTON, DC - The Iraq War was a disaster, so the United States needs a new foreign policy. Instead of invading foreign countries with tens of thousands of troops and trying to occupy and control the political process, President Barack Obama has embraced a new foreign military policy relying on "unmanned" drones and limited counterinsurgency forces.

The poster child for this new war effort is the ongoing U.S. military action in Pakistan. But Washington has also dramatically expanded the use of armed, unmanned military drones in East Africa and part of the Arabian Peninsula. The Congressional Research Service reports that our military has more than 7,000 drones in its arsenal.

The arguments for drones are easy to make. In an era of federal budget deficits, drone warfare is cheaper than deploying soldiers, and apparently has widespread public support - 83% of people interviewed in a February 2012 ABC News/Washington Post poll said they approved of the president's use of drones strikes to kill "terrorists."

The Obama administration's new military strategy released earlier this year calls for shrinking the number of troops and relying more on drones and small-footprint military interventions. Following a series of interviews with administration officials, the journalist David Rohde dubbed this the new "Obama doctrine."

Before embracing this new strategy, Congress should consider its consequences. Our country doesn't need a new era of secret wars with armed, military drones as the leading edge of covert or semi-covert military campaigns around the world. Yet that's what we are getting. The operations that have been reported in the media include Somalia, Yemen, and of course Libya.

And the results now include the extrajudicial killings, without charge or trial, of U.S. citizens.

The explanation usually provided is that these were really bad people. "I want to make sure that people understand that drones have not caused a huge number of civilian casualties," President Obama declared in January. "For the most part, they have been very precise, precision strikes against al-Qaeda and their affiliates."

Leaving aside the fact that people in Pakistan would dispute his count of civilian casualties, this is a slippery slope. We're a nation of laws, not a nation of assassins. We have these laws precisely because we don't want the president to become judge, jury, and executioner. What's more, we don't even know the scale of these killings because they are almost all secret. When Sen. Ron Wyden asked for details about the legal basis for using drones to kill U.S. citizens in another country, the Justice Department refused to provide details in public.

Rohde saw the impact of drones firsthand during the seven months he spent as a Taliban captive in the tribal areas of Pakistan. He has concluded that the Pakistani state is failing and the Obama administration's drone war is only making things worse. "Pakistan is more unstable today than it was when Obama took office," he writes in the latest issue of Foreign Policy. "And the percentage of Pakistanis supporting the use of the Pakistani Army to fight extremists in the tribal areas...dropped from 53% in 2009 to 37% today."

In Yemen, Obama's drone strikes have increased the ranks of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula from 300 fighters in 2009 to more than 1,000 today.

Washington now seems intent on exporting this same strategy to East Africa, where



KHALIL BENDIB CARTOON, OTHER WORDS.ORG

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Interim Superintendent Was Informed of the Timing of the Hiring Process

We take exception to the statements made in last week's *Montague Reporter* by the Gill-Montague School District's Interim Superintendent Nadine Ekstrom. Ms. Ekstrom stated that she was forced to look for other employment opportunities because the GMRSD school committee was "taking too long" to offer her a new contract. In fact the process for hiring a permanent Superintendent has been known since last summer. The school committee would complete an evaluation of the interim by February and then decide on a process for hiring a permanent

Superintendent. We did not agree with this process (we thought member towns should be involved) but the basic time frame was well known. The evaluation time line was in the interim's contract. In fact the school committee is ahead of that schedule. We heard no complaints from the Interim Superintendent until now.

If Ms. Ekstrom feels the need to apply for jobs elsewhere that is certainly her right. Indeed it makes sense - why should she limit herself to the GMRSD? But she should not blame the school committee for her decision. The

issue of the superintendent's contract has become an emotional one, with certain staff members passionately supporting her and some town officials believing their requests to be part of the process have been ignored. Blaming the school committee for her decision to look elsewhere adds fuel to the fire.

- Jeff Singleton

- Marg Levenson, Montague  
*Jeff Singleton and Marg Levenson are members of the Gill-Montague school committee. Their opinions do not necessarily reflect the position of the school committee.*

## No G-M Funds Used for Student Trip

I appreciate your reporting for our towns and, in this case, the GMRSD school committee meetings. It was fun to see my Nature's Classroom trip permission referred to, and the nod for differentiation from the chair in the March 1st issue of the paper, about the February 28th school committee meeting.

I am a proud of our fundraising efforts, which help my students earn at least half (and sometimes all) of the funds needed for the trip.

I believe fundraising for a goal is an important life lesson, and many other lessons are

learned in the process. We do a fair amount of fundraising and parents pay the balance of the cost of the trip. Some years the PTO has provided for the bus, or for part of it.

The committee voted approval of the trip to the Sargent Center in New Hampshire, in April, but not funding for the trip, as the article stated. No district budget funds are used for this trip.

Thank you for your good work.

- Joanne Flagg  
 Gill Elementary 6th Grade Teacher

the Obama administration is using a combination of drone strikes and mercenary trainers for East African military forces to help stabilize Somalia.

Rather than relying on a new type of military force, the Obama administration needs to invest in more diplomacy, development, and international cooperation. Unlike drones, they are proven tools for building peace.

*Jim Cason writes for the Friends Committee on National Legislation, a Quaker lobby in the public interest. (www.fcnl.org) This article was distributed by OtherWords (OtherWords.org)*

## U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan as of 3/7/12

Wounded:	Deaths:
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**GUEST EDITORIALS**

**Genocide in Limbo**

*In response an earlier article about Democracy under Duress in Turkey, (MR X #21) filed from Istanbul by Montague town meeting member Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno, Jan Atamian, a town meeting member from Lake Pleasant, sends the following short memoir.*

**BY JAN ATAMIAN**

**LAKE PLEASANT** - Amidst the long picnic tables, covered with white linen, sit platters of Armenian pilaf, shish kebob, dolma, and spicy lehmeyan. All their tantalizing odors rise up in the summer heat. My mother Helen loved attending the Armenian picnics, usually held on the green lawns of an Armenian church. Here, the older relatives could mingle and speak Armenian freely, catching up on family gossip and news. Held under a white, canvas tent, the music from the oud player was mysteriously hypnotic to my ear. I watched, fixated on the people dancing, pinkies hooked, creating a winding snake-like formation.

As a kid, if I saw something different or unusual, I took my time and quietly stared, observing the scene. I soon learned it is not always complimentary to have a curious nature, when it comes to looking at people.

Back at the Armenian picnic, I

spy a small, frail, elderly woman with a purple colored, scarred arm, perhaps from a burn. Again, I stared, and turned to my mother, who whispered, "It was the Turks."

She was whispering about the Armenian massacres of 1915, but as a young girl I was left to wonder, what did she mean?

Here was my introduction to the sense of sadness and loss my people bear, a feeling I would learn to carry in my subconscious, like a weight, a resentful burden, leading to melancholy. And so, 96 years after the Armenian genocide, first and second generation Armenians still carry around the red torch of anger. I tell myself, "If you are wise, you will learn to channel this anger into a productive project," after hearing my president, whether it be Clinton, or Bush, cough, cough and sadly, pass on to another topic, as Obama did, choosing not to tell the Turkish government to come out of their draconian dark denial and recognize their past deeds.

If the details of the Armenian Genocide go unrecognized, surely the world regretfully remembers Hitler's famous horrendous words. Announcing his plan of mass destruction to his cabinet, one officer said, "If you wipe out

all the Jews, what will history say about you?"

Hitler replied, without a moment's hesitation, "Who any longer remembers the extermination of the Armenians?"

The cabinet agreed, and decided to proceed with their diabolical plan.

Not long ago, House speaker Nancy Pelosi was quoted in the N.Y. Times saying she was reconsidering her pledge to force a vote on a resolution condemning as genocide the mass killing of Armenians starting in 1915, as then president George W. Bush intensified his push to derail the legislation. The nonbinding proposal "angered" Turkey, and raised fears that the Turkish government would reduce its strategic cooperation with the United States.

Bush said, "With all those pressing responsibilities, one thing Congress should not be doing is sorting out the historical record of the Ottoman Empire. Congress has more important work to do than antagonizing a democratic ally in the Muslim world, especially one that is providing vital support for our military every day."

I put the paper aside, and recalled an art exhibit of mine from 1992, entitled, "My Secret Garden." Surrounded by paint-

ings depicting family members, from past to present, drawings of myself in spaghetti, a self-portrait wearing a collaged mask, holding a family tree, it's roots nurtured in genocide, and a sculpture of my Auntie Serpouhi, I paused to take a breath.

Picking up an old press release from the Hampden Gallery, I read, "Atamian's Armenian grandparents escaped the Turkish massacres of 1915-1918, and came to this country like wounded animals, too weak to tell their stories. Consequently, her parents only learned of the genocide through hushed whispers and dark secrets."

The show and garden installation quietly spoke for itself. The local press wrote many culturally curious articles with headlines like: "Seeds for Secret Garden First Sown in Armenia." "My Secret Garden Harvests Emotions," or "My Secret Garden Shows Atamian's Inner World." I was happy I had had my say, and that historical facts about the genocide were printed in each article.

A year after the exhibit, in 1993, my grandfather's sister, Serpouhi Mekatarian, the last family member to survive the Armenian genocide, passed away. Serpouhi once had a large family with many animals, in her rural village in Armenia.

As her hands rolled out the buttery pavash, a hand-made filo

dough recipe, I listened to her story. She witnessed the killing of many of her family members and consequently was forced to follow the Turkish death marches across the desert, losing her left eye.

Somehow, she made it to Damascus, Syria.

I recall staring at her glass eye, which sometimes rested in a watery solution on her bureau. In broken English, Serpouhi spoke slowly and sadly. I imagined each memory for her to be like a sharp knife, piercing her heart.

An Arabic speaking family saw she was starving and took her in. For the next five years, she lived safely, working as their servant, and eventually learned to speak Arabic herself.

The ceramic sculpture which honored her journey to this country, a country which does not openly acknowledge the murder of her family and the genocide of her people, rests serenely in my flower garden, surrounded by pink roses, black-eyed Susans, bee balm, lilies, sunflowers and basil.

