



## East to West Student Art Looks at China at the Discovery Center

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 10 - NO. 26

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 29, 2012

## Price Tag for Last Mile High Speed Internet Fiber Could Equal \$3.6 Million

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - On Tuesday, the selectboard named the figure that will be on the town meeting warrant on April 28th for what it will cost the town of Leverett to run last mile fiber for high speed internet connectivity for all households and businesses in town: \$3.6 million.

Selectboard member Peter d'Errico, who has been spearheading the drive to get Leverett hooked up to high speed internet services, with the help of a broadband working group and the town's consultant, G4S, said the warrant article would seek to borrow that amount on a 20 year bond, with an estimated 4% rate of interest. He said the average property tax payer would face a \$300 annual increase on their tax bill if the motion carries.

But d'Errico said both the \$3.6 million figure, and the estimated 4% interest rate, are essentially conservative figures. He said the town is seeking grants and low or zero interest loans to assist with the last mile fiber project, and the number of households (860) in town is probably a high estimate. If neighboring communities like Shutesbury or the Chestnut Hill area of Montague want to piggyback on the project, that could create additional revenue streams to lower Leverett's

final cost, said d'Errico. If Leverett is able to loosen regulations restricting the placement of cell phone towers in town, and if a private company is then attracted to construct a cell phone tower or towers in town, that too could provide needed revenue to reduce, or even eliminate, the cost of last mile internet connectivity to town residents, he added.

Still, using the ballpark estimate of \$3.6 million, d'Errico said the average taxpayer in town who happens to be using dial up, satellite, or other means of connecting to the internet now in Leverett would probably see a net savings if the bond issue is approved, by eliminating those monthly charges.

He acknowledged the roughly six percent of Leverett residents who do not use the internet from home now would be required to pay the cost of universal coverage in town, even if they did not take advantage of the service. But d'Errico said a number of these residents would also be eager to connect to high speed internet service once they become generally available in Leverett.

D'Errico thought the project, if approved at town meeting, could be completed by next summer, with some households gaining access even earlier.

see PRICE page 11

## G-M Superintendent Ekstrom Resigns

**BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE GILL-MONTAGUE** - Interim superintendent Nadine Ekstrom announced her resignation at the Gill-Montague school committee meeting Tuesday night, March 27th.

Ekstrom informed the committee chair of her decision to accept a position with another school district late last week, after being informed by that Berlin-Boylston school committee had decided to offer her the position as their superintendent.

During the long process from voting on January 24th to offer Ekstrom a position as permanent superintendent, rather than forming a search committee to explore other candidates, through a February decision in executive session to offer her a three-year contract, the Gill-Montague Regional school committee had made their intention to try to retain Ekstrom as permanent superintendent clear.

Nevertheless, the committee had not reached the point of offering her an official contract. By the time the G-M committee informed Ekstrom in early March that they wanted to begin



Interim G-M Superintendent Nadine Ekstrom

Ekstrom, they made their decision, and called Ekstrom Thursday to tell her they had decided to offer her the position.

Ekstrom said, "This is a year of bitter sweet. It's been a great journey. My heart is with Gill-Montague and always will be."

Ekstrom, who received a salary of \$125,000, said she appreciated the nurturing environment in the G-M schools, her connection with the students, teachers and administrative staff.

As for the transition to a new superintendent, she expressed confidence the district would be able to continue the work she had started. She applauded work done by the teachers, said improvement in the

classrooms is exciting, and said she will be on the sidelines cheering them on. Unlike when she took over last year, the district now has a turnaround plan in place to get out of Level IV (the state's 'needs improvement' category), and she called that a clearly defined plan that must be implemented. Since the work going forward is set, with clear guidelines and requirements, the new superintendent will be able to step in and know just what to do.

see RESIGNS page 11

## Creating a Lovable Downtown



RiverCulture Director Lisa Davol and Peter Kageyama on the canalside bike path, with town planner Walter Ramsey (left) and town administrator Frank Abbondanzio (center), March 22nd.

**BY SHIRA HILLEL**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - Does Turner Falls possess the qualities of a lovable city? Does it have natural beauty? Check. Parks? Check. Walkability? Check. Bikeability? Check. Boatability? Check. Hikability? Check. Beautiful historical buildings? Check. Great restau-

rants? Check. Affordability? Check. A creative artistic community? Check.

Peter Kageyama has spent a lot of time thinking about how to get people to love their communities. An internationally recognized expert on community development and grassroots engagement, he is the

author of *For the Love of Cities*. His book explores the value of being emotionally engaged with our cities, how that connection is created and nurtured, and how it can be turned into a development resource. Kageyama lives in Florida, and has spoken around the world about bottom up community development and the people that make change happen.

Kageyama was the keynote speaker at the Creative Economy Summit 3 on March 23rd and 24th in downtown Greenfield. The annual summit is produced by the Fostering Art and Culture Project of which Turners Falls RiverCulture is a partner.

Kageyama's keynote talk was held on Friday, and inspired the entire audience: "Arts and culture are what make the city fall

see DOWNTOWN pg 10

## DOUBLE TAKE: Imitating Art at the Gallery at Hallmark

**BY JC PRODUCT - TURNERS FALLS** - Don't miss the final weekend of "Imitating Art" at the Gallery at Hallmark on Avenue A in Turners Falls. The gallery is open from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. Friday through Sunday; admission is free!

Each year, Hallmark School of Photography students are asked to recreate a work of art in a staged photograph, and photos of both the original work and the student's version are hung side by side.

This year's display features work from Hallmark students past and present, along with reproductions from classic masters like Van Gogh and Degas, and also current artists like anime-alum Yoshitaka Amano, and the street painting Banksy.

see HALLMARK pg 9



Bridget McDonald photographer imitates Norman Rockwell



## PET OF THE WEEK

### These Boots are Made for Adoptin'



### Boots Magoots

Hi, I'm Boots Magoots. I'm a four year old phat cat, pretty kitty and a pearl of a girl. See how I came out of the gate rhyming? With a name like Boots Magoots what else can I do? I'm a super talkative purr monster with a head butt to beat all head butts. I adore catnip and mostly I'm just looking to be in a loving home as soon as felinely possible!

I might not be good with canine friends in my new home as I had some boxers in my last home who wanted too desperately to be my playmate. So, if you have kitty cats, people, love and catnip in your home, then I'm the one for you! To learn more about adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.

