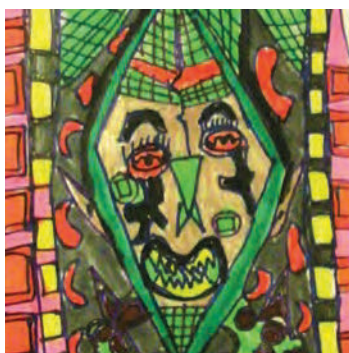




March Goes Out Like A Lamb!

Page 2



Danny Cruz: In His Own Words

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Memories of Gill's Country Store

Page 12

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

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YEAR 11 – NO. 24

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 28, 2013

Three Finalists Selected for G-M Superintendent

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

On Thursday, March 21 the school committee met with members of the search committee to receive their recommendations for final candidates to be considered for the position of permanent superintendent for the Gill-Montague regional school district. In the Turners Falls high school TV studio where the meeting was recorded, the members accepted the report from the search committee, thanked them for their efforts and discharged them of their duties. The school committee will now take over the work of developing a schedule for site visits and questions for the final interviews, which will take place at the high school and will be open to the public.

The superintendent search committee made up of people from all parts of the community, has conducted interviews with candidates in executive session

since early March to select the finalists to be referred to the full school committee.

Nancy Daniel-Green, chair of the search committee, reported the names of the selected candidates to the committee. She said they met on Tuesday, March 19 after completing their interviews and voted, selecting these candidates unanimously on the first vote. The three finalists are:

- Patricia Gardner, M.Ed, has worked at Turners Falls High School since 2010 and is its current principal.

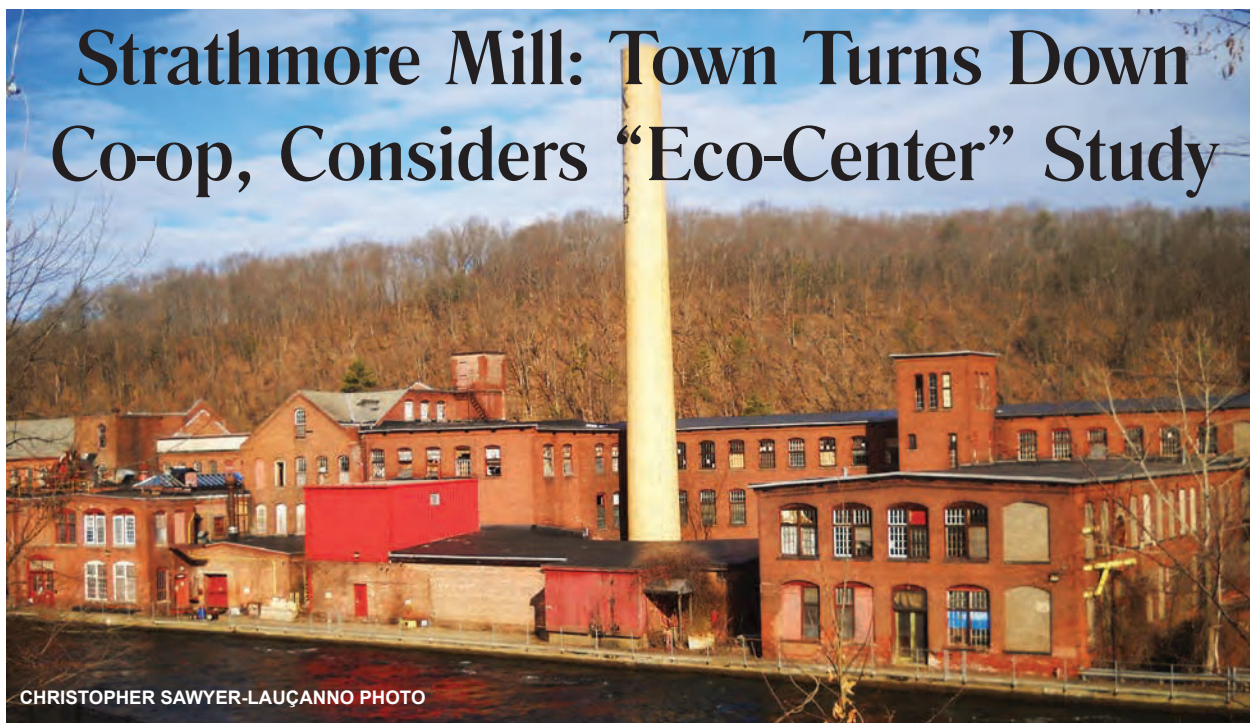
- Michael Sullivan, C.A.G.S., is the Assistant Superintendent for Learning, at Longmeadow Public Schools.

- Maureen Ward, Ed.D, current Superintendent of the SAU Unit 18, in Franklin, New Hampshire.

The next step will be for members of the school committee, along with some of the search committee

see **FINALISTS** page 4

Strathmore Mill: Town Turns Down Co-op, Considers “Eco-Center” Study



CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUÇANNO PHOTO

The town of Montague has struggled to attract investment to the landmark mill complex.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Montague’s attempt to give the Strathmore Mill complex away this year fell short of its target, but an opportunity to keep the process moving forward is still on the table. At their Monday night meeting, the selectboard declined one group’s

proposal for use of a single building, and heard the second group’s request for a one-year exclusive period in which to study the entire property. If such an agreement is reached, Flight Patterns LLC, which sees in the buildings a future “mixed-use eco-center,” would invest up front in updating environmental, structural, and market assessments on the

property – a deal supported by the team of town officials that reviewed the two proposals. If they then walk away, their findings could still be used by subsequent developers.

“The downside,” noted town planner Walter Ramsey, “is not being able to sell the mill for one

see **STRATHMORE** page 5

Turners Falls Residents Presented with Progress on Downtown Livability Study



DODSON & FLINKER IMAGE

PHOTO © MARTIN MISSELDITZ

How downtown Turners might look if the livability plan is implemented.

By CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUÇANNO

TURNERS FALLS – On March 21, approximately 23 Turners Falls residents heard the latest refinements and progress on the Downtown Turners Falls Livability Study.

The public presentation was the culmination of several months of discussion and planning by Montague Town Planner Walter Ramsay, various groups and individual residents of Turners Falls, and a consulting team led by Peter Flinker of Dodson & Flinker from Ashfield, in conjunction with Ted Brovitz of Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates from Boston. The study is funded by the U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Grant

Program.

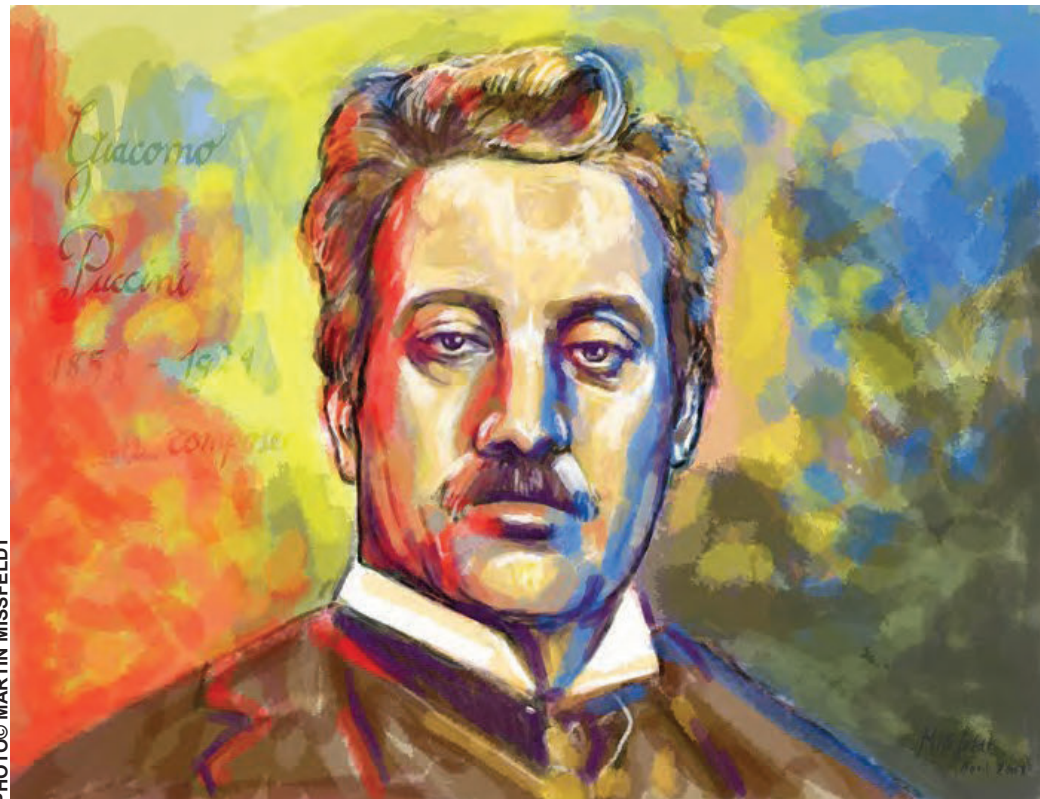
The meeting’s specific focus was on two major areas: Avenue A streetscape proposals and marketing and branding of downtown Turners.

The meeting began with Flinker presenting a draft vision statement that stressed the pride residents take in their downtown. It began “Downtown Turners Falls is a vibrant, diverse and livable community. We value the beauty of the Connecticut River surrounding our village and honor her long history of providing us with food, power, transportation and recreational opportunity. We are proud of the industrial foundations that have given rise to both our distinctive architecture and the hard-working, creative ethic of our community.” Further on

in the statement was a vision for the future couched as an actuality: “A mix of locally-owned businesses thrive in storefronts along a beautiful, active and pedestrian-friendly Avenue A. Key vacant properties are re-energized with new uses that bring more people and businesses into downtown.” Flinker’s presentation attempted to show how this hope for a revitalized Avenue A could become reality.

According to the consultants, a central element in the revitalization of downtown Turners is refurbishing the Avenue A streetscape. Flinker and his associate, Kate Tooke, presented several proposals for greening the avenue and creating a more direct link

see **LIVABILITY** page 6



PUCCINI: WORLD’S FAVORITE OPERA COMPOSER LIVES at GCC SYMPOSIUM

By LEE WICKS

Opera came to me in 1991 while the United States prepared for the first invasion of Iraq. Feeling despair about the impending war, I started watching late night TV when I could not sleep. In an advertising spot Luciano Pavarotti sang “Nessun Dorma” to sell the album from the Three Tenors concert that had been held that summer in Italy. “Nessun Dorma” is a soaring piece from Puccini’s opera *Turandot*, and for me it became the beginning of a love affair with opera that has only grown deeper throughout the years. A friend who cheered me on said, “If you like Puccini, you’ll love Verdi,” and that became true. Now I treasure all the Italian *bel canto* repertoire, along with French and German Opera. However, Puccini’s work is still thrilling, which is why I was delighted to

learn that one of the senior symposiums at Greenfield Community College was titled, “So You Think You Know Puccini.”

On Thursday, March 21, about 75 people crowded the lecture hall at GCC’s downtown campus to hear William Fregosi talk about this complex composer. It was part one of a two-part presentation, the second part to be held on March 28. Fregosi is a retired technical Coordinator for Theater Arts at M.I.T, a freelance artist, a theatrical designer and a writer and lecturer on opera. This is the seventh year he has lectured on opera at GCC, and his presentations always draw a crowd.

In his course description, he wrote, “Wagner is more intellectual and controversial; Verdi is more the great Italian icon; but Giacomo Puccini is almost certainly the world’s favorite opera composer.

His operas are constantly performed. His beloved arias appear in film scores and TV commercials, one even making the 1950s pop charts. Yet popular as he is, much of his life is unknown to the public. A man of obsessive passions, and an infuriating perfectionist whose life was haunted by tragedy, Puccini may have put more of his heart and soul into his works than any other composer. We’ll explore this artist’s complex and deeply felt life with special attention to the beauties of his lesser-known operas. There will be recordings by the creators of their roles who worked directly with the composer, as well as by famous modern interpreters. We’ll also hear student compositions he incorporated into his great operas and unknown original passages cut from *Madama*

see **PUCCINI** page 6

Pet of the Week

Some Kind of Trouble



Luca

My name is Luca and if I had a middle name, it would be PLAY! According to my previous family, I'm friendly, active and very intelligent. My golden eyes don't miss a thing; I love to chase and pounce on things that move -- if you adopt me, your house will be bug-free! When I play, I can get revved up like a race car engine so it's best to have toys handy when you interact with me. If you're looking for a lot of personality in a handsome package and can appreciate a cat who likes to run the show, look no further than Luca!

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

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Wendell Free Library

Internet Access Club

There is now an "Internet Access Club" at the Wendell Free Library.