I guess you might say she has found a permanent home in my garden, rising ghost-like from the earth. She is no longer a secret. Her surface, once painted, is now weathered from blistering ice and snow, endless spring showers and intense summer heat. She is a living monument to all the untold stories.

**It Could Happen Here:**

**Mock Evacuation and Public Forum on**

**One Year Anniversary of Fukushima Nuclear Disaster**

**VERNON** - On March 11th, one year after the disastrous earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdowns in Fukushima, Japan, the SAGE Alliance will be conducting a mock evacuation from Vermont Yankee in solidarity with the people of Japan. Said organizer Nancy Braus, "We will be thinking especially of those 100,000 people exiled from their homes, maybe forever, within the 13-mile radius around the Fukushima reactors."

Those who wish to take part in the evacuation will meet at 12:45 p.m. at the Transportation Center on Flat Street in Brattleboro with their "evacuation gear," including

baby buggies, backpacks, and rolling suitcases.

School buses will transport participants to the Vermont Yankee gates. From there, 'evacuees' will assemble with their strollers, roller bags, backpacks, and other evacuation items, as well as signs and banners, and then walk the six miles from Vermont Yankee to downtown Brattleboro. Once in Brattleboro, food and drinks will be served to walkers at the River Garden, at 153 Main Street.

At 5:00 p.m., a public forum on Fukushima and Vermont Yankee will be held at the River Garden. Arnie and Margaret Gundersen, nationally respected consultants on

nuclear issues, will present an update and analysis on conditions at Fukushima and discuss the response to the meltdowns of the Japanese government and nuclear industry one year later, the implications of Fukushima for U.S. reactors, including Vermont Yankee, and the impact of radiation from Fukushima on public health in the U.S. The forum will also include a talk by Ms. Chiho Kaneko of Hartland, VT, who will give an eyewitness report about life in the aftermath of Fukushima in the area around the reactor, and in Japan as a whole.

Please come to both events.  
- Leslie Sullivan Sachs  
Brattleboro, VT

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG**

**Suspicious Vehicles Moved Along**

**Monday, 2/27**

7:45 p.m. Searched area of French King Bridge for intoxicated party; subject not located.

10:45 p.m. Restraining order concern from Riverview Drive resident.

**Tuesday, 2/28**

6:20 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle reported on Ben Hale Road. Subject located and moved along.

4:30 p.m. Reported breaking and entering at French King Highway residence; under investigation.

**Wednesday, 2/29**

10:15 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle reported on Center Road; identified and moved along.

10:40 a.m. Motor vehicle complaint on Main Road; follow up required.

1:40 p.m. Animal complaint on Center Road. Animal located and owner to deal with same.

4:55 p.m. Suspicious activity reported at French King Highway residence; under investigation.

**Thursday, 3/1**

10:00 a.m. Traffic hazard on Main Road at River Road. Motor vehicle moved out of roadway; domestic situation.

10:40 a.m. Motor vehicle off roadway on West Gill Road, no injuries. Assisted with wrecker service.

11:35 a.m. Assisted resident on Main Road with a locked vehicle.

**Friday, 3/2**

2:35 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police department with motor vehicle accident.

3:00 p.m. Motor vehicle complaint on Main Road in center of town.

6:05 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on Dole Road; no injuries.

**Saturday, 3/3**

12:40 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with elderly party suffering from dementia on Turners Falls Road.

**Sunday, 3/4**

6:20 p.m. Welfare check requested for resident on Main Road. Checked; OK.

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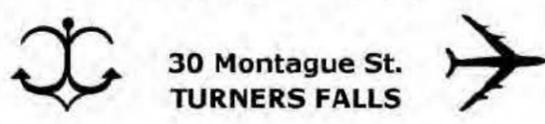
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## NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

### Shea Theater Hopes to Cut Lighting Costs

*"It's time to play the music. It's time to light the lights."*

— *Muppet Theme Song*

BY JANEL

**NOCKLEBY** - The Shea Theater hopes to go as Green as Kermit the Frog with new LED stage lights that would dramatically decrease electricity use with each rehearsal and performance at the theater.

The current lighting system is like "having 16 to 20 heaters in the ceiling during the heat of the summer." Shea board member Bart Dotty told the selectboard on Monday night.

The Shea Theater building is a town-owned property, so infrastructure spending at the theater must be approved by town meeting. Light-emitting diode (LED) technology improvements are now affordable enough for the Shea to consider. If installed at an approximate cost of \$10,500, an LED system for stage lights at the Shea could easily save at least 50 - 70% of the theater's electricity costs, Dotty said.

The Shea's typical electric bill is about \$1000 a month, added Shea board member Robin Paris.

The selectboard recommended the Shea seek bids on an LED system, and sort out any open technical questions regarding the proposals they've already received. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio will work with the Shea board to make sure those open questions are answered, and help draft a warrant article for town meeting this spring.

Dotty explained the additional benefits of an LED system would be less need for air conditioning, since LED lights do not generate much heat, increased longevity of the lighting system itself, due to less of an electrical load, increased safety since the

lights are not hot, and a reduction in labor costs since setting up the lights for each performance would be simplified backstage.

Dotty was also hopeful that once funding was secured at town meeting, federal Green initiative funds or WMECO grants could be secured for the project, alleviating some of the cost to the town.

Paris described the status of the Shea Theater as "We're doing OK, but utility costs are killing us."

Paris said the Shea is getting by "on a month-to-month basis," but she was optimistic that new members of the Shea board, like Dotty, were bringing much needed technical knowledge to managing the theater. The selectboard, Abbondanzio, and the Shea board members present also speculated that with an LED system, it would be much easier to cover the electricity needs of the theater with a solar array on the roof in the future.

Maybe it is easy being Green.

In other news, Fairbrother suggested that a motion to allow remote participation at selectboard meetings for board members via phone or video or internet be tabled for now, since Allen was not there to vote on the issue, and he was disinclined to vote in favor of the proposal. If eventually approved, other town boards would also be allowed to have remote participation in meetings.

The selectboard, acting as personnel board, approved filling a vacancy at the water pollution control facility. A laborer position has now been posted as a vacancy at the rate of \$13.67 per hour.

Interim police chief Chris Williams presented two requests for reserve fund transfers, based on a re-evaluation of spending needs at the police depart-

ment. Increased gasoline prices have made a big impact to the vehicle supplies and maintenance line item of the budget, Williams explained.

He anticipated needing \$6000 to cover gasoline costs through the end of the fiscal year, and an additional \$6000 for ongoing maintenance to police systems, since some unexpected costs have recently come up, such as the need to replace a radio system board, at a cost of \$1900, and software updates pegged at \$1600. The board approved the request.

In other police news, a \$20,000 grant has been secured to help alleviate costs for the dispatch department, including helping to provide better pay rates and benefits. A stipend was approved by the selectboard for new part time temporary hire Josh Hoffman at a rate of \$25 per month, to cover cell phone costs. Williams described cell phones as an important tool in police work, especially in the field and in emergencies.

Stanley Zera Jr. has been appointed to the Montague Housing Authority, filling a vacancy left by Robert Martin. Zera's term will last for three months.

The selectboard voted to approve continuing to work with the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority to administer the town's applications for Community Development Block Grants in 2013. "They've been helping us for three decades," Abbondanzio said.

Abbondanzio also reported on the results of a combined department of public works and waste water treatment plant staff election on union representation. The vote was tied between the Teamsters Union and the United Electrical Workers Union, so another vote will need to be held.

## NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

### Dog Complaint Takes Up Lion's Share of Meeting

BY JOSH HEINEMANN  
The February 29th selectboard meeting was dominated by a dog hearing.

Selectboard chair Christine Heard recused herself, as a relative of one of the complaining parties, so selectboard member Dan Keller chaired the hearing.

Perhaps due to the falling snow, only one complaining party came to the meeting, Heard's son-in-law, John Fitzgerald.

Dog officer Maggie Houghton said the complaints began in August about three unlicensed dogs belonging to Andrew Hamilton. She said she has called Hamilton three times, and left three messages, and has never received a return call. The dogs have been running free, harassing neighbors' chickens, going into other yards and intimidating children and running out after people walking on the street.

Hamilton came into the hearing wearing full overalls and high winter boots from a day in the weather. He said, "I don't have a phone, so who are you calling?"

He said he has nearly finished installing an electric fence for the dogs, but he has been having trouble trying to get several used chargers to work and produce enough voltage to hold the dogs in.

Hamilton said with the snowstorm going on outside the town office windows, he would be able to make enough money plowing to buy a new charger.

Since he got the letter from the dog officer, the dogs have been restrained, "except for some minor bolting."

Though he said he had no phone, Hamilton added he had heard only two complaints, and asked, "Is this the standard? Two

complaints, and then a hearing?"

Houghton listed the complaints. She repeated she had left three messages at a telephone number given to her by one of his plow customers.

Hamilton said his phone had been out of commission all winter.

Fitzgerald said he has had an issue with Hamilton's dogs almost every day for three weeks, although the last five days have been better.

One of the dogs, a black one, knocked a woman down. Hamilton said he was watching, and saw no dog knocking anyone down.

Heard, speaking as a witness, said that once the dog came at her, and though Hamilton was yelling the dog did not respond.

Hamilton said the dogs are still learning to respond to voice command. He generally trains them and walks them off leash only in the back of his property, where they are not distracted by other people, and where there are no other people they can bother.

Asked by Keller what she recommended Houghton said, "Some clarity." The dogs must be licensed, and, until the electric fence is finished and operating, the dogs must be on a leash or inside at all times.

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser said the complaints seem chronic and serious. He asked Hamilton, "What do you think should happen if tomorrow a dog jumps up on someone?" Hamilton answered, that it depends on the circumstances. He said the electric fence is tight to the house in front, and all he needs is a charger which he will get after the snowstorm earns him some money from plowing,

but this is maple syrup season (his other money making work, and which demands full time attention).

As chair, Keller said that all the dogs must be licensed by March 7th, and the fence must be working by the end of the week. One more complaint and the dogs will have to leave town.