**TURNERS FALLS  
WATER DEPARTMENT**  
will begin reading  
**WATER METERS**  
on Monday  
**APRIL 2nd, 2012**

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## GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT School Committee Vacancy

The Gill-Montague Regional School Committee has a school committee Montague representative vacancy, to fill out the term of Emily Monosson who resigned recently.

The term will end in May of 2012, at which time the new appointee would have the option to run for election for the

two year term. The school committee will make the appointment at their next regular meeting on April 10th, 2012.

Letters of interest should be sent to interim superintendent Nadine Ekstrom, GMRSD, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, 01376 or e-mailed to rhamlett@gmrso.org no later than April 4th, 2012.

## Mutton and Mead Returns to Montague in June

The Mutton and Mead Festival, a traditional Renaissance Faire, will return to the Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club, 210 Turners Falls Road, in Montague on Saturday and Sunday, June 23rd and 24th. The expanded festival will bring together food, fun and entertainment with a medieval flair. For attendees, dressing up in period cos-

tume is not required, but will heighten the experience for everyone involved.

The first annual Mutton and Mead festival last year brought 2,300 people to the event. This year, organizers decided to double the pleasure by expanding to two days. So tell all your friends, and mark your calendars to join Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest. Huzzah!

## WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS 2nd Annual Seed Swap

The second annual Wendell Seed Swap will take place at the Wendell Free Library this coming Saturday, March 31st, from 11:00 -12:00. Bring any seeds you'd like to trade, and small containers/envelopes.

Seeds can be your own home grown or commercial seed. Please note: this is not the Plant Swap that will occur later in the spring. This program is sponsored by Wendell Energy Committee.

## WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS Integrated Pest Management for Vegetable Gardens I: An Introduction

The first part in this workshop series will be held on Thursday, April 5th, at 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. at the Wendell Free Library.

The workshops aim to educate vegetable gardeners about integrated pest management practices that help reduce or eliminate pesticide use, and protect the health of our ecosystems. Workshops will include time for gardeners to

share problems and solutions. The workshop is free for Wendell residents. Space is limited at the library, so please arrive on time. The program is presented by Karen Idoine and sponsored by the Wendell open space committee. Idoine has a background in agricultural entomology, integrated pest management (IPM), biological control, horticulture and natural history.

## SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – April 2nd to 6th

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

**Monday, April 2nd**  
10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle  
**Tuesday, April 3rd**  
10:30 a.m. Seated Health Program  
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting  
1:00 p.m. RAD Class  
**Wednesday, April 4th**  
10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, April 5th**  
NO Tai Chi  
10:30 a.m. Brown Bag  
1:00 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, April 6th**

10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

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

The Erving Council on Aging will host a conflict-resolution workshop. The classes will be led by Mediator and Trainer, Mari Rovang and will occur for four consecutive Tuesday afternoons in April from 3:30 until 5 p.m. Call Polly for more information or to register.

**Monday, April 2nd**  
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi  
10:00 a.m. Osteo Exercise



On September 24th, 2011, Greenfield Community College students cleaned and moved a humpback whale skeleton. Its skull will be on display at GCC beginning April 4th, in the front foyer.

Humpback whales are the most common Massachusetts whale. Their acrobatic summer feeding exploits are easily spotted by whale watchers. These whales are classified as an endangered species in Massachusetts and under the United States Endangered Species Act. An estimated 10,000 humpback whales survive in the world today.

In September of 2010, a 30-

foot juvenile dead male was found floating off the coast of Cape Cod and brought to shore. The skeleton was donated by Mass Wildlife and cleaned and moved by GCC students.

On Wednesday, April 4th, at 12:15 p.m. the mounted skull of a humpback whale will be unveiled in the front foyer of the lobby at the Greenfield Community College Main Campus.

## LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS


### Pizza and Poetry


Come share pizza with family and friends surrounded by fantastic photos of our new trails in East Leverett. Janine Roberts, Leverett author and poet, will lead a workshop in writing poems about nature on


Tuesday, April 10th, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Leverett Library.

This program is sponsored by the Leverett trails committee and supported by a Leverett cultural council grant.

**Great Falls Middle School  
Students of the Week**  
**Grade 6**  
Madison St. Marie  
**Grade 7**  
Tionne Brown  
Bryn Kruzlic  
**Grade 8**  
Lindsey Mailloux

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

## Local Briefs

**COMPILED BY DON CLEGG** - The Diemand Farm will host its **annual Easter Egg Hunt** on Saturday, March 31st, from 10:00 a.m. to noon at 126 Mormon Hollow Road in Wendell. There will be egg hunts and egg coloring along with visits from the Easter Chick and Easter Bunny. There will be plenty of food including turkey legs, hot dogs, sandwiches, pastries and cold and hot drinks for purchase.

Children ages 4 to 12 are invited to take part in the 7th Annual **Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza** on Saturday,

April 7th at Unity Park in Turners Falls starting at 1:00 p.m. This great community tradition will feature face painting, egg coloring, pictures with Peter Cottontail, and an egg hunt where kids will have the challenge of finding approximately 5,000 candy and toy-filled eggs placed in designated areas throughout Unity Park. Participants must bring their own basket or bag for the eggs. The event is sponsored by Montague parks and recreation commission.

April is Rabies Awareness Month and the town of Warwick is holding its annual **rabies clinic** on Saturday, March 31st, from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Warwick fire station on Route 78 (Orange Road). The clinic is open to all and you do not need to reside in Warwick to bring your pets to this clinic, which is sponsored by the Warwick Animal Control and Care.

For more information call 978-544-5218 or email [animal.control@town.warwick.ma.us](mailto:animal.control@town.warwick.ma.us).

The town of Wendell will also hold a rabies clinic on Saturday, April 7th, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Wendell highway barn. Dog licenses will also be

available. Dogs must be on a leash, and cats in a carrier. No appointment is required. For more information, call 978-544-7773.

The mounted skull of a **humpback whale** will be unveiled in the front foyer of the lobby at the GCC Main Campus Library on Wednesday, April 4th, at 12:15 p.m. Humpback whales are the most common Massachusetts whale. Their summer feeding exploits including spy hopping, flipper slapping and breaching are easily spotted by whale watchers. These whales are classified as an endangered species in Massachusetts and under the United States Endangered Species Act. An estimated 10,000 humpback whales survive in the world today.