The Marion Herrick Room at the Library is open for internet access each Monday through the end of April from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Anyone who needs access to a connection is welcome at the library

for quiet study, work, etc. People who have been hanging out in the parking lot with their computer are invited to come in from the cold and join us on Mondays.

The Internet Access Club may continue the Monday hours in May if there is enough interest.

Erving Public Library

Book Discussion at Senior Center

On Thursday, April 4, the Friends of the Library invite people to a free book discussion on *Buying the Farm: Peace and War on a Sixties Commune* by Tom Fels, from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Senior / Community Center in Erving.

The book tells the story of Montague Farm, an early back-to-the-land communal experiment in western Massachusetts, from its beginning in 1968 through the following thirty-five years of its surprisingly long life.

Drawing on his own experience as a resident of the farm from 1969 to 1973 and decades of contact with the farm's extended family, Fels provides an insightful account of the history of this iconic alternative community. He follows its trajectory from its heady early days as a pioneering outpost of counterculture through many years of change,

including a period of renewed political activism and, later, increasing episodes of conflict between opposing factions to determine what the farm represented and who would control its destiny.

With deft individual portraits, Fels reveals the social dynamics of the group and explores the ongoing difficulties faced by a commune that was founded in idealism and sought to operate on the model of a leaderless democracy. He draws on a large body of farm-family and 1960s-related writing and the notes of community members to present a variety of points of view.

The result is an absorbing narrative that chronicles the positive aspects of Montague Farm while documenting the challenges and disruptions that marked its history.

Contact the library if you need the book.



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

By FRED CICETTI

Q. I'm a baby-sitting grandparent and I get lots of colds. Is this common?

A. Yes. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases reports that school children get as many as 12 colds a year. Put those kids near their grandparents and it doesn't take a scientist to know those colds are going to spread.

One of the problems is that these walking petri dishes come home from school with new germs for which older people haven't developed antibodies.

Any grandparent will tell you that

being around their little treasures has made them sick. My seven grandchildren are generous with all the viruses they get from their school chums.

What are you supposed to do when one of the darlings comes up to you with a runny nose and asks for a hug? Well, if you understand the hazards, perhaps you can formulate a plan that works for you around the miraculous children of your children.

Obviously the best course of action is to stay away from grandchildren when they have colds, but any grandparent knows that's next to impossible.

There are two ways you can catch a cold:

1. Inhaling drops of mucus full of cold germs from the air.
2. Touching a surface that has cold germs and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

So, avoid close facial contact with your ailing grandchildren. Use some restraint. If the child needs



Jill Horton-Lyons hangs out with the lambs of Winterberry Farm in Leverett.

The lambs, at 21 Teawaddle Hill Road, are bosting their 20th annual Easter afternoon open house this Sunday, March 31, from 2 to 4 p.m. Newly hatched ducklings and chicks will also be present, as will the farm's other animals. All are welcome, free of charge. Boots are recommended, and donations will be accepted for Right Sharing of World Resources. Call Jill at (413) 548-3940 for more information.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Children are Lovely Little Germ Factories

comfort, limit yourself to hugs that don't put you in the position of inhaling their germs.

Washing your hands thoroughly and often is important. Washing with soap and water doesn't kill the cold virus, but removes it. The scrubbing is more important than the soap.

Also, if you can, try to avoid touching your face after you have been around a child with a cold.

Rhinoviruses can live up to three hours on your skin, and on objects such as telephones and stair railings. Cleaning environmental surfaces with a virus-killing disinfectant might help prevent spread of infection.

Where are these viruses found most often? No, not in the bathroom. The worst room in the house for germs is the kitchen. And the greatest concentration is found in sponges and dishcloths.

Laundering a dishcloth doesn't eliminate germs. And putting a sponge through the dishwasher makes it look clean but doesn't

remove the infection. Instead, moisten the sponge or dishcloth and microwave it for two minutes. Then you'll have safe, germ-free tools to use.

These tips will help, but the reality is that you're going to catch some colds. They're the price of being a caregiver. It's the price you paid as a parent. Now you're having a second chance for all that love... and all those germs.

Send your questions to fred@healthygeezers.com.

Senior Center Activities - April 1st to April 5th

GILL-MONTAGUE SENIOR CENTER

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

Monday 4/1

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday: 4/2

9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting
1 p.m. Painting Class

Wednesday: 4/3

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

Thursday: 4/4

9 a.m. NO Tai Chi

10:30 a.m. Brown Bag

1 p.m. Pitch

Friday: 4/5

10 a.m. Aerobics

10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

12 p.m. Pizza Party

1 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING

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

Monday 4/1

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

Tuesday: 4/2

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics

12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday: 4/3

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

10 a.m. Blood Pressure

12 p.m. Bingo

Thursday: 4/4

8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Posture Perfect

11 a.m. Brown Bag

12 p.m. Cards

Friday: 4/5

9 a.m. Bowling

9:30 a.m. Sit and Knit

LEVERETT

For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us. Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga - Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$4 (first class free). Senior Lunch - Fridays at noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

WENDELL

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

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Grade 7
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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled By DON CLEGG

Come one, come all to **Bingo at GSB**, Turners Falls, on Saturday, March 30 from 10 to 11:30 p.m. with guest caller Ivan Smith. GSB will provide cards, prizes and light refreshments; all you need to bring is yourself and to call ahead, (413) 863-4316 to reserve your seat, which will be on a first call, first reserve basis.

The Legendary Tom Rush will perform at the Wendell Full Moon Cafe on Saturday, March 30 starting at 7:30 p.m. Since helping to shape the folk revival in the 1960's, Rush has been spinning tales and tunes all over the world, selling out Symphony Hall and influencing generations of musicians in many genres. This is a rare chance to hear him up close, out of the big lights, and to share an evening of song down home in Wendell. Seats are limited. Visit our website for more information about reservations. The Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse is located in Old Town Hall in the center of Wendell. It offers music, fun and dance; always in support of a good cause. Come experience the Valley's only Dessert-O-Rama in an affordable family-friendly venue.

The **lambs of Winterberry Farm** in Leverett (21 Teawaddle Hill Road) are hosting their 20th annual Easter afternoon open house on Sunday, March 31 from 2 until 4 p.m. Newly hatched ducklings and chicks will also be present, as will the farm's other animals. There is no charge but contributions for Right Sharing of World Resources will be accepted.

All are welcome. Wearing boots is recommended.

The next **Soup & Game Night** on Monday, April 1, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at Hope & Olive will benefit Franklin County's Museum of Our Industrial Heritage, located along the Green River in Greenfield. The museum's collection of artifacts, archival material, and historic photos represents nearly all of Franklin County's 26 towns, presenting tangible reminders of industrial heritage by focusing on the spirit of innovation that fueled each era. The Green River Festival

will provide an added treat for the evening by announcing the festival line-up.

Turners Falls River Culture is seeking submissions for the **"Where I Live" exhibit**. Wherever you live — in your mind, in an apartment, in town, or the country, even on the edge — anyone can be part of River Culture's collaboration on the latest community art project. Use a 4 x 6 inch card to create something that tells about where you live, in any media. Drop off the card by Thursday, April 4, at Loot, Nina's Nook, or the Montague Town Hall, all located on Avenue A in Turners Falls. Come to Turners Falls on the evening of Thursday, April 11, to see the postcards on display. You don't need to live in Turners Falls to participate. For more information, call Turners Falls RiverCulture at (413) 230-9910.

On Saturday, April 6, at 9 a.m. to noon at the **Millers River Environmental Center**, 100 Main St in Athol, the Millers River Watershed Council will hold a training to instruct volunteers on how to properly conduct a stream wide culvert survey and where to store data so that priority planning can be done to improve culvert conditions. The project will be done in stages. Culverts at stream crossings are one of the major challenges for fish and wildlife passage along streams. Culverts are also a significant concern for municipal highway departments in managing water flow under roadways. For both of these seemingly different issues, knowing where the problems are situated is an important first step in solving the problem. MRWC in partnership with Trout Unlimited are taking the first step to tackling this challenge.

The Leverett School is holding a **free ice skating** event and bake sale at the Mullins Center Practice Rink in Amherst on Sunday, April 7, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Doors open at 1 p.m. Arrive early if you need rental skates. This event is sponsored by the Leverett and Shutesbury PTO. Skaters may help out by donating a baked good to the bake sale. Email to PTO@leverettschool.org

to let the PTO know what you're going to bake.

Sawmill River Arts, a collaboratively run fine arts and fine crafts gallery located at the Montague Bookmill is seeking new members. We are hosting an informational meeting for interested artists on Monday, April 8, from 6 to 7 p.m. at the gallery. The meeting will give folks the opportunity to see the gallery, find out how it operates, and see if it may be a fit for you and selling your work. SRA members are all local artists, working in different mediums, who value mutual respect and artistic growth. For more information, contact Kerry Stone (978) 544-5463 or Jill Bromberg (413) 367-9959.

A.K. Warner Fund Scholarship applications are now available. The fund was established in 1881 under the will of Anson K. Warner to provide financial assistance to Greenfield residents between the ages of 14 and 21. The scholarship is awarded for the purpose of paying for expenses related to educational endeavors, including tuition, fees, textbooks, and more. Interested candidates may pick up an application at the guidance office of any Franklin County public or private school, or by calling Sally Ahearn at (413) 773-3959. The application deadline is Friday, April 12.

The **Turners Falls Block Party will live on**. Thanks to Colleen Campbell and Pam Allan, the Block Party will happen once again on Saturday, Aug. 10. Allan, a downtown resident and musician, is especially interested in reviving and revitalizing the opening parade as well as having World Music play a big role during the afternoon, celebrating the many cultures of the community. Cambell, who organized the Harvest Festival at Camp Kiwanee, will work with vendors and evening musicians, who will be more of the rock genre, publicity and more.

Send local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Greenfield Community College

Career & Job Fair

Tuesday, April 9

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

GCC Dining Commons

Sponsored by GCC & Franklin Hampshire Career Center

Greenfield Community College will host its annual Career Fair on Wednesday, April 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Local employers from around the region will be present and participants will have the opportunity to learn about multiple career paths. Employers from sustainable energy, not for profit, health care and more will be

participating. Workshops, resume assistance and career guidance will be available throughout the fair.

Join us for this exciting day of career exploration! All GCC students and alumni are welcome. Attendees should park in lots A-E.

Contact Judy Raper, director of student development at raperj@gcc.mass.edu or (413) 775-1819.

Wanted: Writers

Do You Want to Get More Involved with Your Community?

The Montague Reporter

is seeking writers to cover local board meetings. Modest compensation and editorial guidance provided.

For information, contact 413-863-8666 or editor@montaguereporter.org

Urgent meeting of the Gill, Riverside Cemetery Association

Monday, April 8th 6:30 p.m. at the Turners Falls Safety Complex Community Room

All parties interested in the welfare and continuation of the Riverside cemetery should attend this meeting.

CORRECTION with APOLOGIES

In the March 21 paper, in the article "Next Steps for the Town, MCCI, and the Planning Board," *Montague Reporter* staff regret the following errors: the building held by MEDIC is located at 38 Avenue A, not 62 as reported. Secondly the monies appropriated at Town meeting will not be used for facade work on the building as originally reported. The *Montague Reporter* thanks Don Valley, a member of MEDIC for bringing the correct information to our attention.