Hamilton asked for Houghton's telephone number because he had complaints about another dog's incessant barking.

School committee members Johanna Bartlett and Dick Baldwin arrived. When the hearing ended, they asked that Fitzgerald be appointed for a two month term on the school committee to fill a vacancy. Elections are in May and in order to keep that seat he will have to be voted in.

In other news, the selectboard considered, but did not necessarily decide on a special meeting Wednesday March 7th to sign a contract with Seaboard Solar of Danbury, CT. The contract is not ready, but in general terms, Wendell would act as host municipality for a ten megawatt solar installation that Seaboard would build, not necessarily in the borders of the town.

As host, Wendell would pay a reduced rate on its municipal electric bills, and get compensated for the electricity Seaboard Solar sells elsewhere, but the ten megawatts of net metering gain Wendell might get if it built its own local solar array would be used up.

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser said members of the town's energy task force felt they had been excluded from discussions with Seaboard Solar and should be informed and included in any more discussions involving that

see WENDELL pg 11

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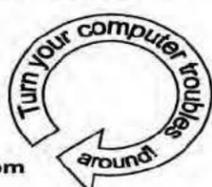
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**NOTES FROM ERVING SELECTBOARD**

**Selectboard, Spare that Building**

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
On Monday, March 5th, the Usher Mill re-use committee asked the Erving selectboard for more time to make a presentation to annual town meeting, on May 9th, in an attempt to save the historic boiler building and chimney at the former Usher Mill site, on Arch Street in Erving Center, from the wrecking ball.

The town is due to take possession of the Usher Mill site for back taxes in mid-March from the current owner, Patriots Environmental, a salvage firm out of Worcester that has already stripped the mill complex of valuable materials for the resale market.

Patriots Environmental has not paid the town any taxes on the property since they took possession of the former shoe factory, following a devastating arson fire at the site on July 30th, 2007. That fire destroyed two of the main buildings on site, and these have since been torn down.

The salvage firm has not secured the site adequately to prevent trespassers, despite repeated orders from the county building inspector and town fire chief to do so.

At last year's annual town meeting, Erving voters approved spending \$500,000, to demolish structures and clean up the approximately four acre site.

Last month, the selectboard authorized the consulting firm of Tighe and Bond to prepare a bid document for demolition of all other structures at the mill complex, except for the boiler building and its chimney.

This week, the selectboard agreed to give the Usher Mill reuse committee: Linda Downs-Bembury, Jeff Dubay, Sarah Vega-Liros, Gary

Burnett, and Jeanie Schermesser, a chance to make a pitch to the annual town meeting to save the boiler building. The boiler building, which resembles two concrete and brick barns attached together, topped by clerestory windows, is approximately a century old, 90 feet square, with a single main story on one side, and smaller rooms, along with the mills original boiler and smokestack, on the other side.

The reuse committee proposes that the town should essentially mothball the building, after replacing the roof at cost estimated by Tighe and Bond of \$270,000. Committee member Jeff Dubay, a contractor in private life, calls that figure "inflated," and said he would jump at the chance to repair the leaking roof and secure the building for \$50,000.

In future years, the committee hopes the town will be able to secure grant funds to renovate the building, which the committee believes has the potential to attract tourism from nearby Route 2.

Town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp said, "The committee did a good job convincing our selectboard that this could be a cultural opportunity to attract tourists off Route 2 to view the industrial architecture and history of the town. It's right by the Millers River. There are few prettier spots that I've discovered in Erving."

In other news, the board heard budget presentations for level funded requests from the assessors, and the treasurer collector's office. The emergency management team of Luke Hartnett and Laura Conway also presented a budget request, up 25%, or \$2,500, from last year.

The town's emergency planning department, after dealing with more than one severe storm leading to widespread power outages in recent years, would like to establish an emergency operations center in the basement of town hall, and is encouraging the town to fund an additional capital request for an as yet undetermined sum, in the tens of thousands of dollars, to purchase and install a back-up 135 kilowatt generator at the new senior center, along with an 150 kilowatt generator between the town hall and the Erving Center fire station, to serve both buildings.

Sharp said the selectboard was receptive to the emergency planners' request, and would work with highway superintendent Paul Prest to reduce the final cost to the town of installing emergency generators.

In addition to the selectboard meeting, on Monday town hall hosted what Sharp referred to as, "a record number of meetings since I got here nine years ago."

Those included sign-ups with the recreation committee for softball and baseball, a conservation commission meeting, and meetings between the finance committee and the school committee (which featured finance committee chair Stanley Gradowski storming out of town hall in high dudgeon) and also a meeting between the finance committee and more than a dozen town employees, who were upset that that finance board was, for the second year running, recommending cutting the percentage the town contributes to employee health benefits by 2%.

Last year, the town cut the percentage of its contribution to employees'

see ERVING pg 11

**NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**G-M Working Together**

**ELLEN BLANCHETTE TURNERS FALLS** - The atmosphere in the school conference room was relaxed and collegial, as six members of the Gill-Montague school committee met to continue developing their portion of the accelerated improvement plan (AIP). This project aims to develop an addendum to the school district's AIP, to be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Deb Moiles, who has been providing professional development to the school committee, facilitated the meeting. Moiles' services are provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

The task is a structured one, with a form to be filled out with agreed goals and objective outcomes. The idea is that the group not only set goals, but also list actions the committee will take to achieve them, and specify what kind of outcome could be expected if all actions were taken and all projects successfully completed. These tasks are for the benefit of the school committee itself, and include actions the committee can take and choices members can make, such as decisions about spending based on the needs of the students, in support of the district AIP.

Moiles made the point that the school committee is the oversight board for the district, not the "doers." Moiles cautioned members not to set themselves up for too much work, but instead to set the conditions for success.

Sandra Brown of Gill said, "We want to be forward looking, but not box ourselves in." She supported the approach the group was taking in completing the AIP, "Simplify, get it done."

This effort has been

going on for many weeks, and the form is largely completed, with the school committee now working on tightening up language, simplifying their statements and directives so that what their stated goals and objectives will be clear to themselves and the public, as well as the DESE.

After some debate, the committee resolved that their primary objective is, "To function as a united, goal oriented, forward moving and civil school committee that creates an environment in which all students can reach their full potential."

To further the success of the school committee and the school district in its efforts to get out of Level 4 status, the question is how to demonstrate support for the school administration, teachers and students. Michael Langknecht, chair, and members Jennifer Waldron, Sandy Brown, Jane Oakes, Marge Levenson, and Emily Monosson debated wording and intention, with Moiles' guidance, as she cautioned them that the school committee does not deliver education, but rather supports the efforts of those who do.

"By supporting the implementation of the AIP, the school committee will create the conditions that will allow the district to sustain the changes and improvements that are the focus of the plan." A concern voiced by several members, including Langknecht, Brown and Emily Monosson of Montague, was that the work that is being done during this two year process will be maintained into the future. The statement addresses that.

Some additional language is required to indicate that part of this outcome will be a 10%

increase in test scores, a condition that makes the members uncomfortable but they have clearly adjusted to understanding the necessity of doing what the state requires them to do.

In fact, at some point, Monosson said she felt the process had brought the school committee members closer together. This was evident in Tuesday's meeting as there was a good spirit of cooperation, with members working together to accomplish the task at hand. There was vigorous debate as they worked on tightening up language, clarifying intentions, with a focus on their role in leading the district.

In accepting the need to produce a document that meets the requirements of the state, the school committee members seem to have overcome their resistance to being directed (required) to do what the state demands, adjusting their thinking in their desire to meet the goal of bringing the district into compliance and out of Level 4 status.

In an effort to communicate better with the community, there was some discussion of providing public forums, informational presentations and opportunities for public discussion sessions around important issues as they arise.

Langknecht raised the matter of establishing norms of behavior for the school committee members. Moiles said this would be better done as a professional development piece, after their addendum to the AIP is submitted to the DESE for approval. The district AIP was approved by the DESE last year. There is a projected date for completion of the school committee portion of June 2012.

It was agreed they

see SCHOOL pg 11

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## A Bridge for Tomorrow



PARZYCH PHOTO

*A red Link Belt excavator stands in the shadow of the yellow Kobelco excavator on the Gill-Montague bridge as they work in tandem lifting the old 18,000 pound fascia beams that had been supporting pedestrian railings on the edge of the sidewalk.*

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH**  
**GREAT FALLS** - For years, the state of Massachusetts had diligently inspected the Gill-Montague bridge, with under bridge inspection equipment.

State inspectors noted the continued deterioration, until Mass Highway finally decided to spruce up the bridge with a quick cleaning and painting.

Mackin Construction company got the job, back in 1995.

Mackin employees began removing and trucking railings from the pedestrian walkway to Mackin's sand bank, where a tent had been erected with a 'negative air pressure' system.

Negative air pressure is bureaucracy-speak for 'vacuum.'

Fans vacuumed the air inside the tent through filters designed to trap dust laden with lead, as masked workers sand blasted the railings.

Two problems arose. First, an inspector found that dust laden air was bypassing the filters. Second, after sand blasting, there was very little left of the thimbles on the ends of the railings to fit into the sockets on the railing posts.

"Sandblasting left the railings paper thin," Mike Mackin said. "You could push your finger through the railing."

It proved impractical to repair the railings, and the quick-fix project was quickly terminated.

During the railing dismantling at the bridge, one dare-devil employee, suited up in a harness, walked about holding the safety

line in his hand. A state engineer took a dim view of the brave man, and his employment was quickly terminated.

SPS began a thorough reconstruction of the bridge about two years ago. The contractor removed the railings on the side without a sidewalk (the west side) and trucked them to WTE for recycling. SPS replaced the fascia beams, installed new railings, erected decorative street lights and resurfaced the west side of the roadway.

SPS is now engaged in demolishing and rebuilding the east side of the bridge, the side with a sidewalk. Damage from spray from the dam has deteriorated this side to a greater extent.

Reconstruction involves widening the bridge surface using cantilevered beams thrust out toward the dam to support a new sidewalk, in the form of a shelf.