A 30-foot juvenile dead male was found floating in Stellwagon Bank, a common feeding ground, off the coast of Cape Cod and brought to shore in Chatham, Massachusetts on September 12th, 2010. The skeleton was donated by Mass Wildlife and cleaned and moved by GCC students on September 24th, 2011. The structure supporting the whale skull was designed and fabricated by Steelhead Studios in Holyoke.

Discover about **vernal pools** and some of their special features at the Leverett Library on Saturday, March 31st, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Dawn Marvin Ward will present a hands-on

program designed for families and beginner naturalists. This program will begin inside and then venture outside to visit the library's own vernal pool if weather permits. While all ages are welcome, this program is designed for children ages 8 and over, accompanied by an adult. For more information, call the Leverett Library at 413-548-9220.

"We are living in the worst economic crisis facing America, facing the world, since the 1930s. Like the Great Depression of the 1930s, the crisis was caused by the success of the 1% in massively redistributing income to themselves, and it will be relieved only by policies that restore equity in our economy," according to professor Gerald Friedman, of the UMass department of economics.

On Thursday, April 5th, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. at the GCC downtown campus, 570 Main Street, Greenfield, Professor Friedman will speak on the **current economic crisis** and what we can do about it, as part of a continuing series of speakers sponsored by the educational working group of Occupy Franklin County. "We see these discussions as an important part in helping the 99% take back our country from corporations and the 1% who control them," said organizer David Cohen.

"Gas prices are the highest ever, even though demand is low. That's price gouging by oil

companies and speculators. Unemployment is still 16% if you count people who ran out of unemployment benefits and people who are still losing their homes. The banks have recovered but not the regular people," said Joshua Epstein, a member of Occupy Franklin County.

Friedman has been active in campaigns for single-payer health insurance in both Maryland and Massachusetts, and is working on how to finance a national single payer plan. His studies show that towns like Greenfield could save several million dollars a year if a single-payer health insurance plan were adopted in Massachusetts.

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

## Correction

Due to a reporting error in last week's story on Celebrating Dr. Seuss, we stated inaccurately that Marie Bartlett, author of *The Little Yellow Trolley*, made "a gift of a copy of her book to each family in attendance."

In fact, the books and other expenses of the evening were paid for through a \$500 grant from the Gill-Montague Education Fund, with remaining expenses paid for by the Title I program at the Gill-Montague schools.

## This Week on MCTV:

**BY CINDY TARAIL**

**MONTAGUE** - Laurel Facey, resident of Wendell and Great Falls Discovery Center board member, is a frequent video producer at MCTV. Her recent

videos showcase music and poetry at Discovery Center events, including the March 9th Ray Mason coffeehouse concert pictured below.

Facey said of her video work,

"This is the best way to enjoy what is going on in our community. Learning to tape and edit is just part of the fun."

Facey's next project will be the April Coffeehouse at the Great Falls Discovery Center, featuring the Amanda Chorus.

For more info about Discovery Center events, call 413-863-3221 or visit: [www.greatfallsma.org](http://www.greatfallsma.org).

MCTV invites members of the community to learn how to make local TV, to borrow equipment and to crew on member productions. Contact MCTV at 413-863-9200 or visit [www.montaguetv.org](http://www.montaguetv.org) for a program schedule.

Visit: [vimeo.com/mctvchannel17](http://vimeo.com/mctvchannel17) to view locally produced videos on demand.



Ray Mason and Dawn Marvin Ward

**Montague Parks & Recreation Department**  
presents:  
**The Annual Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza**  
**Saturday, April 7 at 1:00pm**  
Unity Park, First Street, Turners Falls  
Children ages **4 to 12** are invited to take part in this great community tradition, featuring:  
... face painting,  
... egg decorating,  
... pictures with Peter Cottontail,  
... bake sale and cotton candy!  
... and our Annual Egg Hunt where kids will have the challenge of finding well over **5,000** candy and toy-filled eggs placed throughout Unity Park.  
Participants must bring their own basket/bag for the eggs.  
**THIS EVENT IS RAIN OR SHINE.**  
*We thank the generosity of the event Co-Sponsors:*  
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**"The Voice of the Villages"**

## Best Health Care Money Can Buy

BY WILLIAM COLLINS

**NORWALK, CT** — In most countries, health care is aimed at curing the sick. Here, not so much.

In the United States, health care is a profit center, one of our nation's few growth industries. Young people are wisely counseled to pursue health-related careers. As a service, it's harder to ship overseas.

But unlike other countries, where the patient is the focus, here the corporate owners are. If you don't believe me, please ask United Health CEO Stephen Hemsley. He pocketed \$102 million in total compensation in 2010, so he should know.

Even local health care can be a racket. No, probably not your own general practitioner who deals with your broken toe and that persistent gout. The profiteers are the clever MDs and hospitals who set up testing clinics to X-ray and CT-scan us to death, and to perform marginal surgical procedures. That's where the money is. And since Medicare and HMOs seem willing to pay for just about anything, entrepreneurs will test and operate for just about anything. It's no skin off your doctor's nose. If you're lucky enough to be insured, he knows you won't have to pay for it yourself — insurers will.

The major downside of this greed-based system is that health insurance is now so costly that too many of us can't afford it. The ranks of uninsured Americans have swollen to 50 million. This racket provides cozy income to the few at the top while abusing the poorly paid health aides at the bottom. It consigns vast swaths of the population to inadequate care. There may be some other modern country that also allows this, but none springs to mind.

What do our legions of truly selfless health professionals do to compensate? They volunteer at clinics. Some serve schools, others veterans, still others poor neighborhoods. And when that's not enough, uninsured folks flock to the steadily diminishing number of hospital emergency rooms. By law,

these have to provide them with care, the world's most expensive. It's a health system only Wall Street could love.

And Wall Street does love it. But for them it could be even better. If we could just get rid of Medicare, which is essentially what many Republicans are calling for, all seniors would be forced into the juicy private insurance market. And if we could just tweak the patent laws, folks would have to pay full price for Lipitor forever.

Our system makes foreigners scratch their heads. How can a great nation like ours leave one in six Americans without coverage and millions more forgoing doctor's appointments, medical procedures, and prescribed medicine to avoid costly deductibles and co-pays? Why doesn't the government operate, or at least manage, health insurance itself? How can companies get permission to make their medications so expensive for so long? Why is poverty allowed to be so rampant, thereby making health conditions worse?