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Leverett Public Hearing

A public hearing will be held at the Leverett Library on Tuesday April 2 at 7 p.m. to discuss proposed changes to the "Code of Leverett" as follows: To add a section to Chapter 78, which would address the outdoor confinement of dogs. These proposed changes would prohibit the tethering of a dog to a stationary object for over three consecutive hours and prohibit tethering with a cable run for over eight consecutive hours daily. No tethering would be allowed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

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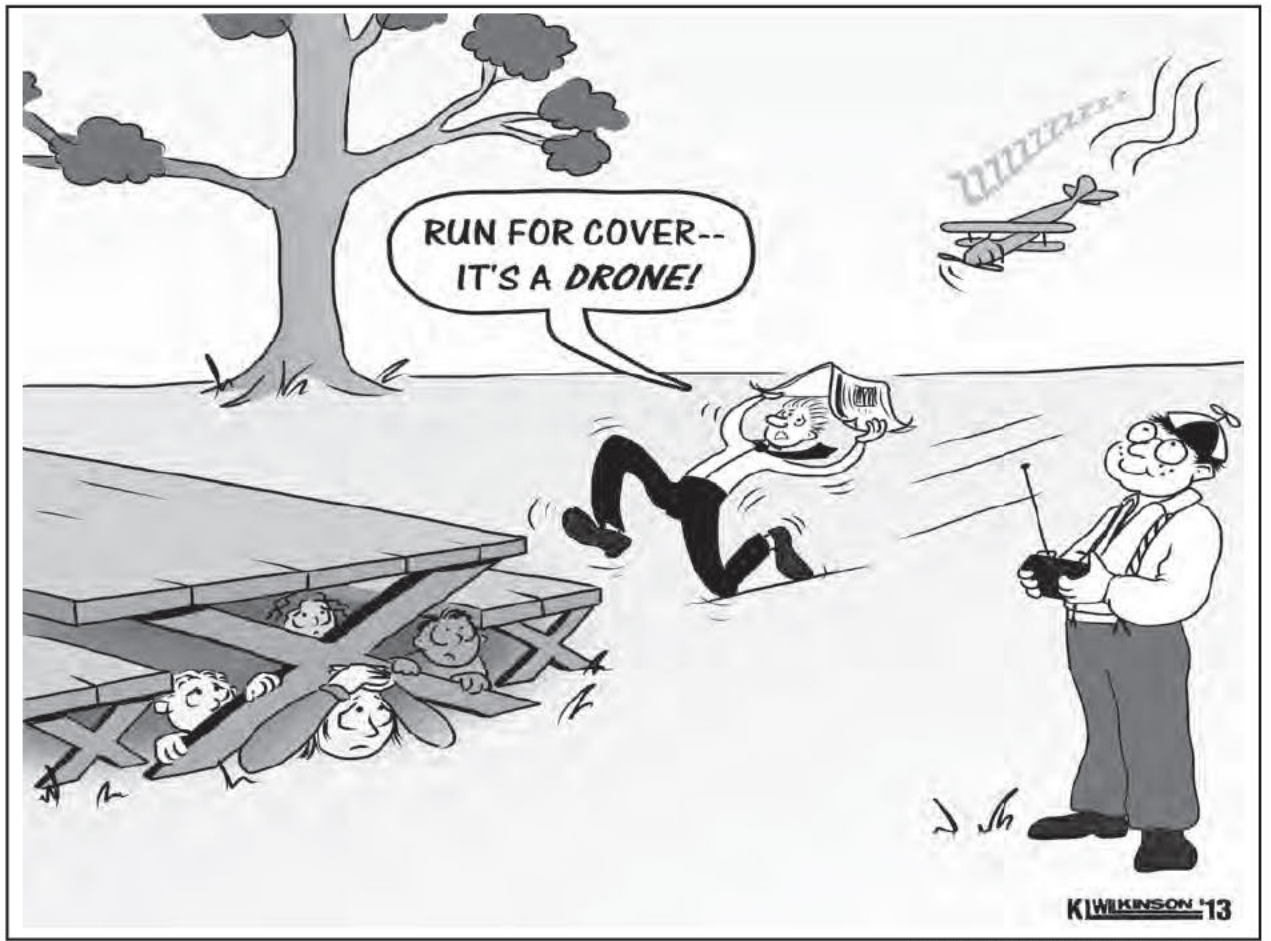
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KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

GUEST OP-ED

Lemmings at the Nuclear Cliff HELEN CALDICOTT ON FUKUSHIMA, AND OTHER DISASTERS

By DAVID DETMOLD

NORTHAMPTON – America needs a revolution, and the women of Northampton are the right ones to lead it.

That was the basic message Dr. Helen Caldicott, 75-year old Australian born pediatrician and founding president of the Nobel Peace Prize winning Physicians for Social Responsibility, delivered at the First Church of Northampton on Sunday, March 24.

Caldicott achieved early fame for her exposition of the medical dangers of nuclear power and her advocacy for a halt to a uranium mining union in Australia, which contributed to that nation's seven year ban on uranium mining, from 1975 to 1982. Though Australia still has no nuclear reactors, the nation gradually resumed mining and shipping high grade uranium ore, of which Australia currently holds 40 percent of world supplies.

On Sunday, Caldicott was billed as speaking about the medical consequences of Fukushima. But she devoted as much if not more of her hour long talk to other man made catastrophes that she believes are threatening the survival of the human race, along with other so-called higher life forms on this planet – notably the rapidly accelerating global climate chaos caused by burning fossil fuels, and the proliferating threat of thermonuclear Armageddon, courtesy of a Pakistan-India or Iran-Israel flashpoint, or simply from some teenage hacker gaining access to the fail-safe codes of any of the major nuclear powers and pushing the button. "Our lives are hanging by a slender thread," she said, "and we are like lemmings rushing toward the cliffs of our annihilation."

Since hard cancer induced by radiation exposure has a five to 18 year latency period, Caldicott had little hard data to point to in terms of actual casualties of the ongoing triple meltdown at the tsunami-damaged GE Mark I boiling water reactors at Fukushima. But she nevertheless categorically declared that disaster to be the worst industrial accident in the history of the human race. In her estimation, Fukushima topped Chernobyl in terms of total radiation releases (although that is not a judgment shared by the International Atomic Energy Agency – which has clung to a disaster rating system that

places Chernobyl at the top of a growing list as the worst of the once unimaginable loss of coolant core melt accidents, which seem to be occurring now every ten years, on average).

Caldicott pointed to solid data, backed by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, of over 6,000 cases of childhood thyroid cancer around Chernobyl to support her claim of the devastating consequences of that disaster. She also said the towns and villages surrounding the 30 kilometer radius exclusion zone around Chernobyl are filled with cases of hideously deformed children, children she said were born missing limbs and vital organs due to the teratogenic effects of radiation. Young children and fetuses, the world renowned pediatrician explained, are 20 times more susceptible than adults to the damaging health effects of radiation, due to their rapidly dividing cells.

For that matter, Caldicott spurns the conventional estimates of deaths attributable to the Chernobyl explosion, citing a little known 2009 study published by the New York Academy of Sciences that drew on thousands of previously untranslated Russian health studies to conclude that over a million premature deaths will ultimately be attributable to the failed power experiment conducted by an ill trained station operator at the month old Chernobyl reactor on April 26, 1986. Authorities at the IAEA count only 31 Soviet firefighters and reactor operators at Chernobyl as the direct fatalities of that disaster.

Turning to the March 11, 2011 disaster in Japan, Caldicott said, "The children of Fukushima were inundated with radiation. Three times more radiation was released by Fukushima than Chernobyl," and those releases are continuous and ongoing, as reactor operator TEPCO struggles two years later to contain the damage from the melted cores. Earlier this month, a recent power failure in the jury-rigged electrical systems maintaining some level of cooling at the Fukushima complex, blamed on a rat infiltrating an electric switchboard, left the cooling pools where thousands of lethally radioactive fuel rods are stored without power for hours or days. A fuel pool with 1331 fuel rods sits at the top of the tilting and badly

Springtime at Unity Park

Letter to the Editor

Common Core Standards

After reading the article, "Union 28 Teachers Talk Shop" (MR Vol.11#23), I wanted to say a few things about the Common Core Standards. It is not a foregone conclusion that the Common Core Standards are good for kids. I have a master's degree in education and eight years of teaching experience, and I feel strongly that children should not learn the exact same thing everywhere in the country, regardless of their academic achievement level, just because they happen to be the same age.

The way we present content, and even the content we present, should match a student's current level of achievement and, most importantly the student's interests. Sometimes a group of kids in a classroom will really get excited about something. Maybe it's writing a play or learning about our local waterways, local government, or anything else under the sun. If teachers have the freedom

to run with their students' interests, those kids will have an experience they will remember the rest of their lives, and they will learn a lot in the process. I think we have all seen examples of this either when we were kids or in our own children's schools.

The Common Core Standards aim to align everything teachers do with the tests. They do not leave room for a group of students excited about a topic to follow their interest. They also do not leave room for students to be ahead of or behind grade level. Let's face it, there will always be a range of abilities in any classroom.

It's not surprising the Standards are good for neither students nor teachers. It was not teachers who came up with the idea in the first place. Common Core Standards are brought to you by the same people who brought you tests, more tests, and even more tests. The

Common Core Standards, along with ever more standardized testing, represent a way for some very large corporations to rake in our tax dollars. Billionaires have spent a lot of money to ensure that states adopt the Common Core Standards. The entire concept of public school is under attack by corporations who would like to turn a profit from education "reform." The Common Core Standards are a part of this movement.

I am sure the Union 28 Teachers come up with some great ideas when they get together. I have taught out of the *Investigations* series and *Everyday Math* and think they are great programs. I support our public schools and public school teachers 100 percent, but I do not support "aligning" with the Common Core Standards.

— **Eloise Michael**
Turners Falls

FINALISTS from page 1

members, to visit the candidates at their schools to see them in their work environment, get to meet some of their co-workers, teachers, parents and others in order to get to know the candidate better. These visits will take place during the week of March 25.

On April 1 there will be a meeting at Turners Falls High School with Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) search consultant, Patricia Correia, where they will discuss the results of the site visits and organize their final interview questions. This meeting will be taped but will not be broadcast live.

damaged Number Four reactor at Fukushima, threatening Japan and the world with a far worse radiation release should another serious earthquake strike before TEPCO can complete the construction of a new building around that damaged reactor, with a crane suspended from the top to move the thermally hot fuel rods to dry casks for long term storage. (Long term meaning

The next phase will be the site visits at Gill-Montague regional school district for each of the candidates. On the day of the site visit the candidate will begin the day with a tour of the district. The school committee discussed what to do for lunch, and there will be some choices available, including lunch in our cafeteria. At 4:30 the candidate will take part in a one hour meet and greet at Turners Falls High School. Members of the staff and parents, as well as the public, are encouraged to attend these events.

Each one of the three candidates will have a separate day to visit. Following the meet and greet the school committee will conduct an

interview that will be one hour and 15 minutes long. The site visits and interviews will take place between April 8 and April 11 at 6:00 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School television studio.

The final interview for all candidates will be on April 11. Immediately after the interview is completed, the school committee will vote to select their choice for superintendent.

The next regular school committee meeting will be on March 27, 2013 at Turners Falls High School at 7:00 p.m. The school committee will vote on a final budget for the district at this meeting.



her topic. "The EPA has stopped measuring ambient levels of radiation coming from Fukushima. No one is protecting you. As we fill the environment and the food chain with radioactive elements we're going to see catastrophic increases of genetic illnesses."

Caldicott said of the 100,000 children living around Fukushima who have been tested for thyroid abnormalities, 43 percent have cysts or nodules on their thyroids, two years after the accident began. As mentioned, cancer takes at least five years to develop, but Caldicott anticipates an epidemic of thyroid and other cancers in northeastern Japan, if not elsewhere in the country, wherever the wind deposited the radiation from the meltdowns. She said the dust in the apartments in Tokyo would be buried as radioactive waste in

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U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan

as of 3/27/13

Wounded	Deaths
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STRATHMORE from page 1 year." The selectboard's weary laughter at this comment underscored the town's continuing frustration in finding a suitable owner for the sprawling, 227,000-square-foot landmark situated between the Power Canal and the Connecticut River, which was most recently taken for back taxes in 2010, but has not seen full use in nearly 20 years. The theme of physical deterioration and maintenance costs was raised repeatedly in the discussion, with recent reports of new leaks in the roof adding to the sense of urgency in finding investors.

Two proposals were received in January and have been studied closely for the past two months by Ramsey, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio, and building inspector Dave Jensen. The goal was to sell one or more segments of the complex for a nominal fee, under the town's Commercial Homesteading program, but the request for proposals was worded in such a way as to allow additional outcomes such as the one now requested by Flight Patterns. That group's three core members, BJ Warsaw and Marie Rossettie of New Jersey, and Joel Roston, of Brighton, were on hand on Monday to pitch their vision to the selectboard – and explain what they saw as the need for a slower, more deliberate investigation "before a change of ownership could even be discussed."

Warsaw, presenting from a set of slides, made the case that the buildings could find their patrons if their chief difficulty – their relative inaccessibility – were spun into an attraction: a contained world, dedicated to art, music, craft and light industry, environmental activism and small-business incubation. "We

think that having this community that is right adjacent to the town, but kind of separated, is appealing to artists and craftspeople, and people who want to go there to really work and get away from their daily lives. To spend some time somewhat in isolation, but also to have other people with them, also involved in creative projects."

He spoke of soundproof musician studios, artist studios overlooking the river, cafes, and indoor and outdoor spaces for public gathering and events. The project would highlight resource efficiency, with solar panels, passive heating and cooling, use of the onsite hydroelectric turbine owned by Swift River Hydro, "living roofs," graywater systems and rainwater collection, and accessibility via the bicycle path and pedestrian bridge.

"All these ideas... seem like a lot," Warsaw continued, "but it's a massive space, and one of the reasons we haven't yet concretely subdivided it is we still would like to hear more from the community about specifically what is needed. And we'd also like to conduct more of our own market research." But this would follow more pressing research items: a thorough environmental site assessment, and an updated structural engineering review.