SPS used a Kobelco excavator equipped with a pavement breaker to demolish the old sidewalk. A canvas demolition blanket kept debris from falling into the river.

While the job, at times, did not show much activity, work out of sight underneath the bridge was continuing in preparation for the drastic removal and replacement of beams, placing of reinforcing rods and decking for eventual resurfacing.

While often inconvenient, the bridge reconstruction is history in the making, and will soon be seen as a major improvement to our area.

## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

### On Vacation

BY LESLIE BROWN  
MERIDA, YUCATAN -

January 27th

On the streets every day women set up small tables and sit with huge knives peeling fresh fruits, oranges, grapefruit, mangoes, papaya. These are placed in plastic bags and are often sprinkled with cinnamon. The most elaborate are cut in small portions and layered in plastic bags and sold with a spoon. The air is full of the scent of citrus peel. Also for sale are shelled nuts, whole fried potatoes and corn steamed whole in the husk.

While much American food is available - hamburgers, hot dogs, pizza - we want to eat the local foods and so far have enjoyed wonderful grilled fish stuffed with seafood, chicken in black bean sauce and a grilled mixture of pork, chicken, and fish all served with fresh warm tortillas, avocado and sliced limes. The food is mildly spicy and flavorful although hot chili sauces are always on the table as well for the brave.

January 28th

We walk a number of miles each day. Our leg muscles know it and our bodies are all the better for it. This may be the only vacation on which I actually lose a few pounds. The pavement is very uneven; during our first couple of days I am close to falling a few times as I am too busy looking around. One day Ken badly stubs his toe on a hefty iron ring embedded in the sidewalk. He does a great recovery worthy of Charlie Chaplin but we provide a huge amount of entertainment for a passing truck occupied by three Mexicans who point, laugh and shout, "Gringo!" We dub any trick of the sidewalk a Gringo getter and in a few days achieve the ability to scan the footing AND view our surroundings without peril.

The streets in Merida are a constant work in progress. Every few blocks one is being torn up, largely a matter of extremely manual labor via pick axe, shovel and often just a bar of metal jabbed repeatedly. Occasionally, there is also a machine, bucket on one end and jack hammer on the other. The repaving is very quick however. People here work extremely long hours contrary to the "mañana myth" about sleepy, lazy Mexicans. After the roadway has been torn up, the men smooth a surface of watered sand and rocks and the cement mixer comes. The final product is incredibly smooth with stone cut and polished and then marked like tile on a floor.

Today we have walked a good five miles to explore Merida's version of the Champs Elysee. This is a lovely tree lined avenue featuring some of the oldest homes in the city many of which now house museums or governmental services. This is also the district where many tourists stay. It features a Hyatt and Best Western, Starbucks and Hennessey's Irish Pub and lo and behold Walmart and Costco! We return to the main square for a meal of grilled fish, tortillas and sauces with rice preceded by a well-deserved ice cold Mexican beer. At the hotel it is siesta time.

January 29th

Izamal is a small village an hour and a half bus ride from Merida. We set out on a hot, sunny day to see the Mayan pyramids and an enormous church dating from the 15th century. Our tourism policia guard is Luis who is no more than four feet tall with a hunched back, a harelip and an immense knowledge of the church's history. He takes my hand, gives me a welcoming kiss and admonishes me gently to remove my hat before going into the sanctuary.



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

This large, stucco building has seen many restorations; some of the ancient, faded wall paintings are still in progress. It was built on the foundation of a previous Mayan temple. Apparently it was common practice for the invading Spaniards to destroy the Mayan buildings, often using the old stones for their own purposes. I have next to no Spanish but Luis' list of dates and pointed indications of all aspects of the building and grounds make much of the history clear. The many rows of pews in the sanctuary lead the eye to the altar-piece which is elaborately decorated in gold with saints and the Virgin Mary. Despite the prohibition of headgear, photographs are allowed and many have their pictures taken at the altar.

In an alcove outside the main sanctuary is another picture of the Virgin. It is surrounded by hundreds of tiny photos of those hoping for her healing of their illnesses. Some have also left locks of hair. Luis touches his heart to indicate the passionate wishes of the faithful and then snaps our picture.

We hike through the small village that is Izamal and find the ruins of a Mayan pyramid, which, despite its partial collapse is immense in its dimensions and in the enormous effort involved in hauling and stacking the large stones that form the triangular base all the way to the top. Surprisingly, visitors are not prohibited from clambering about, sheltered from the sun by the trees and shrubs which have spring up between the breaks in the stones.

see GARDENER page 16

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## Wendell Examines Solar Contract

BY KATIE NOLAN - The Wendell energy committee met Monday night with Dave Thomas of Seaboard Solar and selectboard member Dan Keller, to ask questions and offer input on a contract the town has been negotiating with Seaboard to make the town of Wendell a solar power development "host customer."

The February 28th special town meeting authorized the selectboard to enter into a solar power purchase or net metering credit purchase agreement. Monday's meeting was called to better acquaint energy committee members about the agreement with Seaboard and its effects on Wendell.

Keller said the selectboard wants to sign the contract "as soon as possible," but the board was open to further input from townspeople. He said it was possible the agreement could be signed at the next selectboard meeting, on March 14th.

Thomas explained the proposal this way: "We build the system, but the meter says Wendell." Wendell would be allocated a certain amount of electricity generated by the photovoltaic array, such as 200 kilowatt hours, at a reduced rate for use in municipal buildings. For the rest of the electricity generated, Seaboard would pay Wendell "rent," while selling the excess power elsewhere. Thomas estimated the net advantage to the town, between reduced electricity costs and "rent" would amount to approximately \$70,000 per year.

Thomas explained that Seaboard makes a profit from selling the electricity it generates, from federal tax credits for solar energy, and from selling the solar renewable energy credits.

According to Seaboard's website, "Our revenue comes from the power companies in the form of Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs). Because of a series of new laws in several states, big power companies have to buy our SRECs when we supply clean energy to our customer." The "rent" paid to Wendell would be a small portion of the money Seaboard would realize from selling SRECs.

see SOLAR pg 13

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from **SUSTAINABLE** pg 3 ways to talk about it."

It's true, many of us have wanted to believe that re-creating old growth forests in the East will replicate pre-Colonial conditions and foster stability in the ecosystem. But a graphic Mann flashed of that era showed fully half of the area east of the Appalachians, and a considerable amount west of them, as "savanna" with "bison grazing in Georgia and New York." These grasslands were created and systematically maintained by native burning, Mann said.

Reforestation, as it was encouraged in Texas, created conditions for the massive forest fires there last year.

From beneath the teeming rainforest of the Amazon basin, in areas made visible once the growth was cleared out by the advance of Western-style ranching, have emerged distinct signs of earlier farming. Ditches stretch for miles, ancient roadways do as well, and thousands of acres of regularly shaped, "raised-bed" type fields are revealed, along with mounds to lift whole villages and even cities above floodwaters.

There, the "dirt," as Mann called it, is infused by ancient farmers with charcoal – an additive that turned normally almost lifeless tropical soil into a vital growing medium.

The implication, usually unspoken, was that practices like this South American rainforest agricultural system might have been sustainable.

But a cataclysmic global event ended the Amazonian culture, the same event that killed off, Mann said, "somewhere between two-thirds and 90 percent" of the entire native population of the Americas.

That event was the arrival of European explorers with their diseases. European smallpox, influenza, typhus, measles, cholera, malaria, bubonic plague, tuberculosis, mumps, yellow fever, pertussis, these germs overwhelmed indigenous immune systems, north and south.

Mann flashed a graphic on the screen that showed only one disease in exchange was carried east – a strain of syphilis – versus nearly a score of European diseases carried to the New World.

With deaths at this level, the cultures of both Americas virtually collapsed, and the forests – which presumably had been there first – returned to swallow the fire pits, middens and burial mounds, the ditches, raised fields and cities before the first colonial settlers of the 17th century ever had a chance to record their existence, let alone their prevalence.

There is a particular explanation for the American plagues. Mann juxtaposed two early home interiors on the screen, one of a rural family's primitive Dutch dwelling, the other of a Powhatan Indian dwelling of similar architectural style (poles with skins or hides stretched over them) in the Chesapeake Bay area. The European home contained the family's domesticated animals, in an intimacy that could only serve to exercise, shall we say, the immune systems of both. The second dwelling, in the isolated Americas, contained no animals – only the skins of dead ones, all of whom had spent their lives in the airy, sanitizing wild. Mann explained that Dutch people – and Europeans in general – "swam thousands of years in this bacterial soup." They endured the special challenge of surviving even the occasional mutation of an animal disease to human, and those who did lived to bring their genes forward. Disease-carrying but functional European sailors brought what is known as a "virgin soil" epidemic to the defenseless Indians, creating "an unparalleled demographic catastrophe."

The "Columbian exchange" also brought plants, animals and microbes that did the same thing to other species, "inadvertently creating an ecological convulsion, a seething, convoluted explosion."

Exports to China of South American sweet potatoes, regular potatoes and maize first saved that country from starvation, then made for calamity as the new cropping system proved vulnerable to massive erosion, the worst in the world.

This general effect continues. "Ecological convulsion is the new norm," Mann said.

The reforestation of the Americas that followed the collapse of pre-Colombian cultures,

he said, was so vast that not only did it obscure much of the works of American native cultures, it drew down the atmospheric carbon dioxide worldwide and may have triggered the Little Ice Age – the 300 years of abnormally cold climate, in areas of the world at least, between 1500 and 1800.

NASA, however, cites this period as "a modest cooling of the Northern Hemisphere during this period of less than 1°C relative to late 20th century levels." Scientists debate the cause and even disagree about whether something of full global significance happened at that time.

Turning to the present day, Mann responded to a question about local culture and local economy versus centralized and globalized human systems by saying, "I like local stuff. But when my daughter got sick, her life was saved by a Japanese medicine," made from an Oriental plant. "The trouble," he added, "is that the pains and gains of globalization are unevenly distributed. The benefits are often widespread, but the impacts are concentrated."