Well brethren, you're now drifting into the realm of market capitalism, which has made this country so great. Every man for himself! Survival of the fittest! Devil take the hindmost!

Unfortunately we've been keeping the Devil quite busy lately collecting many souls whose untreated afflictions weren't covered by insurance.

*William Collins is a former state representative, and a former mayor of Norwalk, Connecticut. This article first appeared in otherwords.org.*

**Montague Reporter**

**We Welcome  
Your Letters!**

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In Memory of Trayvon Martin, 2/5/95 - 2/26/2012.

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Does a Majority Really Support Six Precincts?

In the article on the representative town meeting poll in last week's issue (*MR X#25: Most Poll Respondents Favor Representative Town Meeting in Montague*), I believe the assertion that "Respondents favored the current number of town voting precincts, six, by a large majority," is misleading.

Since we currently have six precincts, I understood this to be a referendum on whether six precincts was the most advantageous number. Thus anyone who voted for a different number would be indicating their belief that some other number would be preferable.

If you take the number of people who support six precincts (46) versus the number of people who support any other configuration (49), you actually have more people who feel some other number would work better than the current number.

I think the results could easily read as 46 were in favor of six precincts, 49 preferred a different configuration, and 23 had no preference.

Of course if that is the question that was really being asked, then it might have been better to ask it differently, such as "Do you prefer the current six precincts or do you think another number

would be better? If you prefer another number of precincts, which is the number you think would work best?" This would have been a two-part question and, for me at least, would have given a clearer picture of people's thoughts on the subject.

I appreciate the work that went into the study and the compilation of the results. I hope this is just the beginning of looking at other aspects of our town's structure so we can have the most effective and efficient town government possible to serve our community.

—Pat Allen  
Montague City

### Stand Your Ground, Massachusetts Style

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**BOSTON** - The country has been focused on the shooting of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed black teenager in Sanford, Florida, since February 26th, and also on the 'Stand Your Ground' law Florida and 20 other states have passed recently. Veteran Florida district attorney Angela Corey has said the law will complicate any attempt to prosecute George Zimmerman, the neighborhood watch volunteer who, police say, shot Martin dead after calling 911 and being told to leave the scene that night.

Zimmerman claimed he acted in self defense; he was not arrest-

ed by police.

As the investigation of the case continues at the local and federal level, an international outcry mounts about 'Stand Your Ground' legislation that allows American civilians to use lethal force in self defense anywhere "they are legally allowed to be," without facing the threat of lawsuit, if they believe they are acting in self-defense.

In Massachusetts, Senator Stephen Brewer, (D-Barre) has introduced similar legislation in the state senate (S-661), where it is currently being reviewed by the Judiciary Committee.

In a written statement, Brewer said this week, "The Common Defense Bill was filed on behalf of the Gun Owner's Action League, with the support of many of my constituents, and it is a bill I have been filing for five years."

"What happened in Florida is a true tragedy. That is not the intent of this bill, nor would it have provided protection to George Zimmerman in the case of the shooting of Trayvon Martin. This bill provides a clear definition of lawful defense and is a matter of protecting citizens who are acting legally, under a strictly outlined and rigidly

defined circumstance. This bill expands an individual's already existing right to protect themselves to 'anywhere they are legally allowed to be', broadening the current law to provide protection outside of the home, the language remains unyielding that an individual using force, including deadly force, must be protecting themselves or another from 'great personal injury or death'. It is important to note that the bill does not provide any protection to an individual pursuing or chasing after another citizen, as was the case in the Florida shooting. This is a bill that will provide criminal and civil protection for responsible citizens acting in self defense or in the defense of another human being."

State Senate president pro-tem Stan Rosenberg said this week, "I've not had a chance to really research and study the bill. But from what I understand of it, my gut reaction is this is not the direction we need to go here in Massachusetts. This appears to be a shoot first and ask questions later bill. It really worries me that we can see situations where people might act quickly, emotionally, and make a serious mistake."

### U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan as of 3/28/12

Wounded:	Deaths:
15,332	1,918



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**ANOTHER LETTER**

# Congrats, Bluefish Swimteam

On behalf of the Montague parks and recreation department, I would like to acknowledge the time, effort, and positive energy displayed by our Bluefish Swim Team this past season.

This was a season of transition, as the Bluefish competed their first year as a member of the Pioneer Valley Swim League (PVSL). The PVSL comprises teams from Chicopee, Westfield, West Springfield, Belchertown, and Monson to name a few. Most of the teams the Bluefish competed against were much larger, yet our swimmers performed admirably; consistently placing in relay and individual events.

As you can imagine, it takes the efforts of many to contribute to the success of a team. Therefore, I would first like to acknowledge our coaching staff; head coach Sarah Smith, assistant coach Liz Prasol and coach Peg Saulnier. Their patience, enthusiasm and caring nature helped motivate the team to perform at their optimum level. The kids, parents, and department are very fortunate to have all of you on-board.

Secondly, a note of appreciation must also go out to the parents of our swimmers. Bluefish parents are considered part of the team because so much is asked of them. They continually stepped up to help throughout the season with swim meets, fundraising, and of course getting their swimmers to and from all team events on a timely basis.

Recognition must also be made to this season's co-sponsors: Connecticut Valley Oral Surgery Associates, All States Materials Group, Magpie Pizzeria, and the Wagon Wheel Restaurant. The swimmers, parents, coaches and I share in appreciation of your community-minded spirit and contribution towards healthy leisure pursuits for our youth.

Finally, and certainly not least, I would like to acknowledge the Bluefish swimmers themselves. Without question you are the driving force of this

team. You have made your parents, coaches, and MPRD very proud of what you have accomplished this season. You represented the tradition of the Bluefish and yourselves

tremendously with your constant display of hard work and sportsmanship.

The Bluefish Swim Team has existed for approximately 35 years, and in that time has been

the primary source of competitive swimming for youth between the ages of 7 - 15 in Franklin County.

There is no question that due to the dedication and passion

exhibited by those involved, The Bluefish will continue to experience success for years to come.