Though the start date of the 12-month period has not been proposed, Warsaw suggested that the end of Franklin County Regional Brownfields Program's current "desktop," phase I, environmental site analysis would be a natural starting point, so the group could continue with a phase II and then further hazardous materials testing if necessary. He estimates the price tag for that, the structural survey, civil engineering and market

reviews will come to \$40,000 to \$80,000, depending on whether any "surprises" emerge along the way.

Flight Patterns' members, Warsaw admitted, are not experienced developers – they are creative professionals, more representative perhaps of the project's target market, who would serve as "boots on the ground" to bring together the experts and investors. If all goes well during their study period, they would then develop the buildings in four phases, beginning with the stand-alone Building 11, universally agreed to be the easiest starting point for development. They would work with the town to leverage funding for rehabbing the condemned (and disputed) pedestrian bridge, enabling the use of Buildings 1 and 4, and gradually move northward. Warsaw and Rossettie estimate that the first phase's cost would be \$4 to \$5 million, to fix and fill Building 11, with an additional \$1 to \$1.5 million in expenses for "mothballing" the larger northern segments for later development.

Flight Patterns plans to work with Tocci Building Companies of Woburn on the project, as well as as-yet-unnamed "developers from Brooklyn." Warsaw mentioned that Tocci shares the group's belief that historical preservation is best attained by making buildings "future-proof," developing them in a way that minimizes their present and future environmental footprint.

The other response to the town's November request for proposals came from a more local group, the ThreshHold Cooperative, which addressed Building 11 only. ThreshHold sought to attract similar constituents – artists, activists, craftspeople and entrepreneurs – but in a different way, by using a limited-equity cooperative structure that would allow them to buy into the building and gain a stake in the project's governance.

ThreshHold is currently working on the purchase of another, smaller building: the Railroad Salvage Annex, a vacant brick stockhouse at 15 Power Street, tucked between the ruined Salvage property and the canal. The group insists that this project was part of a strategy to develop the grassroots coalition capable of taking on Building 11, but the move apparently provoked concerns among the review team that it would instead spread them too thin, diverting scarce resources early in the project.

Reporting the team's findings on Monday, Ramsey told the selectboard they felt ThreshHold "lacked capacity... to make a major redevelopment project get off the ground in the timeframe that we're looking at." Later he confirmed that the Annex project was a factor in the decision: "[We] had concerns about [their] capacity to execute two challenging redevelopment projects simultaneously... I am confident that they would be able to handle either one of the projects. I look forward to working with them on that project and hopefully more to come."

Abbondanzio echoed this: "I



PHOTO COURTESY OF THRESHOLD FACEBOOK

ThreshHold Cooperative has signed a purchase and sale agreement on the Railroad Salvage Annex building, a vacant brick storehouse on Power St.

have nothing negative to say about ThreshHold. Their proposal would take place over a longer period of time, and with less invested up front. That's probably the key difference."

Cooperative member Julia Handschuh told the Reporter this was not an outcome the group had anticipated in taking on the Annex project. "We're disappointed and surprised, given our conversations with the town over the past six months in developing a community-based, grassroots plan for the mill... The Annex is a building we'd started to move on in hope of our proposal for Building 11 being accepted. It provides a space that's available in the more immediate future, to build relationships with the organizations and people we were working with for that building."

Nevertheless, the coop is continuing its preliminary work on the site, and plans to close on the sale soon. "We hope to start construction this summer, and to move in in the fall. It's structured similarly to how we saw the Strathmore project: it's a limited-equity cooperative, with spaces for member-owners and renters, and the goal of transitioning to a fully user-owned-and-controlled property."

Handschuh continued: "We think it's really important to be building new models of community ownership and community investment. We hope that any spaces in Turners Falls will be developed with the intention of creating equitable systems of power and use of the community's resources."

Speaking from the floor on Monday, Jeanne Golrick asked the selectboard, who have been granted by town meeting the final authority to decide on the Strathmore's fate, whether it would be "sold, or given for a dollar, after all the money the town has put into it?"

"I am not in favor of selling it for a dollar," said selectboard member Christopher Boutwell. "I can't speak for the rest of the board, but I know how I feel about it."

The other two disagreed. "Considering the current condition of the mill," said selectboard member Mark Fairbrother, "and everything that any developer will have to do to get in there, I think it's kind of unreasonable, or

impractical, for the town to think you're going to get a whole lot of money up front. Nobody's going to pay half a million dollars just for the privilege of going through the doors." Selectboard member Pat Allen, who attended the meeting by speakerphone, said she agreed with Fairbrother.

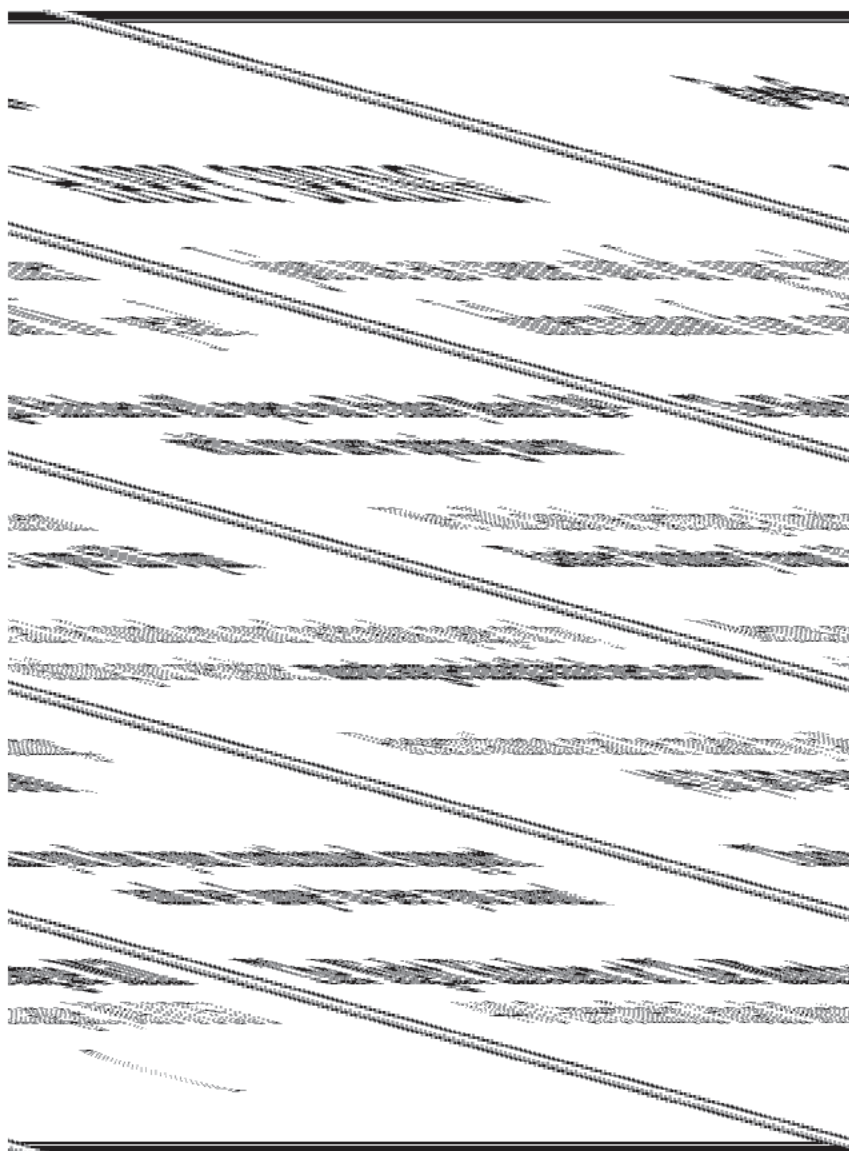
Abbondanzio concurred. "The real return on this, based on our other homesteading programs, is in the private investment that takes place, and what that translates to in terms of tax dollars that are generated from the building. And instead of, basically, putting out \$4 million to demolish the buildings – which is the estimate that I saw – starting to get tax revenue from those rehabbed buildings: that's where the value comes back to the town, down the road."

"We'll take it all under advisement and see what we can come up with," said Boutwell, thanking the presenters from Flight Patterns and tabling the discussion. According to Ramsey, the town plans to negotiate for access to the studies' results, help with immediate maintenance costs, and a partnership for possible outside grants concerning the pedestrian bridge.

"They're doing due diligence before they line up private investors," Abbondanzio explained after the meeting. "And it's a good investment for the town. The knowledge gleaned from these studies will be useful no matter who goes forward with developing the building. They're a very creative group."

Reached the next morning in New Jersey, Warsaw expressed optimism. "We're hoping negotiations go well. We're excited that they've heard us out so far." If the town and Flight Patterns reach an agreement for an exclusive study period, he and Rossettie plan to move to Turners Falls this spring or summer to oversee the project. They would host open-invitation public meetings, he said, "starting a dialogue with artists in the area," and welcoming "ideas as well as concerns" about the mill redevelopment.

"We're crossing our fingers," he said.



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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on March 27, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Gill Montague Schools Seek \$14 Million for '04

Superintendent Brenda Finn delivered the news that after cutting the equivalent of 22 teacher and staff positions from the FY'04 budget, the Gill Montague Schools could cut no further... She asked, "How can we run a school system when we don't have the resources? I don't see how we can go any deeper."

Gill Road Project Proceeds at Turtle's Pace

At their March 24 meeting, Gill Selectmen learned that wood turtles, an endangered species, could add \$10,000 in additional engineering work to the approximately \$3.2 million state project designed

to improve a stretch of Main Road, from near Gill center to the Northfield boundary line.

Take Back our Lives March in Turners Falls

NELCWIT will hold the annual Take Back our Lives march and rally against domestic violence and sexual assault in Turners Falls this year on Wednesday, April 9. It is the second time in recent memory the march will take place in Turners Falls. The rally will feature speakers and youth singers on the theme of "Coming Together for a Healthy and Safe Community and World."

Plans to Repair Wendell Town Offices

The selectboard approved proposed repairs to the town office building/senior center to improve access to the basement at their

March 19 meeting. The work may also include the installation of a new metal front door if funds permit... The work in the basement will be sponsored by Good Neighbors, a group of volunteers who distribute free food within the building to residents every Sunday.

Editorial: The \$2,360,000 Question

Last fall the National Priorities Project issued estimates of how the cost of the Iraq conflict would break down, town by town. Assuming a total cost of \$100 billion to begin and end the fighting... Montague's share of the war will amount to \$2,360,000. A battle of a different sort has joined this week, here in town... Twice as many parents are 'choicing students out' of the system as 'choicing in,' resulting in a net drain of \$200,000 from the school district annually.

LIVABILITY from page 1

between the bike path, the parks and Route 2.

Walkability was also stressed as a major factor. The consultants had a number of ideas for promoting pedestrian access: widening the sidewalks at key locations to allow for outdoor café seating; raising the heights of the planters and trimming the trees; adding bumpouts to the entrances of alleyways to support the idea of pedestrian use. In addition, they had a number of suggestions for improving access and size of the farmers' market. Although they agreed that it was located in the right part of town, they presented a number of new configurations that would expand the market, including utilizing the Discovery Center parking lot.

In order to generate an economy to support the greening and uplift of Avenue A, Ted Brovitz took on the issue of business development, marketing and branding. According to Brovitz, Turners has a great number of assets that can be enhanced to attract business and business patrons to the village including the Avenue A corridor, the bike path, and the river. In order to get development moving, Brovitz suggested that the village form a Joint Downtown Partnership between business owners and the town. The aim of the partnership would be to work actively to create an attractive environment for business opportunity, to promote existing businesses and sponsor community events and activities.

He also had a number of ideas for drawing outsiders into the

downtown. Among them were expanding the farmers' market, having music and movies in Unity Park, outdoor art exhibits and a classic car show along the avenue. As for permanent business, he noted his marketing studies have shown that enterprises most likely to succeed in the downtown are medical and professional businesses, specialty clothing stores (particularly women's and children's clothes), general merchandise shops and food services (perhaps niche or ethnic restaurants). Shops for furniture, electronics and appliances, gifts and novelties and sporting goods were seen as having limited potential.

Of the utmost importance, according to Brovitz, is to get people off Route 2 and into the downtown. To do this he suggested signage along Route 2 that would direct visitors to Turners. An active website and utilization of social media could also get the word out about upcoming events. And then once across the bridge, new wayfinding signs could direct folks to the attractions along the newly-spruced up Avenue A.

In order to collect feedback from those in attendance, both Flinker and Brovitz asked the public to vote on several alternatives for both the streetscape and marketing campaign. A lively discussion followed the formal presentations. The consultants will digest the responses to their proposals and further refine them. The final report, due this summer, will contain their reworking of this public input regarding the future livability of downtown Turners Falls.



PUCCINI from page 1

Butterfly."