Mann cited Laos, where the newly revived natural rubber

industry is now in Chinese corporate hands. Workers suffer from awful conditions and the local culture is disintegrating. "This is happening because natural rubber is the best material for high-mileage tires," he said, "and the best for the gaskets in high-efficiency engines. We can enjoy our Prius," he mused, "but it's not too much to see that the people of Laos get a better deal."

All in all, local control, he concluded, "translates into better stewardship."

Mann cited the initiative by former president Lula da Silva of Brazil setting up a mechanism to give land title to the semi-indigenous population of the Amazon basin – "the people who've been getting shot and driven from their land."

Mann emphasizes there are "no easy answers." He teaches us, though, of some intriguing early attempts at agricultural systems in areas of North and South America that may have been sustainable. 

**SUGAR** from page 1

house out back," Telega said. "But it was getting dilapidated. This is a good spot, here on 63."

The Telega family set out 2,000 pails, and have 2,000 more taps on a pipeline. So far this season, they've produced more than 200 gallons of syrup.

Though they sell some syrup wholesale in drums, most of their syrup is sold at the sugar house.

"The boys and Priscilla want to start selling pancakes, too," Telega said. "I think they'd go good here."

He added, "This has been a good year. The sugar content in the sap has been 50 to 1. We'll have another good run tomorrow when it warms up."

Telega used to farm, growing field corn, sweet corn, tobacco, and all manner of squash. But that's all behind him now.

"I figured when I hit 70, it was time to quit farming. Let the boys do it if they want to."

A big late model John Deere tractor stood outside the sugar house, indicating that his boys were not ready to give up farming just yet. 

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Shoplifting; Burglary; Missing Person**

**Tuesday, 2/21**

8:33 p.m. Assault on Hillside Road. Referred to an officer.

**Wednesday, 2/22**

1:06 p.m. Neighbor disturbance on Grout Circle. Services rendered.

1:59 p.m. Shoplifting at F.L. Roberts. Summons issued.

2:54 p.m. Threatening, harassment on K Street.

Advised of options.

4:59 p.m. Animal cruelty on Fifth Street. Investigated.

10:22 p.m. Report of animal abuse given at police station. Services rendered.

8:16 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street. Services rendered.

**Thursday, 2/23**

8:48 a.m. Hit and run accident at Wentworth and Millers Falls Road. Citation issued.

1:05 p.m. Brush fire at transfer station on Turnpike Road. Referred to other agency.

1:10 p.m. Brush fire at Judd Wire on Turnpike Road. Referred to other agency.

6:40 p.m. Threatening,

harassment on Winthrop Street in Millers Falls. Investigated.

8:33 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Park Street. Investigated.

**Friday, 2/24**

2:46 p.m. Racial harassment on Fourth Street. Referred to an officer.

**Saturday, 2/25**

5 p.m. Harassment on Grout Circle. Advised of options.

**Sunday, 2/26**

3:28 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Avenue A. Services rendered.

**Monday, 2/27**

12:03 p.m. Assault and battery on Millers Falls Road. Report taken.

10:38 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Ripley Road. Referred to an officer.

**Tuesday, 2/28**

10:02 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Eleventh Street. Investigated.

6:25 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] for domestic assault and battery on Second Street.

**Wednesday, 2/29**

8:47 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Farren Care Center on Montague City Road. Report taken.

1:19 p.m. Neighbor disturbance at Grout Circle Road. Services rendered.

1:40 p.m. Neighbor disturbance at Grout Circle Road. Referred to an officer.

**Friday, 3/2**

12:59 p.m. General disturbance/odor at K and 5th Streets. Investigated.

7:56 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] on a straight warrant.

**Saturday, 3/3**

12:18 a.m. Brush fire on Swamp Road. Services rendered.

1:18 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Chestnut Street. Services rendered.

2:59 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Third Street. Services rendered.

3:41 p.m. Vandalism on East Main Street. Services rendered.

4:50 p.m. Neighbor disturbance on Grout Circle. Advised of options.

5:46 p.m. Chimney fire on Dry Hill Road. Services rendered.

**Sunday, 3/4**

1:23 a.m. Arrest of [redacted] at Fairway Avenue and Dell Street for a subsequent offense of operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license. Arrest of [redacted] on a default warrant.

12:37 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Second Street. Peace restored.

**Tuesday, 3/6**

9:38 a.m. Illegal dumping on Lake Pleasant Road. Services rendered.

3:49 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Dell Street. Advised civil action.

5:41 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Montague City Road. Services rendered.

6:14 p.m. Missing person on Main Street. Advised of options.

6:56 p.m. Threatening harassment on Second Street. Advised of options.

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# Montague WebWorks Endures DoS Attack

## Denial of Service Attack takes down local website provider for nearly 24 hours

**BY MICHAEL MULLER** - Around 2:00 p.m. on Monday, March 5th, customers of Montague WebWorks, including the *Montague Reporter*, began to notice that websites were either very slow, or not loading at all for short periods of time. Email was intermittent and sometimes produced errors.

The Montague WebWorks hosting facility in California explained that one of their Internet Service Providers was experiencing problems, and many customers in the facility were affected.

As the day progressed, the interruptions and blackouts became more pronounced. By 7:00 p.m. that evening, the server had to be shut down completely — cutting off 150

community and customer websites, 75 of which depend on Montague WebWorks for email, including this newspaper.

Investigation by the server administrators at the hosting facility revealed that Montague WebWorks' webserver was under a DoS attack, or Denial of Service. Essentially, a dramatic increase in traffic to one IP address caused a strain on one of the bandwidth providers, which eventually led to a disruption in service.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, "The most common and obvious type of DoS attack occurs when an attacker "floods" a network with information. When you type a URL for a particular website into your browser, you

are sending a request to that site's computer server to view the page. The server can only process a certain number of requests at once, so if an attacker overloads the server with requests, it can't process your request. This is a 'denial of service' because you can't access that site."

The hosting facility worked aggressively to control the source of the attack. In a conference call it was surmised that one or more of the websites Montague WebWorks hosts had experienced an influx in traffic caused by the attack. It couldn't be immediately determined which website, or indeed if it was only one website that was the target.

In the end, a cautious re-deployment was determined to

be the best course... turning one or two websites on at a time and then monitoring for any new traffic spikes. With 150 websites to turn back on, this would take quite a while.

As website administrator, I decided to redeploy my ten community websites first, including MontagueMA.net, and FiveCol-Soc.net, to see if the attack was perhaps related to something that had been posted on one of them. I then began redeploying five customer websites at a time with a half-hour pause between each wave, starting with the bigger business customers, and those running e-commerce websites. All Montague WebWorks customers and websites were up and running again by Wednesday evening. Any cus-

tomers still experiencing problems should call: (413) 320-5336.

While this work proceeded, the hosting facility administrators identified a few compromised online gaming servers as the culprits in the DoS attack. The owners were contacted and the attack from those machines ceased.

The hosting facility is continuing its investigation with their network providers to determine whether there are more servers at work, or if the attack is truly over. This may take a few days, but for now the worst appears to be over.

Montague WebWorks is now assessing prevention plans to prevent recurrences.

*Michael Muller is the owner of Montague WebWorks.*

from **WENDELL** page 6

or any similar project.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich reported several smaller items to the board members. Town custodian Larry Ramsdell has completed a clean up check list for people who rent the town hall, and after reading it board members thought it should be included with the rental agreement.

Library trustees would like

to have an area paved for parking between the playground fence and the road, and librarian Rosie Heidkamp thought the cost could go on the annual town meeting warrant.

Town hazardous waste coordinator Nina Keller asked for the selectboard to be represented at a Vermont Yankee rally, date to be announced. Dan Keller said he may already be attending as part of a group of

local elected officials from Franklin County.

Wendell dropped its request for reimbursement for expenses resulting from Hurricane Irene because the total extra expense was less than the \$1,000 threshold.

As a starting point to better defining the responsibilities of the town's building inspector, Phil Delorey provided the selectboard with a copy of the

job description for Athol's building inspector.

A bridge on Mormon Hollow Road over Lyon's Brook was recently inspected and determined to be in good shape. Board members agreed to forward the report to the highway commission. Keller commented that the bridge is as much a large culvert as a bridge.



from **SCHOOL** pg 7

would hold the professional development session before the May 21st election to set standards and norms of behavior for school committee members so that the current members can complete this work and pass on to new members what they have learned.

The school committee will meet to continue work on this task on March 28, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School conference room. The next regular school committee meeting will be held on March 13 at Turners Falls High School TV studio at 7:00 p.m.



from **ERVING** page 7

health plans from 86% to 84%, and for retirees from 79% to 77%. In FY '13, the finance committee has recommended those percentages be cut again, to 82% for active employees, and 75% for retirees.

Town treasurer Margaret Sullivan said, "Paul Prest, the highway superintendent, explained how he could go get a job someplace else paying him more money. It is the long term benefits package that has kept him working for the town of Erving."

Another employee, according to Sullivan, "spoke up about being ready to retire, but now he will have to work longer to be able to afford retirement."

She said, "Officer Robert Holst, the canine officer, explained how he took a pay cut

to come to work for Erving. He weighed it all; he's married with children, before he took the job, to make sure he would have stability and advancement. The benefits package was one of the things that was very important to him. No sooner did he get here than benefits were cut by 2%."

Finance committee member Dan Hammock said the committee was proposing a 2% cost of living increase for salaried town workers (not teachers, or elected officials, however). The proposed COLA should offset the cost of additional health plan payments by employees, Hammock said.

"We said you'll be ending up ahead. The taxpayers who are footing the bill for all this are losing their homes to foreclosure, and not getting raises.

They're in the private sector where things are changing. What we have is approximately a half million dollar budget shortfall," between department requests and town revenues.

Sullivan said the assessors have just heard back from the Northfield Mountain pumped hydro facility that new growth for the town's major industrial taxpayer is expected to increase by \$240,000 this year.

Hammock said if that is true, it may cause the finance committee to adjust its recommendation on employee benefits and budget cuts.