- Jon Dobosz  
Montague Parks and Recreation



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**NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD****Montague EDIC - Proud Owner of the Cumby**

**BY JANEL NOCKLEBY**  
The Department of Conservation and Recreation gave verbal approval on Monday, March 26th, to transfer the title of the former Cumberland Farms building at 38 Avenue A, to the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, reported Andrew Killeen of the EDIC at the selectboard meeting on Monday.

Within a few weeks the property title paperwork should be completed, Killeen said. It has taken years for negotiations on the building to have come this far.

Killeen also provided an update on the conditions of the building, noting that town building inspector David Jensen has written a letter to the EDIC outlining mold remediation steps that must be taken. Gina McNeely of the Montague board of health has also weighed in on concerns about the building's state of disrepair.

Because the EDIC does not have sufficient funds to make needed repairs, the EDIC and selectboard agreed an article should be placed on an upcoming early May special town meeting warrant for that purpose. The deadline for articles is April 12th. Town planner Walter Ramsey noted that ultimately the building will also need a new roof.

Michael Muller, of Montague Community Television, said he had received an estimate from a local Greenfield contractor to remove all mold from the interior of the building and "go down to the brick," for about \$7500, which Killeen appreciated as a reasonable estimate.

MCTV, the Montague Business Association, and Turners Falls RiverCulture would like to lease the building from the EDIC in order to expand MCTV's

studio space, provide offices for their organizations, and to open a cultural center with brochures, exhibits, and bathrooms for visitor to the town, Muller said.

Now, armed with more clarity on the property's title, the EDIC has decisions to make.

Should the building be turned over from the EDIC to the town because the EDIC does not have funds to maintain heat, water, and insurance for the building? Should the EDIC sell it, or demolish it? Or, as Muller would prefer, lease it to MCTV, the MBA, and RiverCulture.

Selectboard chairperson Mark Fairbrother expressed his dissatisfaction with the building by describing it as "ugly and mold infested."

Muller rejoined that he had letters describing the property as structurally sound. "Mold doesn't eat brick or metal," he added.

At this point, all interested parties have been asked to do their homework in preparation for next steps. The EDIC and town administrator Frank Abbondanzio will work on getting the required mold remediation project funded via special town meeting. The EDIC will determine what, if any, requests for proposals and paperwork are needed for the mold remediation. Muller will provide a detailed proposal to the EDIC on potential plans for a cultural center, which he said he has prepared already. The EDIC will need to sort out how to pay for ongoing operating expenses in the short term. Stay tuned for more Cumby's developments this spring.

In other news, the selectboard approved the Montague parks and recreation department's plans to make the Unity Park field house its permanent year-round home, starting this

spring. For a number of years, the parks and recreation department has moved to the basement of town hall in winter.

Heating costs will be higher in the field house building, but parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz explained how being in the field house year-round will help his department respond to incidents of vandalism and neglect more quickly, and provide more of a presence in the area. Of particular concern is the new playground equipment arriving this spring.

"We should be there year-round," Dobosz said.

The selectboard and town administrator Frank Abbondanzio had a number of energy conservation and cost cutting ideas for the building that may be implemented over time, like switching from propane to natural gas. Dobosz noted the building could use more insulation.

Once again on Saturday, April 7th, approximately five thousand eggs will be distributed throughout Unity Park, at the Seventh Annual Peter Cottontail's Eggstravaganza, for children ages four to twelve to find. Don't be late. Dobosz explained that in past years the eggs have been collected as quickly as two to three minutes!

"Some kids bring immense pails, and they're moving," he said.

There will be face painting, egg coloring, a bake sale, cotton candy, pictures with Peter Cottontail, and the candy-filled egg hunt. Festivities begin at 1 p.m., rain or shine.

Robin Sherman, executive director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, presented updated information on the Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund

see MONTAGUE pg 11

**NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD****Compromise on Cross Road Paving**

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
There is more than one way to keep down the dust on Cross Road.

Or at least, that's the message residents were given as a takeaway from this week's Gill selectboard hearing, after highway superintendent Mick LaClaire reported that it could cost up to \$80,000 to widen and chip seal the 1120-foot long, arc shaped side street off Boyle Road into a regular two lane layout.

When abutter Tom Bergeron came before the selectboard to first propose chip sealing Cross Road on Monday, February 13th, LaClaire gave a back of the envelope estimate of between \$20,000 to \$25,000 to do the job.

Bergeron said an increase in traffic over the years has led to an increase in dust, to the point where residents can no longer keep their windows open or hang up clothes on the line in summertime. He said the half dozen families that live on the road are unanimous in wanting a better road surface to keep down the dust.

Since that first meeting, the town has confirmed that Cross Road is indeed a county road, established as such in 1939, and LaClaire has staked out the road to see where the original bounds are located. LaClaire said the road no longer conforms to its original layout, and would need to be widened in places before permanent improvements like chip sealing are undertaken. He said, "Quite a bit of work would be required," to do the job right, like "moving poles and wires, and cutting down trees."

On Monday, former highway boss Ernie Hastings came to the hearing and told the board, "There's no base on that road whatsoever." In fact, Hastings said, "It used to

be a corn field." He added, "There's other roads, and school bus routes, that need to be attended to worse than that one."

Hastings suggested applying calcium chloride to the road surface to settle the dust.

Bergeron said he had not asked for the road to be widened or altered from its present route. He and the other residents just wanted relief from the dust. However, calcium chloride would not be a welcome solution, since private wells are located within a few feet of the road, Bergeron said.

But LaClaire offered an alternative - excavating the road, applying a "good gravel base," and then putting down a surface of reconstituted asphalt millings, at a cost of about \$700. After rolling it out and compacting it, the new surface would last from one to three years, and would need to be reapplied after that.

The selectboard agreed to give this approach a try this year, to see how it would work to improve the dusty conditions for the neighbors.

In other news, the selectboard agreed to order 4,800 gallons of heating fuel for town buildings for the next heating season, at a price to be determined. That amount is down about 20% from the number of gallons the town ordered last year, due in part to the efficiencies expected once Tognarelli Heating and Cooling completes the \$54,000 upgrade of the heating system in the public safety complex.

Due to the mild winter this year, Purington reported that fuel use in all town buildings was down between 13% and 18% from the prior heating season.

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high speed internet fiber, coming soon to a hill town near you, Purington said a number of utility poles are due to be replaced in Gill with taller, 40- to 48-foot poles.