True to his promise, Fregosi brought tapes of rare recordings and lecture notes filled with surprising facts about Puccini, who might be the most financially successful composer in history. When he died on November 29, 1924, his net worth adjusted to today's dollars was between \$175 million and \$250 million dollars. He had cash, investments, multiple villas, and a

collection of boats, automobiles, villas and guns. He once said, "I am a hunter of birds, librettos and beautiful women." Three Puccini operas are still under copyright and *La Boheme*, from which *Rent*, the hit Broadway musical was made, is the single most successful opera ever written, though Fregosi said it was maligned by critics after its opening and only gradually gained traction with the public over the years. *Madama Butterfly*, another

opera that has become part of the classic repertoire at opera houses all over the world, had a catastrophic opening with jeering crowds. In fact, the music could not be heard over the catcalls and whistles. Fregosi said historians have since wondered if this "musical lynching" had been staged by Puccini's rivals, a not uncommon practice in Italy at the time. The second premiere of *Madama Butterfly* was much more successful, and the rest is history so to speak.

Fregosi's presentation was filled with anecdotes such as these and musical selections that demonstrated the ways in which Puccini "stole" from himself. It was common for him to use and recombine bits and pieces from earlier compositions, and some critics and rivals never lost an opportunity to point this out. Puccini also "stole" librettos or, upon hearing that a rival was working on an adaptation of *Tosca*, went ahead and wrote his own, confident that the public would want to hear his version. He was right.

If he began as the sort of starving artist that inspired *La Boheme*, Puccini embraced excess as he became successful. He smoked between 80 and 85 cigarettes a day, owned fifteen cars in 21 years and enjoyed legendary love affairs. It is clear that as passion ruled his life it also informed his art. His heroines die tear-jerking tragic deaths. His heroes are mighty and his villains, unspeakable. I am eager to learn more in the second installment, and have but one criticism, and that is that the sound system seemed to

be malfunctioning. Fregosi ended up holding his voice microphone against the speakers of his portable device, and some of the selections sounded warped. Hopefully that will be corrected this week.

The Senior Symposia program is a collaborative effort between GCC's Office of Community Education and area senior citizens. The series is held during the daytime hours and in an accessible location (270 Main Street) for \$10 per person.

Upcoming symposia include: **Helping Hands Monkeys** Presenter: Megan Talbert *Wednesday, April 3, 2 to 4 p.m.* Highly intelligent, adaptable and social, capuchin monkeys from South and Central America are natural "tool users," using their hands to perform functional tasks and to manipulate objects in ways no other assisting animal can. For 33 years Helping Hands, a non-profit in Boston, has been training these primates to assist people

living with mobility impairments. Using photos, film clips, and anecdotes, Talbert will describe the program's training and placement techniques, the incredible effects of the human-animal bond, and how the program evolved.

Winslow Homer at the Clark Presenter: Marc Simpson *Tuesday, April 9, 2 to 4 p.m.*

One of the most significant 19th-century American artists, Homer is best known for his seascapes and landscapes in both oil and watercolor. His long career also included work in other media (drawings, etchings, wood engravings) and on a range of other subjects, including the Civil War. Art historian Simpson will give us an overview of Homer's remarkable career, focusing on a number of holdings of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown. This summer the Clark will host a major exhibition of Homer's work.



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Little Shop of Horrors

Review By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

The Little Shop of Horrors, book by Howard Ashman and music by Alan Menken, is not a story for the faint of heart. There are beautiful songs and drama, surprises, humor, but let no one fool you. This story is dark – a musical version of a Greek tragedy. The movie version had a happy ending, the play, not so much. At least the three part harmony girls manage to not get eaten by the big green plant that lives in the little flower shop where everything takes place.

This weekend, the Franklin County Technical School presented *The Little Shop of Horrors* at the Shea Theater as its first musical theater production. The cast was small with some performers playing several parts.

Ashton Morse as Audrey and Masha Eisenburg as Seymore were wonderful in the lead parts. Each played a young person struggling with life, thinking they didn't have much to offer. Eisenburg dragged himself around the stage, sat and stared, showed with his physical demeanor a young man who thought he deserved to be treated badly. He

hung his head and sighed a lot. That was before the plant started making him a party to murder. But then the lovely Audrey was also a sad girl, someone willing to date a man who beat her. On the musical side, the solos by Eisenburg and his duets with Morse were some of the best performances in the show. Morse has a strong lovely voice and hers was a powerful performance all around.

Daniel Prasol, who was director, choreographer and played the part of Dr. Orin Scrivello, was perfect as the purely evil dentist who loves to cause people pain. He got big laughs but no sympathy when Audrey II ate him.

The most fun were the girls who sang in beautiful three part harmony, and filled in between every scene with some bit of entertainment. Hailey Perkins-McCraw as Crystal, Lindsey Mailloux as Ronnette, and Lydia Dodge as Chiffon's voices blended so well. Each one is a talented singer in her own right and together they were glorious to watch and hear.

The true star of the show, of course, was the big green man-eating plant, the Audrey II that brought Mr. Mushnik (played by Ashton



ELLEN BLANCHETTE PHOTO

Seymore (Masha Eisenburg) and Audrey (Ashton Morse) with the always hungry man-eating plant, Audrey II, in the Tech School's production of "Little Shop of Horrors" this past weekend at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls.

Morse), the owner of the flower shop, so much wealth and success until it ate him. Bringing Audrey II to life were puppeteers Eric Paige and Rhamsses Diaz-Santiago as the plant's deep scary voice.

Sam Kimberley, Amelia Kendrick, and Alexis Plante played several parts. Music direction was done by David Maloney. Lighting/

sound director was Lee Carey. Brittany Park and Joseph Menko made up the technical crew. Bessie Coutu was in charge of costumes and makeup. Maureen Grout was the stage manager. Joycelyn Croft and Business Technology took care of the programs and tickets. The floral arrangements were provided by FCTS Landscaping Shop.

The entire cast and crew should be proud of the work they did to bring this show successfully to the stage. Judging by the enthusiastic applause and laughter throughout the show, as well as the cheering at the end, I would say this first attempt at musical theater was a great success, and one that we hope we can all look forward to again.

In His Own Words: Danny Cruz



Cruz, in a candid moment at a show at the John Doe Jr. record store last month. Photo by Scott Senard.

By BRITTANY BRUCE AND RENNY SKIATHITIS

Greenfield's Danny Cruz has made a name for himself as lead singer, composer, and conductor of the local "mud-lightning-metal" ensemble Flaming Dragons of Middle Earth.

FDoME, coming off a years-long Thursday afternoon residency and open practice session at the Brick House in Turners Falls, is gearing up for a Northeast seaboard tour, culminating in an April 16 show at Feeding Tube Records in Northampton. Since 2008 the band has released a number of small-run cassettes as well as a well-received 2010 LP on Feeding Tube label.

Reporters Bruce and Skiathitis were granted an audience with the prestigious Cruz Dog last Friday. Here is what he had to say.

B&S: How would you describe your style of music?

DC: It's EDCM Rock. It's Dark Sludge Metal, Crust Punk, Psychedelic, Euro-Pop, Electronica, Mud Lightning Metal, better than Anthrax.

B&S: Who came up with the band name and how?

DC: I came up with the band name in a dream about *Lord of the Rings*.

B&S: Who would you cite as your musical influences?

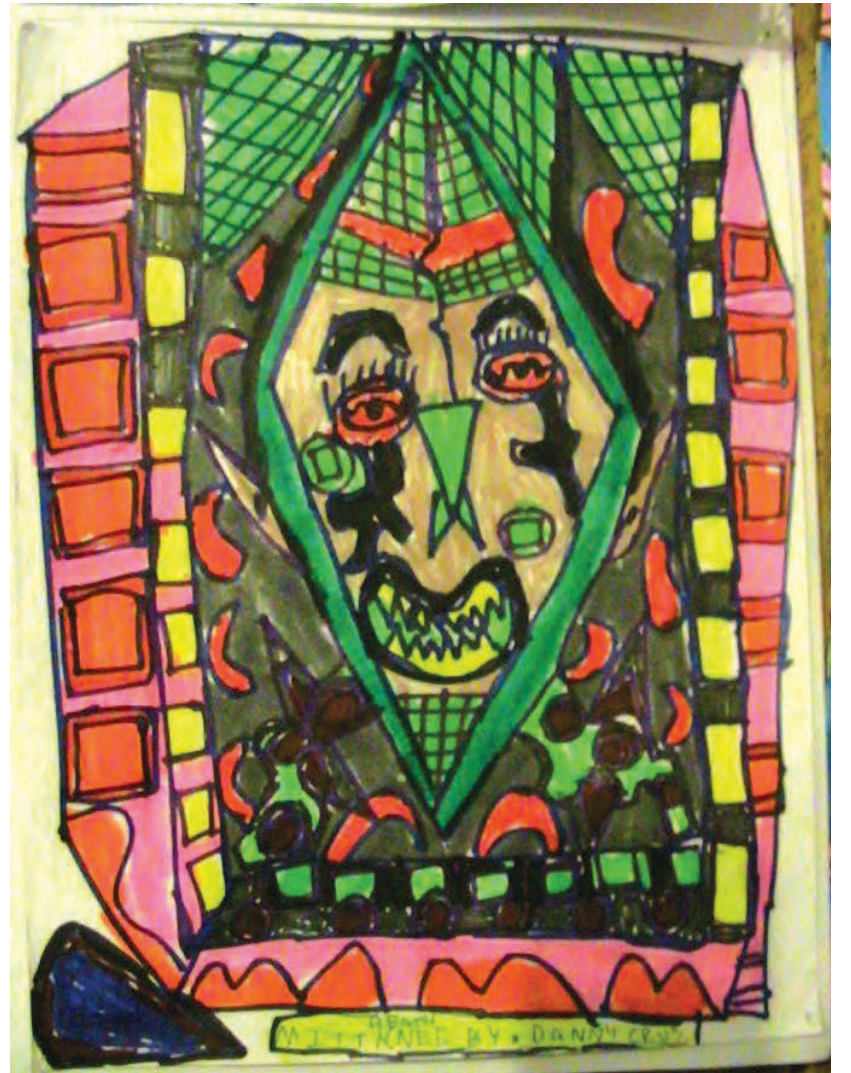
DC: Lady Gaga, Jethro Tull, GG Allin, Marilyn Manson, Nine Inch Nails, Alice Cooper, The Beatles, Cannibal Corpse, David Bowie, Anthrax, Fleetwood Mac, ZZ Top, Lil' Wayne, Spinal Tap, John Lennon, Flaming Dragons of

Middle Earth, Bob Sakula, Moscow Mule, OFC, Madonna, Donnie and Marie, Michael Jackson, Gladys Knight, Cyndi Lauper, a little bit of Ke\$ha, The Fugees, Hurricanes of Love, Pantera, Exodus, Tool, Bob Marley, Yellowman, Shania Twain's "Man, I Feel Like a Woman", Neil Peart, Jimi Hendrix, Pat Benatar, Devo, Talking Heads, Motorhead, Hawkwind, Sun Ra, Coheed and Cambria, Paramore, Fall Out Boy,

My Chemical Romance, Weezer, The Doors, Misfits, Danzig, Rod Stewart, The Faces, 'Til Tuesday, Queen, Iggy Pop, Cheap Trick, The Kinks, The Who, Bone Thugs-n-Harmony, Tupac, and T-Rex.

B&S: Who writes the lyrics?
DC: Brittany Bruce, Robin Whitcomb, Frank the Hurricane, friends, and Danny Cruz.

see CRUZ page 9



Death Mitt Knee, by Danny Cruz. On display at the Brick House Teen Center.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Oldest Citizen Honored

By DAVID DETMOLD

She couldn't make it to the meeting, but Edith Hasting's son Ernie was there in her place to receive the gold-headed cane and honorary plaque presented to her by the selectboard this week, in official recognition of her status as the oldest citizen of Gill. Ladies of her generation never cared much for revealing their age, but it is fair to say she will not celebrate her centennial before the next leap year.

The selectboard offered Edith their heartiest congratulations for achieving the gold cane award.

In Gill, the tradition of awarding of a gold cane to the town's oldest citizen was revived by the Gill bicentennial committee, which bestowed the honor on Hazel Stevens in 1993. The tradition began much earlier, when Edwin Grozier, publisher of the Boston Post, sent gold headed ebony canes to the selectboards of 700 New England towns with the instruction they be given out to their oldest male inhabitants, to be handed on to the next most senior male resident should the cane holder move from town or die. Not until 1930, and only after considerable controversy, was the gold cane award extended to the eldest resident regardless of gender. Apparently, Grozier favored towns in the Post's immediate circulation - no Connecticut towns received Boston Post canes, and only two Vermont towns are known to have received the canes.