As to the school committee, the finance committee has recommended the school committee hold their budget request to no more than a 2½% increase for FY'13, but the school committee has so far kept to their

original plan to seek a 12 - 13% increase, or \$278,000 over last year's number.

Sharp said the school committee wants to hire four special education specialists, to deal with the rising population (now pegged at 30% of the total school body) of students with special needs.

Hammock said, "We're operating with a mutual respect, trying to keep in mind the taxpayers' taxes keep going up each year, while the school committee is keeping the needs of the kids in school in mind."

Newly hired town tree warden, Chris Stacy, was able to keep his budget request level at \$8,500, despite the fact he has already used up that entire amount for FY'12 dealing with the aftermath of at least two major storms.



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PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

**FUKUSHIMA** from page 1 mism." He cited more than 1500 fuel rods still dangerously exposed to the open atmosphere at Unit Four alone.

Former Montague resident Harvey Wasserman, writing for the *Free Press* last month, noted that Tasaka's statements came as a new temperature spike unexpectedly struck Fukushima Unit Two. For reasons not yet clear, heat releases in excess of 158 degrees Fahrenheit spewed from the core, prompting Tokyo Electric to pump in more water and boric acid in an attempt to damp down an apparently ongoing chain reaction. Professor Tasaka and others warn that this in turn will contribute to spreading still more radiation into the water table and oceans.

Justin McCurry, writing in *Global Watch* on March 1st, said, "One year on, little can prepare you for a close-up view of Fukushima Daiichi's damaged reactors." McCurry was part of an official press tour of the site two weeks ago. He wrote, "At Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, the cleanup looks like it has barely begun. Instead, the real work is being done, unseen, deep inside the crippled reactors, where the precise condition of the melted fuel remains a mystery."

"The destructive force of three

**"In the town of Naraha, most of the buildings emerged unscathed from the quake, but the streets are deserted. We pass a convenience store with its stock sitting untouched on shelves, and a parking lot dotted with cars that were abandoned in the ensuing panic."**

**— Justin McCurry  
Global Watch**

reactor meltdowns is evident as soon as the bus carrying a small group of journalists invited by the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power (TEPCO), enters the 20-kilometer (13-mile) exclusion zone imposed after the first reactor building exploded on March 12th of last year.

"During the short journey to the plant from J. Village – a soccer training complex that is now the logistical base for the



*Antinuclear campaigner in Tokyo*

Fukushima Daiichi cleanup operation – radiation monitors alert us to the invisible enemy that has driven 100,000 people from their homes."

Reporting for *Energy News* last month, Akikio Okazaki wrote, "A mind-boggling 40,000 trillion becquerels of radioactive cesium, twice the amount previously thought, may have spewed from the crippled Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant after the March 11th disaster, scientists now say."

"The figure, which represents about 20 percent of the discharge during the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster, is twice as large as previous estimates by research institutions both in Japan and overseas."

Cesium-137, a carcinogen with a 30-year half life, is an

entirely manmade radioactive particle that did not exist in nature before the splitting of the atom in the Manhattan Project. The body absorbs the beta emitter through food and water, and it concentrates in the muscles.

Okazaki wrote the new figure for cesium released at Fukushima, "was calculated on the basis of radioactive content of seawater sampled at 79 locations in the north Pacific and is thought to more accurately reflect reality than previous simulation results. Scientists believe that around 30 percent of the radioactive substances discharged during the crisis fell on land, while the rest fell on the sea."

"In the meantime, TEPCO on February 28th began pouring cement on a trial basis from a marine platform onto the seabed in the port at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant. The work is intended to cover seven hectares of seabed inside the breakwaters.

"The aim is to prevent radioactive cesium that accumulated there from spreading offshore. The project is expected to take four months to finish."

Meanwhile, gaps in the Japanese government's food testing program have been plugged ad hoc by local citizens paying for their own crops to be tested, wrote Martin Fackler in the *New York Times* last month. An uproar resulted after rice near Fukushima was found to be contaminated with cesium in excess of government safety levels.

Those levels have already been loosened to allow school children in the city of Fukushima to be exposed to levels of radiation at the same annual dose rate as nuclear power plant workers.

As TEPCO's operators attempt to bring the ruined reactors under

control and stem the ongoing release of radioactivity from the site, much of the water pumped in to cool the reactors, "gets stored in the squat, gray tanks that have replaced the trees that once grew throughout the sprawling Fukushima Daiichi compound," wrote Phred Dvorak in the *Wall Street Journal* last month. Miles of orange, black and gray hoses snake between the blasted containment buildings and the storage tanks and make shift filtration systems. "TEPCO has the capacity to store 165,000 tons of contaminated water, said Katsuhiko Iwaki, deputy manager of the Fukushima Daiichi stabilization center. About 125,000 tons of water already is being stored."

Sabrina Richards, writing in the *Scientist* in February, noted the decline of bird populations around Fukushima in the last year, a decline that has paralleled an earlier drop in resident bird populations around Chernobyl after the 1986 nuclear disaster in the Ukraine.

She wrote, "The prolonged, relatively larger impacts on Chernobyl communities point to possible sustained, longer term impacts on organisms that may reflect cumulative, multigenerational consequences of mutation accumulation within populations. The disaster at Chernobyl, and now Fukushima, provide unique opportunities to assess the risks and hazards of prolonged exposure to mutagenic contaminants that likely have relevance for other communities inhabiting the regions affected by these disasters."

In the 1970s, three General Electric engineers including Dale Bridenbaugh, resigned their positions due to concerns that the Mark I containment system in use at Fukushima, and at 23 reactors of the same design in the United States, could fail under accident conditions.

A Nuclear Regulatory

**Former G.E. engineer Dale Bridenbaugh told ABC news in an interview last year about the potential failure of the Mark-I containment system during a loss of coolant accident. "The impact loads the containment would receive by this very rapid release of energy could tear the containment apart and create an uncontrolled release."**

Commission analysis of the potential failure of the Mark I under accident conditions concluded in a 1985 report that Mark I failure within the first few hours following core melt would appear rather likely. In 1986, Harold Denton, then the NRC's top safety official, told an industry trade group that the "Mark I containment, especially being smaller with lower design pressure, in spite of the suppression pool, if you look at the *WASH 1400* safety study, you'll find something like a 90% probability of that containment failing."

Nevertheless, in the aftermath of Fukushima, the NRC has done nothing to implement lessons learned from the failure of the Mark I design to prevent the uncontrolled release of massive amounts of radioactivity to the surrounding countryside. The aging GE Mark I boiling water reactors in this country are allowed to continue operating, as if Fukushima never happened.

The Vermont Yankee reactor in Vernon, Vermont is a Mark-I reactor. It is running at 120% of its original design capacity, with the NRC's approval.

A few weeks after the Fukushima triple meltdowns, the NRC gave permission for Vermont Yankee to continue operating for another 20 years.



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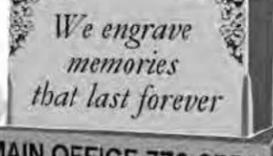
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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - [Second of two columns on brain-stimulation therapies.]

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), which was explained in a previous column, is a relatively new procedure used to treat moderate depression when medication and psychotherapy are not effective. During TMS, doctors place an electromagnet against your head

More study is needed to establish TMS's effectiveness. But, there are other therapies.

**Electroconvulsive Therapy**

**SOLAR from page 9**

The Mass Department of Energy Resources (DOER) requires each regulated electricity supplier or provider serving retail customers in the state to include 15% qualifying renewables in the mix of electricity it sells, by December 31st, 2020. The regulated electricity suppliers or providers show compliance by buying SRECs at auction.

SRECs are granted to solar energy generators like Seaboard under the DOER Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS). DOER describes its "RPS Solar Carve-Out" as a market-based incentive to support developing 400 megawatts of solar photovoltaic (PV) across the state.

Under the municipal program, a PV developer finances, constructs, and operates the PV sys-

Electroconvulsive therapy has been around the longest. It was developed in 1938. It has been proven safe and effective for the treatment of depression. ECT is usually employed when antidepressants or psychotherapy aren't working.

The medical community is not certain how ECT works. However, it appears to produce many changes in the brain. One study found an 86 percent remission rate for those with severe major depression.

A popular image of ECT is one of a patient writhing in discomfort on a bed while seeming to be electrocuted. Today, ECT does not produce discomfort.

Patients are given general anesthesia and a muscle relaxant first. Electrodes are placed on the head. An electric current passes through the brain, causing a seizure that usually lasts less than a minute. The patient's body shows no signs of seizure. After

tem for 20 years, and receives the tax incentives and SRECs, while a host municipality (such as Wendell) buys electricity at a reduced rate. The DOER program will allow only ten towns to become "host customers". Once the state reaches the 400 MW goal, and the opt-in term for solar facilities has expired, SRECs will no longer be generated.

Energy committee chair Nan Reibschlaeger asked how much of Seaboard's solar generated electricity would be allocated to the town. Thomas replied, "That depends on how much you want to buy."

Thomas said that Seaboard would set the allocation based on the amount of energy the town buildings have used in previous years. If the town uses more or less than the allocation, according

about an hour, the patient usually can resume normal activities.

ECT is usually administered about three times a week until the patient's depression lifts. It normally takes six to twelve treatments for results. Sometimes, ECT is needed to keep symptoms from returning.

**Vagus Nerve Stimulation**

There is one vagus nerve on each side of your body. Each nerve runs from your brain stem through your neck and down to your chest and abdomen.

When VNS is used, a device is placed under the skin. The device sends electrical pulses through the left vagus nerve. The vagus nerves carry messages to parts of the brain that control mood. The pulses also appear to alter brain chemicals associated with mood, such as serotonin.

VNS was originally developed as a treatment for epilepsy. VNS remains a controversial

to Thomas, "We can reconcile at the end of the year."

Reibschlaeger said she had not seen language in the contract allowing Wendell to end the contract if Seaboard fails to start commercial operations.

Thomas replied the contract does have a performance date. He promised to clarify the exact section of the contract with the performance date this week.