The selectboard got word of two Community Innovation Challenge Grants awarded to Franklin County, one for \$19,000 to help get the regional dog officer program off to a good start, and the other, for \$119,375, to get the Franklin County Cooperative Public Health Service up and running.

The board agreed to accept bids for \$104 an hour from J.W. Cotton for street sweeping in town, and for \$135 an hour from National Water Main, to clean catch basins. LaClaire said his department is assisting by sweeping sand from the streets in areas of town away from residential areas. The highway department's equipment can clear sand from streets, but can't vacuum it up at the same time, so the outside contractor will clean streets in parts of town like Riverside where residences are close together.

A donation fund has been set up for anyone who would like to contribute to a project to put up walls at the town hall, to provide privacy for residents doing business with the town clerk, tax collector, and other town officials, and to allow for a more efficient use of space for town boards and employees.

Contact Ray Purington at 863-9347 for more information. Bids are also being accepted for mowing on town properties, and Purington would be glad to answer questions about that, as well.

The annual Friends of Gill Pancake Breakfast will take place Saturday, March 31st, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Congregational Church.

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## NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

## Seaboard Solar Contract Delayed

BY JOSH

**HEINEMANN** - The Wendell selectboard did not sign a contract with Seaboard Solar at its March 14th meeting; instead they listened to concerns and suggestions about that contract from the energy committee.

The contract would have Wendell act as host municipality for a ten megawatt solar installation, not necessarily within town borders, in exchange for paying a reduced rate for electricity used by the town, and also receiving a rent of a half cent for each kilowatt Seaboard Solar sells to other users.

Energy task force chair Nan Riebschlaeger enumerated the committee's concerns. First is the lack of a date for a non-performance clause in the contract.

At the energy committee meeting Monday, March 12th, Seaboard Solar representative Dave Thomas said the date was included in the contract, but at the meeting no one was able to find it. The task force pointed out that Seaboard Solar has leases in place for enough surface to install 6.679 megawatts worth of solar panels, and task force members felt that Wendell might do better to sign a contract for that capacity and allow the remaining 3.321 megawatts to be held in reserve, to give Wendell the opportunity to use that megawattage in a net metering facility of its own.

Selectboard member Dan Keller pointed out that the contracted amount of electricity can be modified by either party with six months notice.

The contract period is for 20 years because Seaboard Solar needs that long a commitment to justify the upfront costs of installing the solar panels.

Energy task force members felt the town's rent return for the solar energy credits Seaboard would sell elsewhere should not stay at a half cent per kilowatt hour, but be held at the same constant percentage of the cost of electricity, a cost which is likely to rise during the span of the 20 year contract.

The committee also recommended that the money Wendell earns be put into a loan or grant fund for Wendell citizens and businesses to use for energy efficiency and generation.

Keller said he would forward the task force comments to town council.

The open space committee updated the selectboard on their activities, starting with their effort to pass the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in Wendell. The CPA is a state law that can be adopted by a town to allow state matching funds to be added to money raised in town through a local option excise tax up to 2% on property tax bills; with the combined funds available for open space protection, recreation, and historical preservation. The CPA must be accepted by a town vote as a ballot question, during a regular election, and there was some hope that wording would be ready in time to have the question on the ballot for the May town election.

Marianne Sundell said Japanese knotweed can be controlled by a chemical she feels confident has a short active life. She hoped the selectboard would back an effort to control knotweed in town.

The town owns a landlocked parcel of about 20 acres between Farley Road and the electric lines, and there has been some talk of using that land for solar panels. Sundell said the land was voted as conservation land by a two thirds vote at town meeting, and that Paul Godfrey, a retired botany professor, looked at the trees and thought they were among the oldest trees in town, possibly stump sprouts from the first cutting of that land. The property is hard to reach, even by foot, but worth the effort to see, and Sundell thought it would be a loss to clear it for solar panels.

Treasurer Caroline Manley came into the room as the meeting opened, saying the bathroom thermostat reads "unoccupied" but the temperature in the room is 73 degrees.

showing once again that the heating control system in the town office building is not functioning properly. There is also a problem with the emergency back-up generator not functioning properly. Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said the telephones and answering machine have not been working properly either.

Aldrich read from a letter the building inspector had sent her relating complaints from neighbors about properties with more than two unregistered vehicles, contrary to a town bylaw passed in 1987.

Several residents have special permits to keep more than two unregistered vehicles on their property, but selectboard chair Christine Heard thought no one had renewed such a permit this year. The board will send letters to each of these property owners, allowing them two weeks to respond.

The board voted to adopt a formal list of financial policies that board chair Christine Heard called thorough and clear. Copies will be distributed at the next money manager's meeting, on March 28th.

A new hurdle has cropped up in the path of the Cooleyville Road bridge overhaul, a project that had already been delayed once last fall due to the approach of so-called winter weather. Since then, the Mass DEP has expanded the size of the culvert required, and so the project has to start over again almost from scratch.

Keller said the town got a bill from ATI, the company that is cleaning the moldy documents from the town vault. Those documents came back once, but even in the boxes they gave off a smell of mold and were sent back. When he called the company recently, Keller learned that the man who was handling Wendell's papers was no longer with the company. The papers still need a cleaning, after which they will get irradiated. Keller said ATI is a big company with a reputation to maintain, and came with a good recommen-

see **WENDELL** pg 10

## NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Town Departments Reorganized

### Treatment Plant Supervisory Post Eliminated

**BY KATIE NOLAN** - At its March 26th meeting, the Erving selectboard restructured the town's public works departments, creating the position of public works director and eliminating the highway supervisor and wastewater treatment environmental supervisor positions.

Current highway supervisor Paul Prest was appointed as interim public works director.

Environmental supervisor Art Pace was relieved of his duties on March 27th and informed that his job would be terminated as of April 14th, allowing a two week severance period.

Town employees who want to apply for the public works director job must submit applications to the selectboard by Thursday, March 29th.

The draft organization plan shows the director of public works supervising the highway foreman and the head of the water and wastewater treatment departments.

Two current highway workers and two buildings and grounds workers will report to the highway foreman. Three current part-time grounds maintenance positions and mowing contracts with Beulahland Nursery will be eliminated.

Building and grounds maintenance for all town buildings and properties will be done by a full-time maintenance worker, a new position.

Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin estimated the town will save from \$30,000 to \$40,000 annually with this departmental reorganization.