The Boston Post was once the largest circulation broadsheet in the country, but its fortunes dwindled after the paper passed to Grozier's son Richard on Edwin's death in 1924. The younger Grozier ended his life in a mental hospital, not an uncommon fate for newspapermen, and the Post went out of business in 1957. As is apparently the case in Gill, many of the original Boston Post canes have been lost to time and mischance, but others remain in the hands of those intended to receive them - the eldest citizens of New England towns.

Ernie Hastings said his mother would be thrilled to receive the Gill Bicentennial Cane. "I'll take it over to her right away," he said.

With rather less fanfare, the selectboard proceeded to examine the relative merit of the heating systems in various town buildings. The newly installed twin furnace fuel efficient heating system in the public safety complex has finally had the kinks worked out, "just as the heating season is ending," as Ann Banash, speaking from sunny Florida on conference call noted. Not so fast. The forecast still features sub-freezing nights for the rest of the week, and good maple sugaring for anyone so inclined.

Town administrative assistant Ray Purington said it is too soon to predict the exact fuel savings the town should enjoy at the safety complex from the new system, but he said it should be at least 25% more fuel efficient than the leaky old boiler that used to heat the building. However, whatever energy savings the town may see at the safety complex will be offset by the fact the Four Winds School, renting at the Riverside Municipal Building, has expanded classroom activity from three days and week to five days a week this year, and the Slate Library has also added an extra afternoon of open hours, and that many more winter days of heating the cinder block building.

Meanwhile the mystery of why the heating bill at the Gill town hall is showing an increase this winter continues, and may be connected to the accumulation of soot around the exhaust fan at the northeast corner of the foundation. The soot is also noticeable on the white clapboards and the eaves of that building, which had a fresh coat of paint not too many years ago. Acting selectboard chair Randy Crochier surmised the soot may be evidence of a combustion problem, which may be at fault in the mysteriously rising fuel usage at town hall. On the other hand, compared to last winter, we have had some cold weather this year, most would agree.

The town hall will

soon have a new roof, and Purington predicted that job would be likely to come in between \$12,000 and \$15,000 less than the \$73,000 appropriated for the job. After making that prediction, Purington qualified his remark by noting that the roof replacement had not started yet, and surprises could be in store for any contractor removing and replacing a 40-year old roof on a historic building.

May 6th at 3 p.m. is the tentative date for a meeting with representatives of the Hampshire Council of Governments to discuss the possibility of supplying Gill with solar powered electricity at discounted rates. Also on the agenda is a proposed request for proposals to install a solar power array at the town owned Mariamante parcel on the corner of West Gill and Main. Purington warned the town may be able to move forward on only one or the other of these Green energy options, but more details await a full hearing of the HCOG offer. Dubbed Hampshire Solar, the program involves trading net metering credits from solar power producers in the Commonwealth to municipal governments, which must sign 20 year contracts to receive the discounted electricity rates.

While you have your calendars out, mark voting dates on April 30th for the upcoming state primary to nominate candidates to run for the U.S. Senate seat vacated when John Kerry accepted President Obama's offer to become Hilary Clinton's successor as Secretary of State. Follow that with the town election on May 20th, the Gill annual town meeting on Tuesday, June 11th at 6:30 p.m., and finally the state election for the open Senate seat on June 25th.

And don't forget - the Gill energy fair at town hall, sponsored by the Gill Energy Commission, on Saturday, April 6th, from 9:30 to noon, with a farmers market to coincide on the town common. Organizers are hoping for a day of sunshine and solar power displays.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Replacing Avenue A Street Lighting

By PATRICIA PRUITT

On Mar. 25 town planner Walter Ramsey held the floor with three important projects for Montague. The first was an update on the proposed crosswalk and sidewalk upgrades between Solar and Masonic avenues in Montague City where there is presently an unsafe crossing for bikers and pedestrians. The Town has provided \$51,000 for the design and engineering of the crosswalk and sidewalk involved, while the state will foot the construction cost for the project. The firm Stantec Construction will begin construction in 2015. One public hearing for review of the design plan will be announced.

In a by-the-way question, Mark Fairbrother asked where things stand with the Greenfield Road project. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio answered that the town was in the process of notifying abutters, and that there will be a public hearing in May or June; the project will be on the Annual town warrant also in May. The project will be advertised in November 2013 and will appear on the TIF (Tax Incentive Financing) list in 2014 and 2015. Construction is projected to begin in May/June 2014.

Bank restoration along the Sawmill River at South Street was Ramsey's next announcement. To that end the town has two bids for an ecological consultant to oversee the restoration of the Sawmill River bank, work to be done by the Montague

department of public works. It has nominated Lattrell Ecological LLC of Colrain for the consulting job to be approved by the state department of environmental protection.

The ecological consultant would be required to monitor the project for the two years it may take for plantings along the bank to take hold and stem erosion there. This is an essential part of the bargain made with DEP since the DPW, while attempting to remedy the erosion problem, actually found itself with a worse problem. If the efforts at restoration and remediation of the problem succeed at the end of the two year period, any fine will be dismissed.

Next, Ramsey announced that Flight Patterns LLC has been selected as the respondent of choice to the town's RFP on the Strathmore Mill Complex, although the town will not yet transfer ownership to the group. Flight Patterns LLC feels it needs more in-depth analyses about structural engineering and brownfields assessments throughout the Strathmore complex in order for them to make a realistic assessment of what the complex will take to be brought up to standard on all levels. They will spend a year testing, and evaluating the real conditions in the buildings and site. All information gained will be shared with the town. Their plan is to pay close attention to the mills' environmental footprint and to preserve what is historically of value in the complex. (For more details see article on front page.)

Chief Chip Dodge lent his support to Tom Bergeron's concern about lighting on Avenue A. The lamps on the avenue may be great looking, but they cost "a lot more than my budget can pay." He cited the following maintenance costs for one street light pole with 4 bulbs (\$25-30 each) and 4 globes (\$50 each) plus four transformers (\$230 each). Installed in 1983, the current lights are old, and rusting on the bottom. The downtown business community is concerned about the growing dimness of light on the avenue as expressed in a letter to the board.

Abbondanzio said he wondered if it wasn't time to replace the lights all along the avenue, given their age, the cost of repair & replacement, and because of the economy of LED lighting energy and maintenance. He first suggested seeking a block grant for the funding, but later recalled that there is now a one-year delay to apply for another round of CDBG grants. Instead he recommended seeking a borrowing authorization at a special town meeting to take place after the annual, since it was now too late to get it on the annual warrant. Tom Bergeron was charged with researching LED street lights and bringing back to the board one or two styles that might satisfy the historical character of Avenue A.

There will be a warrant article on the annual town meeting warrant to create

see MONTAGUE pg 10

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Dad Fight At Gill Elementary

Tuesday, 3/19 1:47 a.m. Domestic Disturbance on Center Rd, resident placed under arrest. 9:10 a.m. MV accident on French King Hwy, no injury. Citation issued to operator. 11:30 a.m. Ongoing investigation of an assault-and-battery incident	that happened at the Elementary school on Fri evening between 2 fathers. 2:40 p.m. MV accident on Main Rd, no one injured, fence damaged 9:20 p.m. Reported gun shots area of Dole Rd, no one located	made complaint of parking issues in Center of town a local restaurant. Referred to Selectboard. 2:50 p.m. MV accident on French King Hwy. No injuries. 4:30 p.m. Larceny of fuel from Gill Mobil station. Under investigation.	Friday, 3/22 1:00 p.m. Restraining order for resident on French King Hwy. Served in hand. 6:10 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with disturbance at restaurant on Rt. 2. Saturday, 3/23 9:45 a.m. Resident on Center Rd reported lost or stolen checkbook.
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NOTES FROM ERVING SELECTBOARD MEETING

What's In and What's Out of Annual Town Meeting

By KATIE NOLAN

Fire chief Almon "Bud" Meatley told the Erving selectboard at its Monday, March 25 meeting that an accident at a weekend training exercise in Bernardston put an Erving fire truck out of commission for four to six weeks. Meatley explained that an Erving firefighter was driving downhill on a narrow road when a Bernardston tanker came uphill "at a high rate of speed." The Erving firefighter swerved to avoid the tanker and hit a telephone pole. Meatley said the firefighter felt all right at the time of the accident, but has noticed some shoulder pain and would be seeing a physician.

Asked if the Erving driver was at fault, Meatley said he was waiting for the official police report. Selectboard chair Eugene Klepadlo commented, "If it's the other town's fault, we should go after them." Meatley said a claim had been started with the Municipal Interlocal Insurance Agency. Klepadlo said that after an accident in a town vehicle, it should be standard operating procedure to have the driver

examined by a physician. Fire captain Philip Wonkka suggested the department also develop an SOP for drug and alcohol testing after a vehicle accident. Wonkka and Meatley agreed to write SOPs for post-accident procedures and provide them to town administrator Tom Sharp and town counsel Donna MacNicol.

Meatley and Wonkka presented information about the purchase of a new rescue pumper the department hopes will be approved at annual town meeting. According to Meatley, the cost through the Fire Chief Association of Massachusetts (FCAM) will be \$485,500, discounted to \$470,936 if fully paid upon ordering. Meatley said it will take seven to nine months to build the truck. Selectboard member Margaret Sullivan wondered if the town should agree to pay in full for a truck that the town wouldn't see for nine months. Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin suggested Meatley offer half of the cost upfront and half on delivery, and still ask for the discount. Meatley agreed to check with FCAM to see if that was possible.

The selectboard and

finance committee met jointly to discuss the draft warrant for the May 6 annual town meeting and the fiscal year 2014 (FY14) budget, which totals \$9,165,345 in expenditures. FinCom chair Daniel Hammock thanked the selectboard and school committee for working together with the FinCom to develop a responsible budget.

The selectboard decided to eliminate an article from the draft annual town meeting warrant that would have allowed the selectboard to enter into renewable energy purchase and/or net metering credits. The article was recommended by Eric Weiss of Hampshire Power at the March 11 selectboard meeting. The solar net metering credits would be obtained through Hampshire Solar, a partnership between Hampshire Council of Governments (COG) and nexamp. Under this program, a developer builds a solar or wind generation facility, and credits are assigned to municipalities. The town would sign a 20-year contract to buy credits at a 30.5% discount from National Grid

see ERVING page 10

Greenfield Community College Student Veterans Club Helps Stavros' Home Sweet Home Program

The Greenfield Community College VetNet Club for student veterans voted to dedicate this semester's fundraising efforts to Stavros' Home Sweet Home Program.

The Stavros Center for Independent Living has been actively advocating for the civil rights of people with disabilities since 1974. At present, they provide independent living services for over 6,000 in Western Massachusetts.

Home Sweet Home is a program that coordinates donations, volunteer labor through community programs and skilled building guidance to assemble ramps.

Currently, there are over

50 people on the waiting list in this area. Each Ramp costs approximately \$5,000. Unfortunately, insurance does not cover ramps in many cases.

GCC VetNet has decided to take on the project from fundraising to the completion and building of a ramp.

To kickoff-off their efforts, there will be a VetNet Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, April 5, at 6 p.m. at the Greenfield American Legion. All proceeds will go to the Home Sweet Home Program.

Tickets can be purchased for \$5 at the Channing and Marie Bete Veterans Center located on the Main Campus North End Room 215,

Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., or by calling (413) 775-1825.

April is Food-A-Thon Month In Wendell

April is Food-a-Thon Fundraiser Month at the Deja Brew Café and Pub. The Deja Brew will donate 10% of total dinner bills to the local food-a-thon with the receipt of a donation coupon. Donation coupons are available at the Wendell store.

The 10th Annual Food-a-thon will be held in downtown Orange and Athol on Tuesday, April 9 from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

This event unites North Quabbin food pantries and meal sites in an effort to raise food and funds to support these programs.

The Food-a-thon is the single largest fundraiser to support "Good Neighbors," the food pantry serving Wendell and New Salem since 1988.

The North Quabbin Community Coalition is the fiscal sponsor of this event and the Feinstein Foundation supports these programs.

from CRUZ page 7

B&S: How will you deal with fame?

DC: How we will deal with fame as a group is by having music that is more danceable, get signed to a record label, have more synth in our music, vocal lessons, more hard rocking, for all ages, genders and, races. We will live in the city, get signed to a major label, be pop stars.

B&S: Who are your political influences?

DC: Obama, Green Party, Ralph Nader, Lady Gaga, Gandhi, Al Sharpton, Martin Luther King, Bob Sakula, FDR, Coco, and Mary Collins.

B&S: What is your opinion on drones?

DC: End all wars.

B&S: What is your opinion on gay rights?

DC: You should have the freedom to choose, and have equal rights.

B&S: What about your love life?

DC: I'm single. I'm a glam wannabe, looking for true love. Any single mamas out there: I'm a glam king, looking for a glam princess.