Asked to estimate how soon the solar power would actually be generated and available for sale, Thomas predicted six to nine months. He said Seaboard already has leases in place for installation of the solar panels on approximately 60 acres of commercial rooftops in eastern Massachusetts. According to Thomas, the fact that Seaboard already has leases is very impor-

tant, signifying the company's readiness to move into generating power. He said some solar energy companies were providing only "smoke and mirrors," not actual solar generating capacity.

Committee member Gloria Kegeles asked, "If Wendell wanted to be energy self-sufficient in 20 years, how would this agreement affect that?"

Thomas replied, "You could build a turbine and sell energy to residents. For \$1.5 million, you could build your own solar generation system and generate your own electric power."

Betsy Ames commented that if Wendell built its own solar generation system, it would not be eligible for SRECs, because they would already be allocated to Seaboard by the agreement.

Paul Richmond asked how the

MST produces fewer memory side effects, shorter seizures, and allows for a shorter recovery time than ECT.

The effect of MST on treatment-resistant depression isn't proven. Studies are underway to determine its effectiveness.

**Deep Brain Stimulation**

Deep brain stimulation (DBS) was developed to treat tremor, stiffness, walking problems and uncontrollable movements caused by Parkinson's disease. Electrodes are implanted in the brain and controlled by a generator implanted in the chest. Stimulation is continuous and its frequency and level is customized to the individual.

DBS has only recently been studied as a treatment for depression or obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). It is available on an experimental basis only.

If you have a question, please write to [fred@healthygeezer.com](mailto:fred@healthygeezer.com)

proposed agreement would affect him if he generated solar energy on his own property and wanted to sell excess power to a neighbor.

Thomas said Richmond would be able to sell to a residence or commercial facility, but not to the town of Wendell. Only Seaboard could sell electricity to the town under the contract.

Thomas added the town could put in solar systems on every building in town; that would not be affected by the agreement.

Keller said the contract had been reviewed by town counsel Koppleman and Paige. Counsel found the proposed contract straightforward, and advised that the financials in the contract "looked reasonable and fair to the town."

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# Ferry Meadow Farm - part XXX

Turners Falls 2017

**BY ELOISE MICHAEL** - Someone person steps into the tunnel, footsteps crunching on the sandy floor.

I think about running, but the tunnel seems like a dead end.

My best chance is to stay very still.

The figure takes a few steps forward, then hisses, "Theresa?"

It is a woman's voice. But there could be other FBI agents here. I don't answer.

"Theresa, it's OK," she whispers. "I'm here to help. Leah sent me."

I start breathing again.

A squeaky sound comes out of my mouth which is not really a word.

"OK, I brought you a uniform," she says, not wasting time. "Like mine. Comcast. I'm a Park Ranger. This is the electric company's property, but I think we'll look official enough. You're going to wear this. And a hat," she says looking me up and down.

I realize I must be a mess.

"We'll go to my truck, and drive out of here. That OK?"

It seems like she is not expecting me to speak, and I am glad. In the half dark, I change into the uniform.

I find my voice and say, "What should I do with these?" holding up my muddy pajamas.

"We'll leave 'em," she

answers. Then she says, "Can you get your hair under this hat?"

"Yeah," I say, "OK."

"My name is Marissa," she says. "I'll do most of the talking,

if anyone asks us questions. Just play along."

"OK," I say.

I am relieved when we walk out of the tunnel. We move quickly to get away from its entrance. Soon we are walking on the beach and then up toward the road.

Marissa, in her brown uniform, looks like she has business here. I hope that I do, too, and walk with as much confidence as I can manage.

We get to the truck without seeing anyone. Marissa gets in the driver's seat, and I get in the other side. We pull out onto the road. It's empty, like it always is

in this town, and then suddenly it's not. A car is coming down Avenue A, right toward us. I recognize it immediately and panic.

Marissa says calmly, "Look down, so the hat covers your face."

I do that. She turns left, taking us onto a side road. Neither of us speak. Marissa is looking more at her rear-view mirror than the road. Finally she says, "They're not coming this way."

I start breathing again. After a while I start to watch out the window. "Where are we going?" I ask.

"Ferry Meadow," she answers. "Have you been there before?"

"No," I say.

"How do you know Leah then?"

"I don't really. She's a friend of—" I hesitate and then say, "a friend."

"OK," she says, "I'll introduce you to people at the farm." Then she adds, "What are you hiding from?"

I am not sure what to say. I guess that Leah didn't tell her about the doppelganger.

When I don't answer right away, she says, "It's OK, you don't have to tell me."

"Are you really a park ranger?" I ask, changing the subject.

"Yes, I am one of the lucky ones who kept my job when they sold the park to Comcast."

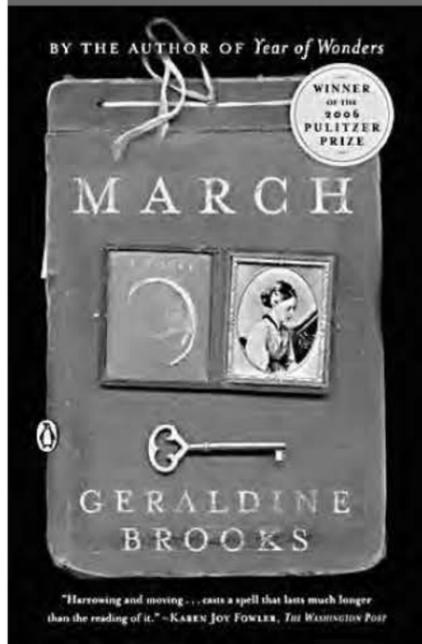
"That's good," I say. Then I add, "How do you know Leah?"

"We both used to work for the DCR. Leah lost her job. Budget cuts."

It doesn't take long to get to Ferry Meadow. Though we are not far from my house, it feels like a different world.

*Continued Next Issue*

## On Books - March by Geraldine Brooks



what he himself doesn't yet know—that he will go to war in the south with these young men mustered on the Common in Concord. Seeing her face in the crowd he hears her silent question and assents in answer. "I say "we", my friends, because if the army will have me, I propose to go with you." Throughout the novel Mr. March makes much of his passionate wife's unruly outbursts against slavery; she is part of the underground railway system with a secret room in their house for escaping slaves to rest in safety before the next leg of their journey north to Canada. Her temper

price for his impulsive investment, and cease to be the landed gentry with a finely furnished drawing room and are forced to "live simply" as Mr. March deems it. They undergo this change gracefully, with a positive attitude, contributing daily to its success while Mr. March is away helping the war effort. His exhortations to anti-abolitionists among the Union forces cause him to be asked to transfer to working directly with the contraband, i.e. slaves. Here he sets up a rudimentary school and does bring some sense of possibility to the not-yet-free field hands on a cotton farm called Oakes Landing. Just as the second crop of cotton is ready for harvest, in the predawn hours, Oakes Landing is attacked by southern pro-slavery guerillas with disastrous consequences for every one, including Mr. March. He survives, but is no longer the man of certainty that he was.

This then is a deftly written story of one man's discovery of himself in the crucible of history; Mr. March expects himself to rise to any occasion. What he learns is that many are called to be courageous, but few are chosen.

per he sees as a great flaw to be improved. It is left to the Reader to gauge the value of Mr. March's impulses to do good.

A staunch abolitionist himself he is persuaded to invest his considerable financial security in John Brown's venture which he believes is one of helping slaves to escape to the north. Of course as history tells us Brown's goal was insurrection stopping at nothing. Mr. March and his family of wife and four daughters pay the

**BY PATRICIA PRUITT**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - Chaplain March, or Mr. March, as he is called throughout Geraldine Brooks's novel, is a man who lives to do good for others and to get others to do the same. At 41 years old while giving a regiment of new recruits to the Civil War effort a blessing and a send off, he unpremeditatedly commits himself to accompany them into the war by the strength of three syllables: We will go; His wife Marmee, standing there listening, hears

## MISSING EAGLES' NEST

### Eagle Watch



**BY PAT CARLISLE**  
**GREAT FALLS** - Our Barton Cove eagle nest was blown from its perch atop Eagle Island in last summer's big wind storm, just after we had received the good news that a new camera would be mounted above the nest after the fledgling left the nest.

Many residents miss the daily live nest activity shown by our local access station, MCTV, Channel 17.

Since the nest blew down last summer, eagle watchers have kept a careful and hopeful eye on activity at Eagle Island, and we have not seen the usual pattern of eagle nest building behavior, like sticks and branches being carried and placed.

I watched a pair of eagles carry on their usual dance of courtship last week, which in years past would often lead to an egg or two being laid in the nest.

But where is their new nest located?

Have our Barton Cove eagles packed their bags and left the area for greener aeries? Perhaps the failure of three nests on Eagle Island over the years provoked a move.

We need the help of all bird watchers to answer this question. I will be glad to hear from anyone who may have watched nest building activities, and I will investigate any reports. Call me at 863-8386.



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Montague Bookmill: *Rusty Belle*, 8 p.m.

Wendell Town Hall: Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse featuring *Jessica Freeman*, proceeds to benefit the Wendell Community Garden. 7:30 p.m.

The Harp, Amherst: *Doug Hewitt*

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

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

**THURSDAY, MARCH 15th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Bird Migration*, Join UMASS Biology professor, *Bruce Byers*, for a discussion on ornithology and bird migration, 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *48 Solutions, Planemo, Goat Boy*, rock/indie, 9 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Tommy Filiault & Friends*, Acoustic Rock, 8-10 p.m.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 16th**  
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Nexus*, 9 p.m.  
Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *TJAY*, 8 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Chickenwire*, 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Freres & Pere (Roland) Lapierre*, folk, rock, Free, 9:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 16th and SATURDAY, MARCH 17th**  
Turners Falls High School: *Bye Bye Birdie* presented by Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School, 7 p.m. Also matinee Sunday, March 18th at 1 p.m.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Syrup, One Sweet Performance Festival*. A delicious potpourri of world class theatre, music, and dance for all ages. See website for details: ptco.org.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 17th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *The Puzzle of New England's Predators*. Bobcat, coyote, and fishers live locally, but do we really know that much about them? Join naturalist *John Foster* for a slide show of New England's predators. Let's demystify these animals, 1 - 2:15 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & The Mud, Blood & Beer Band*. Singing all your Johnny Cash favorites, 9 - 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Turn it Loose*, 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rockit Queer with DJ Greg 2000*, 9:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 18th**  
Academy of Music, Northampton: *Celtic Heels' Irish Dance Company Production*, 2 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

Sunday Locals: *Marlene Lavelle & friends*, indie, folk, 6 p.m. Free.