Treasurer and assessor Margaret Sullivan questioned the costs for creating a full-time benefited maintenance position, but Goodwin said with the elimination of the full-time benefited environmental supervisor position, the town will not have increased costs.

School committee chair Jarod Boissonneault reported that the school committee approved the FY'13 budget, which includes a 13% increase over FY'12. This budget was previously presented to both the selectboard and finance committee. Boissonneault asked for information about town employee cost of living increases for the past three fiscal years, for use in negotiations with school employees.

The selectboard decided that it would be best to meet with the Montague selectboard in May, after annual town meeting.

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## On View: East to West



ANNE HARDING PHOTO

Logan Pratt experiments with rod puppets at the East to West exhibit at the Discovery Center

BY ANNE HARDING

**GREAT FALLS** - The Great Falls Discovery Center (GFDC) "East to West" exhibit has been extended and will now be open for viewing through the month of April. It brings together children's art, Chinese cultural history and great literature. University of Massachusetts professor Annaliese Bischoff, who was at the opening reception on March 3rd, called it "one of the most innovative installa-

tions of children's artwork" she has seen. Bischoff said she was impressed with the low cost strategy used to hang the work and inspired by the high quality of the exhibit.

This is the fourth exhibit inspired by a Big Read book choice that Sheila Damkoehler has hung for the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and Memorial Hall Museum (PVMA) at the Great Falls Discovery Center. The Big

Read is a national program that aims to revitalize the role of reading in American public culture, funded in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. Damkoehler feels the PVMA's approach to the Big Read differs from many organizations because the PVMA's activities span several months, beginning with the Franklin County Fair in September, and typically end with a month long exhibit and a culminating per-

formance or event.

This year's Big Read is Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*.

As a history museum, PVMA first looks at their chosen books through the lens of history and how the book relates to the museum's collection of artifacts. In addition, the books serve to advance the education mission of the PVMA's Deerfield Teacher's Center, and to build new and strengthen existing community partnerships.

The Great Falls Discovery Center exhibits are an opportunity for PVMA to have a community presence at a family friendly facility during the winter, when their unheated museum in Deerfield is closed. The Discovery Center also offers an opportunity for young students to see their art work displayed in a professional gallery setting, and for teachers to showcase their students' work in a non-school setting.

This year, Althea Dabrowski's sixth grade students from Bernardston Elementary School worked in teams to design board games for the exhibit - following discussions on the social aspects of games and the cultural background of Chinese art, including traditional colors and motifs. Third and fourth grade students from Bernardston and Northfield learned some of the historic background of the use of rod puppets in shadow settings before designing their own puppets, loosely based on the

Chinese lunar calendar. Student art from two Greenfield public schools is also on display at GFDC.

The Pioneer Valley has played an interesting and important role in the history of relations between the United States and China. The Pioneer Valley History Network will host a conference at the Discovery Center on Saturday April 14th from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. on this theme, followed by a 3 p.m. performance of the Chinese Folk Art Workshop at the Shea Theater.

Conference highlights include: "The Forgotten Connection: Connecticut River Valley and the China Trade," showing the two-way trade between China and the Pioneer Valley; "A Shoemaker's Story," looking at the story behind a famous 1870 photograph of immigrant Chinese strikebreakers at a North Adams shoe factory; "China's Tea: Splendid Elixir of Emperors, Nobles, Holy Men and Everyman"; and "The Bridgmans: America's First Missionaries to China," giving the details of the life of Belchertown native Elijah Bridgman, America's first Christian missionary to China.

Tickets are \$25 per person for the whole day, including lunch and the performance. Reservations can be made by contacting the [www.pioneervalleyhistorynetwork.org](http://www.pioneervalleyhistorynetwork.org) or sending an email to [pioneervalleyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:pioneervalleyhistory@gmail.com).

### Montague Special Town Meeting - April 4th

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Montague will hold a special town meeting at the Turners Falls High School auditorium on Wednesday, April 4th, at 7:00 p.m. All registered voters in Montague are welcome to speak at least once on any issue under consideration by town meeting; only elected precinct representatives can vote on the 12 warrant articles.

In addition to motions to allocated \$25,000 to fund new water mains for the former Montague Center School, and an article to spend \$30,000 to fund a pay and classification study to compare Montague's pay rates for town

employees to those of neighboring communities; town meeting will also consider articles to supplement the town's legal budget by \$15,000, to spend \$14,000 for energy efficient lighting at the town owned Shea Theater; and \$12,500 for the town's 5% match of a \$250,000 airport improvement grant to primarily finance design and tribal investigation of article of cultural interest in the completion of a perimeter fence at the Turners Falls Airport.

The town also seeks to set aside \$10,000 in the Henry Waidlich Conservation Fund for conservation of agricultural land.



JANEL NOCKLEBY PHOTO

A Cedar Waxwing as seen on March 24th on Third Street in Turners, eating fermented crabapples and getting tipsy.

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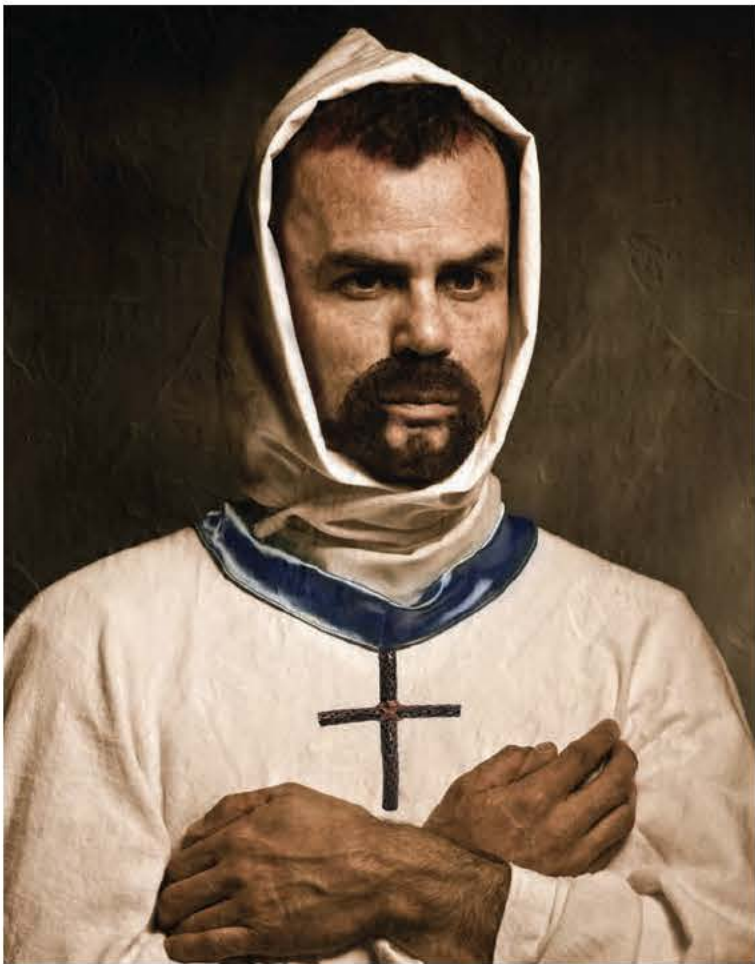
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Luis Tobian, Photographer