B&S: What kind of woman is right for Danny Cruz?

DC: My dream woman is Lady Gaga. Lady Gaga is the woman I want to be my sweetheart.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Disturbance and Suspicion

Tuesday, 3/19
11:40 a.m. Medical emergency at Heat-Fab Inc., 130 Industrial Blvd. Removed to hospital.

1:57 p.m. Medical emergency, O St. Arrested individual under Section 12 mental health statute.

7:30 p.m. Domestic disturbance, 4th St. Peace restored.

9:55 p.m. Domestic disturbance, Avenue A. Peace restored.

Wednesday, 3/20
5:14 p.m. Threatening/harassment, 3rd St. Advised of options.

7:50 p.m. Threatening/harassment, G St. Advised of options.

Thursday, 3/21
9:00 a.m. Domestic disturbance, Green Pond Rd. Arrested 31-year-old man for domestic assault & battery.

5:03 p.m. General disturbance,

Franklin Emergency Shelter, 15 Farren Ave. Arrested [redacted], for disorderly conduct and assault and battery on a police officer.

6:24 p.m. Officer initiated traffic stop at 3rd St. and Avenue A, leading to the arrest of [redacted], on a probation warrant.

Friday, 3/22
1:01 a.m. Domestic disturbance, 7th St. Arrested 54-year-old woman for domestic assault & battery.

3:12 p.m. General disturbance, 7th St. Advised of options.

Saturday, 3/23
1:16 a.m. Investigated suspicious person, 4th St. at Avenue A.

1:55 a.m. Suspicious person reported, Avenue A. No such person found.

2:15 a.m. Suspicious automobile, Food City, Avenue

A. Services rendered.
2:55 a.m. Investigated suspicious automobile, Montague Police Department, 180 Turnpike Road. That one was easy.

12:18 p.m. Annoying/harassing phone calls, Franklin Area Survival Center, 96 4th St. Services rendered.

6:09 p.m. Neighbor disturbance, 4th St. Services rendered.
9:11 p.m. Larceny, Franklin Emergency Shelter, 15 Farren Ave. Services rendered.

Sunday, 3/24
1:41 p.m. Burglary / breaking & entering, 3rd St. Investigated.

1:48 p.m. Shoplifting, Jay K's Liquors, 59 Avenue A. Investigated.

9:14 p.m. Domestic disturbance, Millers Falls Rd. Services rendered.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

Syrup Industry Causes Alarm

Tuesday, 3/5
6:20 p.m. Resident complained of a pickup operating erratically. Officer located vehicle: a farmer collecting sap.

Thursday, 3/7
8:08 a.m. Report of vehicles off the road on the "S" curves on Shutesbury Rd. No accident, vehicles slid into snow bank. Vehicles helped back onto the road, Highway Dept. notified.

Friday, 3/8
8:35 a.m. Single car accident on Chestnut Hill Rd. Driver failed to negotiate a curve and

sideswiped a tree damaging his pickup. Driver cited for operating too fast for road and weather conditions.

10:48 a.m. Assisted Shutesbury PD with a snow plow vs ATV accident.

Friday, 3/15
11:55 Motorist informed detail officer of smoke from the Ripley Road area on the Montague/Leverett town line. Smoke was from a sugarhouse.

Saturday, 3/16
3:35 p.m. Alarm at a Shutesbury Rd. residence. House checked and all secure.

Tuesday, 3/19
6:50 p.m. Highway Dept. advised two vehicles parked on the side of No. Leverett Road hindering snow removal. Owner contacted and advised to move vehicles.

Friday, 3/22
10:15 a.m. Medical emergency at an Amherst Road residence. Subject transported to hospital by Amherst FD.

Sunday, 3/24
2:35 p.m. Medical emergency at a Juggler Meadow Road residence. Subject transported to hospital by Amherst FD.

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CALDICOTT from page 4

America—and she said the Japanese government's decision to allow people to continue living in the ancient city of Fukushima, despite the high levels of radiation there, was a criminal act of malfeasance.

Contrary to Ann Coulter's recent nostrum that radiation is good for you, Caldicott emphasized, "No radiation is safe. Radiation is cumulative," and concentrates in the food chain. "Each dose you are exposed to increases your chance of getting cancer. If we have a disease that is incurable, we have to prevent it, like smallpox or polio. Cancer is a hideous way to

die, and I don't think we'll ever find a cure."

So, her Rx for nuclear meltdowns and nuclear weapons, not to mention man made global warming (which is causing a different kind of meltdown in her native Australia—where wildfires, drought and killing heat waves are becoming endemic)—is simple. It's time for the women of the world, the care givers and nurturers of new life, to take power away from the men and save the planet. "Stop nuclear weapons, shut down all the reactors in this country, and stop global warming," Caldicott prescribed.

She noted that nuclear reactors provide 20 percent of America's electricity, and America wastes 28 percent of the electricity it generates, so conservation could make nuclear power swiftly irrelevant to the nation's power supply. "There's enough wind west of the Mississippi to supply all of America with electricity; all we have to do is upgrade the electric grid." For a nation that managed the Manhattan Project and the Apollo moon landing, she suggested that feat of engineering was well within our capacity.

"It is not fair to leave a world in such chaos to our children," she added, and no one in the audience offered any argument.

"All revolutions have been led by women," she claimed: "the Russian revolution, the French revolution and on and on. And then they write us out of His-story. Fifty-two percent of this country are women, and we are pathetic. We let men do whatever they want and we take care of the babies. But right now our children and grandchildren have no future."

Caldicott said life on Earth was

nothing short of miraculous, and may be unique in the universe. "We're not here to make ourselves happy," she adjured. "We're here to save all creation. That's why this generation was born." So join 93-year old Frances Crowe, and the other Northampton women of the Shut it Down Affinity Group, and "Go to Vermont Yankee, and shut it down."

Or join Ann Coulter at the nearest sushi bar and put the whole thing out of your mind.



MONTAGUE from page 8

a seven-member broadband committee to include the town planner, a representative of the industrial park, the Tech School, the Chestnut Hill, Taylor Hill neighborhoods, the finance committee, cable advisory committee, and a legal representative.

The Town is urged to create a flag bearing the town seal or other town imagery to be displayed with other municipal flags at the State House

in Boston. But it must be done by June. Where's Betsy Ross?

Finally the board approved the following dates for performances by the Montague Community Band in Peskeompskut Park: 6/24/13; 7/8/13; 7/22/13; 8/5/13. The Harmony Lodge of Masons received approval also to place a sign on public property to announce their Open House, from 4/1/13 - 4/6/13.

The next Board of Selectmen Meeting will be held Monday Apr 1, 2013.



ERVING from page 9

and at a 21 percent discount from WMECO. For example, for \$1,000 in solar credits generated, the town would pay \$790, which would show up as a credit of \$210 (\$1,000 minus \$790) on its WMECO electric bill. Goodwin said, "I don't know enough about it" to make a decision. He added "they should have asked us six months ago, not ask us to hurry up and get it on the annual town meeting warrant."

The board decided to keep a draft warrant article that would allow the selectboard to enter into a contract with the Hampshire COG for power supply to residential and business consumers. Selectboard members made the decision although both Goodwin and Sullivan said they would not recommend its approval at town meeting. All individual consumers in town would be included, but would retain the option not to participate by informing Hampshire Power.

Goodwin said, "I don't like the government telling me I have to be part of something. You have to opt out. I don't want someone changing my electric company." Sullivan said, "Right at this moment, I'm not in favor of it."

The board accepted a citizen petition asking the selectboard to place an article on the warrant supporting resolution of union

contract issues at Bay State Franklin Hospital by negotiation.

The selectboard objected to a proposed article transferring \$115,000 in retained earnings from the Wastewater Enterprise Fund to fund wastewater operations. The town's wastewater treatment plants are funded partially by payments from Montague for Ervingside residential waste treated and partially by tax levy, and for the past few years by transfers from the enterprise fund.

Goodwin said taking money from the enterprise fund was not sustainable, as annual income to the fund is less than the amount of the proposed transfer. The board decided this amount should be covered by tax levy instead.

After reviewing the draft warrant and making revisions, the board voted to close the warrant. The final warrant will be printed in a special edition of *Around Town* that will come out ahead of the annual town meeting.

Sharp informed the board that the line item for veteran's benefits is being overspent this year by approximately \$4,000 per month. He told them that town treasurer Deb Mero was not comfortable paying bills that were not budgeted. "In the first five months of the year, he [the veteran's agent] chewed through his budget," said Klepadlo. Sullivan said, "There is no rhyme or

reason, no explanation" as to why the line item was being overspent. "Who manages the veteran's benefits budget?" Goodwin asked.

Noting that he fully supports veterans and benefits for veterans, Goodwin suggested, "We should have a conversation sooner, before it goes into the red. When he [the veteran's agent] gets near to using all his money, he should get an article on special town meeting." Sullivan agreed the veteran's agents, who are paid by the town through Franklin Council of Governments, should be the ones to manage the benefits budget."

Reprising a discussion started at the March 11 selectboard meeting, the board rejected a draft town policy on hourly employee breaks written by Sharp. The board agreed that they wanted a schedule for breaks, not wording that allowed some flexibility.

At the March 11 meeting, Box Car restaurant owners protested that town employees had been told to stay away from their restaurant after there were complaints the employees lingered at the restaurant during breaks, and Sharp was asked to draft a policy. At the March 25 meeting, the selectboard laid out and agreed upon specific break times and lengths based on employee shift length.



GOT WOODS?

The Franklin Land Trust will offer a free program for landowners April 17 at 7 p.m. at the Warfield House in Charlemont. If part or all of your land is wooded, come to the forum to share your questions and experiences with other landowners, foresters and the FLT staff.

This informal discussion will be a chance to get advice and recommendations on forest management, invasive pests and plants, land conservation, property tax programs, and anything else that's on your mind regarding your woods. Open to all; refreshments served.

Call ahead to reserve your seat: Wendy Sweetser Ferris at Franklin Land Trust, (413) 625-9151, or email wferris@franklinlandtrust.org.

INTRODUCTION TO ZEN MEDITATION
 at Green River Zen Center
 Sunday, April 7 and May 5
 2-3:30 p.m.

- Instruction on posture, breath, concentration methods, mental training, and the journey of awakening. Refreshments at 3:30 p.m.
- You're also welcome to stay for regular service, meditation, and dharma talk, 4 - 6:30 p.m.

177 Ripley Rd., Montague
 Contact: dantikapm@gmail.com 413.256.1594

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Call To PD Hastens Bill Payment

Tuesday, 3/19
 8:50 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Rte. 2 near Old State Road. Stood by for assistance.
 9:20 a.m. Assisted Montague police with domestic situation at 4th St.
Thursday, 3/21
 9 a.m. Assisted Montague police with domestic situation on Green Pond Rd.

3 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.
 4:45 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle at Rte. 2 rest stop. Assisted same.
 6:45 p.m. Arrested habitual traffic offender [redacted] for speeding, marked-lanes violation, and operating

suspended license.
Friday, 3/22
 5:30 p.m. Report taken of possible identity theft.
 6:20 p.m. Report of possibly intoxicated woman at Christina's Restaurant, refusing to pay her bill. Subject gone upon arrival, having paid her bill.
 9:30 p.m. Report of suspicious female at convenience store; subject

a motor vehicle with a had left.
Saturday, 3/23
 6:15 p.m. Report of motor vehicle crash in Erving Center. Found to be in town of Northfield. Referred to Northfield PD.
 11:05 p.m. Report of suspicious motor vehicle at convenience store. Found to be fatigued motorist, resting.
Sunday, 3/24
 1:50 a.m. Suspicious vehicles at old senior center, Pleasant St. Same moved along.

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

EVERY TUESDAY

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

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

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: Karaoke with Dirty Johnny. 9 p.m. to midnight. Friday Night Karaoke begins on March 1. Free.

EVERY THURSDAY

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

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

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Open Mic Night, 9:30 p.m.

ART SHOWS:

Great Falls Discovery Center, The Painters at GCC. Open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Nina's Nook, Avenue A, Turners Falls: Sensual>Sexual>Smut. Erotic art by local artists. Through March 31.

LOCAL EVENTS: THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Greenfield Community College Downtown Center: Senior symposium on opera: So You Think You Know Puccini?

Second of two. Pre-registration advised. 2 to 4 p.m., \$

Leverett Town Hall: Natural history program, "New England Forests Through Time." Presented by John O'Keefe. 7 p.m., free.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Ed Byrne's Latin Jazz Evolution Quartet. 8 p.m., \$

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

Steve & Ray (Koziol & Mason). 9:30 p.m., free.