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

**MONDAY, MARCH 19th**  
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo*, 8 p.m. Free.

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**EVERY TUESDAY**  
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Craft Night*, 7 p.m.

**EVERY THURSDAY**  
Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Acoustic open mic*, with *Dan, Kip and Shultz* from *Curly Fingers DuPree* hosting. 8:30 to 11:30 p.m.

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

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

**EVERY FRIDAY and SATURDAY**  
Montague Inn: *TNT Karaoke*.

**NOW until March 31st**  
Gallery A3, Amherst: *Seeing Into Metal*, photography by Wendell's own *Gloria Kegeles*. Shooting with a vintage Nikon camera, she combines skill, instinct and humor with her in-camera compositions.

**MARCH**  
Elmer's Store, Ashfield: *The Eye, The Lens, The Hand*: B&W views from Wendell photographer Morgan Hoyle-Combs.

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

original work of art.

**NOW through MARCH 16th**  
Augusta Savage Gallery, UMASS, Amherst: *Fine Tuning: Zero Balancing & Sustainable Bodies*, featuring work by Montague's *Jenny Chapin* and also *Terry Jenoure*, and *Alexia Cota*.

**MARCH 2nd until MARCH 28th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *East to West-Stories, Games, and Festival*, an exhibit in the Great Hall, Art, history, and literature converge in this exhibit of Chinese-inspired student art centered around recreation with family and friends. As part of our valley-wide BIG READ of the *Joy Luck Club* by *Amy Tan*, art was created by public school students from the Pioneer Valley Regional district and two Greenfield schools: Math and Science Academy and Discovery School at Four Corners. Fridays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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

**FRIDAY, MARCH 9th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: The Great Falls Coffeehouse presents, *Duo Orfeo*. Their use of electric guitars and vintage tube amplifiers to interpret classical music creates a sound that is stunningly gorgeous. 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *St Paddy's Caribbean Adventure*, island to Ireland dance party, free, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Burn Town*, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Richard Chase Group*, acoustic driven originals, 9 - 11 p.m.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 10th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Bird Songs*, we will explore the many beautiful songs we hear as the Refuge transitions to warmer weather. 10:30 a.m.



Fireseed, with Crystalline Ruby Muse and Daniel Pac, open for Carrie Ferguson & The Cherry Street Band at The Rendezvous, on Saturday, March 10th at 9:30 p.m.

Group, 9:30 p.m. Free.

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

Greenfield American Legion Post: *Trivia Night to benefit The Concerned Citizens of Franklin County*. The most fun you'll ever have fighting biomass. 7 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Luke Mulholland Band*, 8 p.m.

Arts Block Cafe, Greenfield: Yes Exactly Open House featuring *Daniel Hales*, and the *frost heaves, The Walking Ghosts, Egg, Eggs, Katie Sachs, and Rebel Base* playing both upstairs at the Arts Block main stage and downstairs in The Wheelhouse. 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Dedicated to Delilah*, 60's, 70's & 80's Cover Tunes, 9 - 12 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Rock 101*, 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Carrie Ferguson Band and the Cherry Street Band* with *Fireseed* opening. Folk, indie, rock, 9:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 11th**  
Montague Grange: *Vintage & Antiques Market*, quality vintage and antiques vendors bring their wares to the Grange, 7:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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**GARDENER** from page 8*February 6th*

The bus handling the border transit from Chetumal, Mexico to Corozal, Belize waits while passengers go through immigration at the Mexican border, and again in Belize. It is a recycled Bluebird school bus from the US, and provides us with a lumpy, bumpy ride.

The next day, in Corozal, we awaken to the sound of birds, the occasional rooster and the plaintive cries of the fourteen new puppies next door. Our Welsh host, Gwyn, is a mercurial fellow whose emotional state turns on a dime. Over time he has adopted two street dogs and a cat, to whom he gives medical attention, food and affection. Similarly, he collects human orphans.

A young American we nickname Miss Tattoo for obvious reasons is a case in point. She has a room in the hotel annex in exchange for helping in the kitchen, cleaning rooms and tending bar several nights a week. During our stay she buys a motorcycle as she plans to travel to Guatemala.

Miss Tattoo is in her twenties, fearless and self-confident about traveling alone and the state of her finances. She sold everything of value that she owned to buy the motorcycle, which she procured brand new for \$1500 US or \$3200 Belizean, complete with helmet, license plate and security alarm.

One evening, a street vendor came to the gate of the hotel and called up to us on the upstairs patio to ask of our interest in a large wooden carving. He was very persistent despite our negative response, and finally let himself in the gate and upstairs to the second floor.

Immediately afterwards, Gwyn appeared like a bantam rooster. "This gentleman says you want to purchase his carving."

After we demurred, and Gwyn sent the man out on his ear, and returned to lecture us

angrily. "Never, never let anyone you don't know in. He just wants to case the joint. Now he knows where my security cameras are and I'll have to move them around." He turned and roared out of the room.

Gwyn and our breakfast cook, Sondra, are both hot-tempered and prone to frequent disputes. She complains he is unreasonable and forgets all manner of things; he is impatient but also highly dependent on her organizational skills, a fact which he resents. About halfway into our week's stay, the storm clouds build over Gwyn's horizons and he is speaking to no one.

Happily, he gets out his boat and disappears for the day leaving things in the capable hands of Sondra and Miss Tattoo. When he returns at 4 p.m. for the first beer of the day, peace has been restored.

*February 12th*

We are back in Merida, feeling a new level of comfort with the pace and flow of the city. We have in mind two side trips we'd like to make before we leave Mexico. One is to a Mayan site a few miles outside the city, the other a half-day trip 30 kilometers north to Progreso on the Gulf coast.

We elect to go first to Dzibilchaltun, where we will tour a well-preserved Mayan temple, a church and a cenote or sinkhole. A cenote is the entrance to an underground river, open for swimming or just for water-side relaxing.

We walk to the bus terminal the prior day to get our bearings and plan to leave the hotel the next morning at 9:00 a.m. for a 9:30 departure. We arrive at the terminal after a brisk walk and secure our tickets. Soon we are boarding a cushy touring bus, weaving through the back streets of the city.

At a traffic light, our driver scrutinizes our tickets and informs us we are on the wrong bus. We owe an additional thirty pesos and we are on the way to

Progreso! The driver makes swimming motions with his arms to make sure we understand: we are on our way to a day at the beach.

Progreso could be any beach side resort town in warm waters. The beach is on the Gulf of Mexico and is fronted by a long line of bars, souvenir shops and restaurants. It is not a day on which the cruise ships dock, so there are few tourists.

We walk the beach, collect shells, and enjoy the warm surf with only a handful of others. When we get hungry, we check out the restaurants all of which are large and clean featuring Mexican and Yucatan specialties as well as international favorites. The price of a fillet of fish, grilled, starts at \$100 pesos (\$7.70 US) and descends to \$65 pesos as we near the end of the line. The establishments sport tropical names: Flamingo, Toucan, Crocs. We enjoy a delicious meal of grilled seafood for \$15 US for two. After about four hours of sun, beach and wind, we amble back to the terminal and catch one of the frequent buses for the hour return trip to Merida.

*February 14th*

We trek again to the bus station, this time watching for a local bus to the Mayan ruins. We navigate this successfully and are soon seated on a springless, chummy and soon to be filled carrier which bumps and humps over frequent stops and consumes the same amount of time going 10 kilometers the luxury bus took to travel the 30 kilometers to Progreso.



*The Temple of the Dolls, in Dzibilchaltun, near Merida, Yucatan. The Mayan temple is aligned in such a way that the rising sun shines through its doors on the spring and autumn equinox.*

Dzibilchaltun is extraordinarily powerful visually. The buildings are many: a church, several temples, a tiered seating area in the original square of a plaza, as well as the remains of many homes, all spread across an extensive open field with the occasional tree or cactus.

The wind rushes through the site yet the sun is very hot. The space is crisscrossed with walkways of crushed stone. On one large iguana poses for a picture. Because so many of the structures are largely intact, we can appreciate the labor of creating these angular, tiered layers of rock, triangulating towards the sky. Each site boasts an explanatory plaque so we dodge the large tourist groups with their guides and make our way alone. Except for the occasional bird song it is quiet, adding to the sense of history and the mysterious past.

All of the buildings date from 600-900 AD. The area was at one time home to as many as 20,000 Mayans. As in all of these places it is possible to see where conquering Spaniards used Mayan structures as the foundation for their own buildings. The Spanish church is the only arched, curved structure. In one temple we are permitted to climb down into the interior where we see a

large stone carving of a Mayan god.

It takes a couple of hours and a rest besides the beautiful cenote to do justice to the site. When we return to the visitor center we learn that we have just missed the 12:30 bus back to the city and must wait two hours for the next.

On the way out, we travel increasingly narrow, rutted roads through one fairly prosperous town and then to the final stop, a poor Mayan town seemingly out in the middle of nowhere. We see uniformed children returning from school, carrying school projects.

We are back in the Merida terminal around 4 p.m. having made countless stops on the bumpy way through the back streets.

*February 17th**Adios, Mexico!*

We will miss most:  
The smiling, friendly people.  
The oases of light and greenery in interiors and in the many city parks.  
The local Yucatan foods.  
The loud music 24-7 (yes!)  
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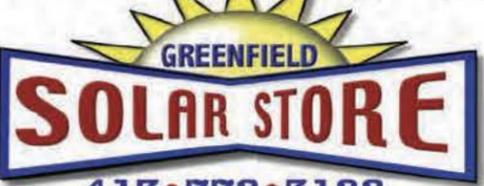
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