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: 90 Mile Portage, americana folk, with special guest singer-songwriter Andrew Geano. 7:30 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Songwriter's Roundtable with John Sheldon & Lisa McCormick. 8 p.m., \$

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

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Here Come the Foxes, with Sandy Bailey. Folk and much more.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Heironymous Bogs, OPEL, and The Frost Heaves String Duo. 9:30 p.m., free.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Roogaroos, classic rock. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 1

Montague Bookmill: Oweihops, with Ora Cogan. Get there early to get a couch. 7:30 p.m., \$

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Bear Burlesque, a one-man show by renowned acrobat/cho-reographer/violist J. Berger. Two performances: 10 p.m. and midnight. Call ahead for tickets. \$

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: The Collected Poets Series, featuring James Arthur & Maya Janson. 7 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Film screening, My Business Is To Sing: the unique presentation of Emily Dickinson and her Music. Producer Ernest Urvater, writer/narrator Susan Snively,

PHOTO COURTESY HOME BODY



Electro-experimental-fun-something music duo Home Body brings their sort of music to the Rendezvous in Turners Falls on Friday, April 5.

Labelmates Happy Jawbone Family Band join them, with a sound that makes small-caption-writers even more frustrated. Go, though! Five bux.

9:30 p.m., \$

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Montague Grange: Gender Role Free Contra Dance. Please bring soft-soled non-street shoes to protect the wooden dance floor. 7 to 10 p.m. \$.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: Tom Rush. The actual Tom Rush. Francis Doughty and Hillary Chase to open. Advance reservations available. 7:30 p.m., \$

Memorial Hall Shelburne Falls: The Last Waltz LIVE: A Re-Creation of The Band's Classic Concert Film. Featuring The Rev Tor Band & Friends including Charles Neville, Dave Chalfant, Ray Mason, Christa Joy, Todd Mack, Tommy Filleo, Jeff Martell, Bruce Mandaro, and many more TBA. All ages. 7:30 to 10:30 p.m., \$

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

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Ladies in Jazz, with Samirah Evans & Evelyn Harris. 8 p.m., \$

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: The Mark Nomad Band, funk, blues, and beyond. 9 to 11:30 p.m.

and composer Alice Parker will be present for audience discussion and questions. Cash bar; light refreshments. Outreach for Mohawk Trail Concerts. 7 to 9 p.m., free.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Falltown String Band, 8 p.m., free.

Bezanson Recital Hall, UMass: Jazz Lab Ensemble, big band repertoire with new and historical works. 8 p.m., free.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: Jenn Spingla & Alyssa Kelly, etch-a-sketch original (folk)-rock. 8 to 10:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Drew Paton's 1940s Hit Parade. 7 p.m., free.

Montague Bookmill: Ephemeral String Band, old time and early country with close harmony, and Armand Armonin & Ben Gagliardi, Irish and beyond. 8 p.m., \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: Misty Blues, blues. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: The Equalites, reggae fantastico!. 9:30 to 11:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

Home Body, northamptonite dance pop, and Happy Jawbone Family Band, brattleborovian joyful shouting. 9:30 p.m., \$

CALL FOR ARTISTS

The Montague Arts Movement calls for fine art, any medium, from Montague residents, for the 5th Annual May Day Fine Art Show and Sale on May 5. Registration fee \$20. Send email to Montague.Arts.Movement@gmail.com by April 1.

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Johnnie's Overcoat

By JOE PARZYCH

The Gill Tavern has recently changed hands. Various businesses have operated in that same building going back to the early 1800's, but it will always be D.O. Paul's Store to me. I was a customer of his delicious penny candy from an early age. Later it was ice cream, and then gasoline when you got 6 gallons for \$1. The only cash slips I saved are dated from 1965 when it took an outrageous \$2 or \$3 to fill a car's gas tank.

As a young boy, I'd often walk the long trip to the library on Fridays with my sisters, which isn't far from D.O.'s store.

Mr. Paul preferred to be addressed as D.O. even though youngsters at that time addressed their elders as Mr. or Mrs. (Out of earshot, they called him Dorilla the gorilla.) He weighed all of 95 lbs. with his overcoat on. He was a smart businessman who subscribed to the *Wall Street Journal*, probably the only subscriber in town.

As a young man, D.O. had gone off to Washington, D.C. to seek his fortune. He got a job chauffeuring the Ambassador to China. D.O.'s most memorable trip driving the ambassador was to Kitty Hawk to witness the Wright Brothers' first manned flight. When fame and fortune passed him by, D.O. returned to Gill to run a general store, gas station and Ford automobile dealership. Though he was a very intelligent, worldly guy, I put one over on D.O. at a very early age.

In the dark recesses of our upstairs closet, my brother Johnnie's overcoat hung on a wooden hanger. The World War I overcoat was part of the standard Civilian Conservation Corps uniform issued to him when he signed up for a 6 month period during the Great Depression. The CCC was one of the first of President Roosevelt's many make-work agencies. By using WWI army uniforms and retired army officers to run the agency, the CCC was up and running 35 days after Roosevelt took office.

With no work available, anywhere, it was a wonderful opportunity for young men to get a job and job training, and even further their education in the evening. The pay was \$30 per month; \$25 went to the enlistee's family and \$5 to the enlistee. The \$5 was enough to buy toiletries and cigarettes, but not enough to go into town and get into trouble. Food, clothing, lodging,

education, arts and crafts, health and dental care were furnished free.

The CCC sent Johnnie to Maine. It was customary for the CCC to send the enlistees far from home to broaden their horizons. Like most of them, Johnnie had never traveled far from home. He became friends with another enlistee who lived in Maine. Johnny liked the wildness of Maine, so he re-enlisted for six more months. At the end of that enlistment, he headed home, hitchhiking so that he could save his bus fare allowance to re-enter life on his own. On the way home, in the dead of winter, he was grateful for the warm woolen overcoat. It came down to mid-calf, and with the collar turned up it sheltered him from the cold wind.

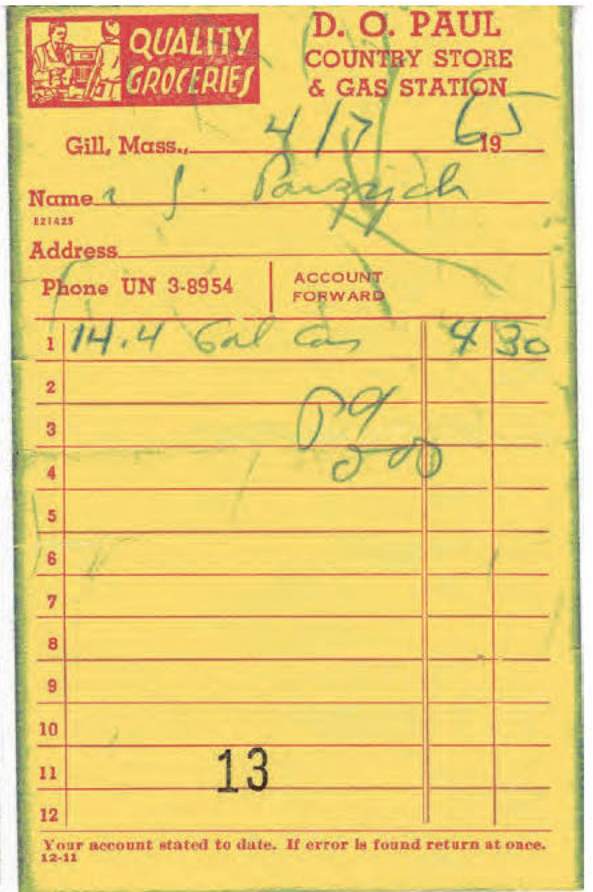
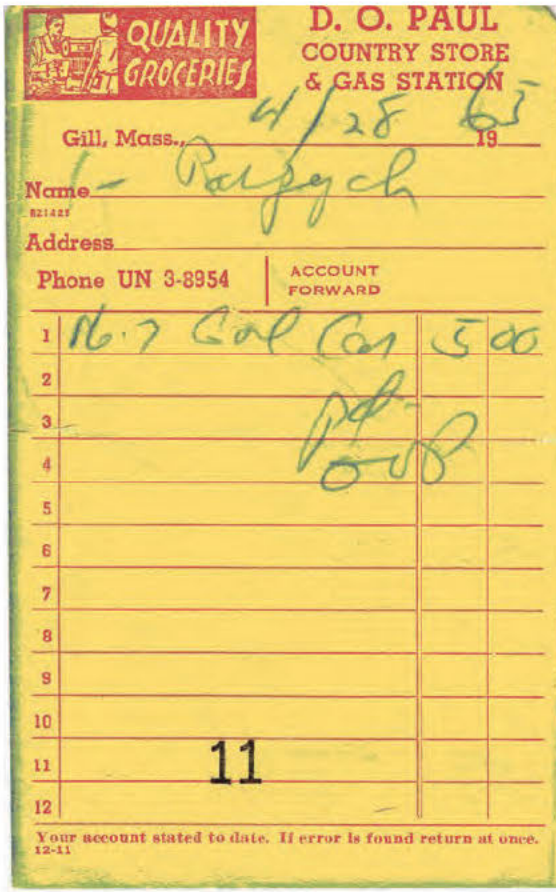
There were a lot of hobos traveling around the country and people were often afraid to pick up these men who were desperately looking for work. After many days and nights of hitchhiking and walking, Johnny finally made it to our sister Mary's house in Greenfield in the dead of night. When he knocked loudly on her door, the neighbor's dog began barking ferociously. The neighbor got up and began hollering, "Get out of here, you damn hobo!"

Lights went on at other houses because of the commotion, and someone called the police. Mary's husband let Johnnie into the house and later explained everything to the police.

Johnny said that as he'd hitchhiked home, kids would point their fingers at him and chant, "See CCC!" As a result, Johnnie hung the overcoat in the closet and never wore it again.

One day, I made my way to the second tier of clothes at the back of the dark upstairs closet, and put my hand into one of the big deep pockets of Johnnie's overcoat. To my surprise, I felt coins — lots of them. They were a little bigger than regular pennies. I got excited, because money was scarce and even a penny could buy a half dozen penny candies. I took a few coins and ran to show my older sister, Emmy, the treasure trove I'd found.

Emmy said, "Those are Indian head pennies and aren't any good. Stores won't take them. Put them back and



Gas had climbed to 30 cents a gallon by 1965 at D.O. Paul's in Gill as shown in these receipts, submitted to the Reporter by the author for travel expenses related to this piece.

leave them there." Disappointed, I put them back, but I couldn't get the thoughts of D.O. Paul's row of big square jars full of all manner of candy at his store. Root beer barrels were two for a penny, but gummy green leaves were six for a penny. There were "liquorish" sticks, Mary Janes, peppermint patties and other delightful treats.

One day, I took one of the Indian head pennies and trudged the mile, or so, to D.O.'s store. I picked gummy leaves so that I could have enough to share with my younger brother and sister. When I handed the penny to D. O., I held my breath, hoping he wouldn't notice it was worthless. D.O. cocked his head to one side and looked at the coin with his good eye. The eye widened a little, his eyebrow went up, and he slipped the coin into his pocket instead of putting it into the cash register. He handed me the little brown paper bag of gummy leaves, and I quickly left for home feeling excited to have the candy and guilty for cheating D.O.

A few days later, I tried passing another worthless coin. Again, D.O. slipped it into his pocket. The third time I presented him with an Indian Head penny, D.O. said, "Where are you getting these pennies?"

"I'm getting them out of Johnnie's overcoat," I said, and I left for home. This time, I gave Emmy some of the candy and confessed to cheating poor old D.O.

"He's taking them because they're worth a whole lot more than an ordinary penny. Johnnie's been collecting them and he'll be mad when he finds out you spent them. Don't take any more."

"Why didn't you tell me that to begin with?"

"I figured you wouldn't try spending them if I told you they were worthless."

I don't think Emmy was successful in getting the Indian Head pennies back from D.O.

The next time Johnnie came home, he took his collection with him, but he never scolded me for spending the three coins I'd taken from his collection. He'd sometimes even offer me a choice of either five Lincoln head pennies or one nickel. I always took the pennies. One day, he asked

why I always chose the five pennies.

"If I take the five pennies and lose one, I'll still have four left, but if I lose the one nickel, I'll have nothing."

He laughed and said, "Good thinking."

"*Johnnie's Overcoat*" is one of the stories that will be read on Sunday, April 7, in an encore debut of *As You Write It: A Franklin County Anthology Volume III*, edited by Laura Rodley. The writers reading will be at the Gill Montague Senior Center on Fifth Street in Turners Falls.

There'll be stories of growing up and living life large before cell phones, TV, computers, with the recounting of going to Australia, serving as a teenager in the Army of Occupation in Japan, finding the perfect bridal gown and other surprises. You'll be sure to laugh and maybe even shed a tear.

The reading starts at 1 p.m. Best of all, the reading is free and so are the refreshments, courtesy of Food City.

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