#### HALLMARK from page 1

Within moments of entering the gallery, it is evident why this is considered a favorite assignment at the Hallmark School. What fun it was letting the eye play across the twin pieces. I was not the only browser to make a game of which image to peruse first: the student's imitation or the miniature original masterpiece.

Maxwell Parrish's "Wild Geese" was interpreted by Jillian Rollins; as the opening pair of photographs, these did not disappoint. One can quibble over hand positions and hair color, but in Rollins' version, as in the original, the wild geese were flying yonder. I marveled at both women, their sun salutations interrupted by the soaring flock. A glorious painting paid homage by a glorious reincarnation.

A painting that hung in the living room in my childhood turned out to be a photographed replica of Johannes Vermeer's "The Milkmaid." I marveled at the execution, imagining Julia Rodriguez's countless retakes aimed at the perfect pour.

Chris Catti's photograph

achieved the ethereal as it recreated the translucence of Egon Schiele's oil painted "Self Portrait." A triumph in its own right and as a completion of the assignment, Catti's photo is a visual feat, making this free cultural event well worth a visit if only for a glimpse of that single print. My eye cannot forget the shot.

Scott Richard's imitation of Norman Rockwell's "Popular Science" everyman tinkering away in 20th century Americana tugged at my heartstrings even through its buckling wall. And though I knew it was a restaging, that Rockwell chuckle escaped me un-coerced, as it always does when I see the master's work.

Michael Cali's replica of Andy Warhol's "Beethoven" was a success – a cartoonish pianist caricatured brightly in depth, hidden visibly around the notes; the intensity of Van Gogh's eye was captured hauntingly in both his own and Pete Cullinane's "Self Portrait"; and I found myself nose close to the seemingly painted English Rose Hosiery ad, the whisper glow on the woman's

calf holding me tight in its shimmer – the lack of nylon mystifying my gaze. Mayela Lopez made light dance to remake this print by an unknown artist.

The ad led me to consider Hallmark's mission to produce professional photographers. I tried to gain a sense of which students might become commercial standouts. Here are a few likely candidates:

Alex Zmacaynski could have spent more lavishly on flowers for Jean-Baptiste Robie's "Still Life," but in the future his clients will pay. With petals wilted in heart's warm glow, cupping wisps of gentle laughter and love, my mind's eye, now in quiet repose, easily filled in what had been left undraped in lush cascade down the glass. The photo will make you sing sonnets, and the products will sell for Zmacaynski. It was a poetic, sexy shot.

The model in the John William Waterhouse imitation, "Boreas," was more aware of the field than the photo shoot, but the smudge on her skirt exquisitely mimicked the original, and despite the shortcomings, style and light should take Carli Wentworth far.

Had Bernard Villemot been on the set of Kelly Boitano's Bally Shoes Kick Poster remake, he would have counseled, "Even more curve, doll, this was long before Paula Abdul's "Straight Up". But as I stood transfixed with tilted head, I saw I loved the shot for the Tween consumer, which could mean commercial success in droves for Boitano's fresh eye.

A final note: except for the gloves, Brittany Deats' representation of Tamara de Lempicka's cubist inspired "Jeune Fille Vert" was simply brilliant. Model, light, composition, green dress – it was a story telling photo, one advertisers would love.

The Hallmark exhibit is filled with high quality student work, which then doubles to bursting when paired with the original masterpieces. The diverse group of original works made the browse enjoyable, while the vig-

orous attempt by the Hallmark students to complete the task with distinction made the spin through the gallery uplifting and inspiring.

Like all the art events in Turners Falls – the Pumpkin Fest, the Soap Box Derby, and Suzee's Laundromat Fashion Show, to name a few – I am already anticipating next year's exhibit. Add it to your calendar, villagers. We can all use more art in our lives and I promise you'll be glad you made the visit.



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from **DOWNTOWN** pg 1 in love with itself... Creativity can get people to care and break out of the malaise they feel about their city... Creative people and artists can have an enormous positive effect." He gave numerous examples of individual artists in cities across the nation.

The day before his keynote address, Kageyama toured several Franklin County towns, including Bernardston, Greenfield, Deerfield, Ashfield, Shelburne Falls, Colrain and Turners Falls.

During his short visit to Turners Falls, he took a walk down Avenue A, accompanied by Lisa Davol, director of Turners Falls RiverCulture, Frank Abbondanzio, the town administrator of Montague, and Walter Ramsey, the town planner. They gave Kageyama an introduction to various Turners Falls cultural revitalization efforts.

**Tour Highlights**

The Gallery at Hallmark, 85 Avenue A: Lisa Robinson, Director of Education at the Hallmark Institute of Photography, introduced the school's program. Kageyama was impressed with the professional quality of the student exhibition, "Imitating Art," where students were assigned the task of creating a photographic image that recreates a different, non-photographic work of art.

The Shea Theater: After being out of commission for some 30 years, the Shea theater was bought by the town and renovated in 1985. Today it is one of the crown jewels of Turners Falls. Seating up to 330 people, the Shea houses a range of events including performances for school children, theater, films, music, and fundraising programs.

LOOT found + made: Owners John McNamara and Erin MacLean greeted Kageyama. They shared that when they first moved to Turners, they were inspired by the town's industrial atmosphere and beauty. Their store collects used industrial goods and sells them to an artist community that finds creative uses for these unusual recycled materials. In the vein of old-school shop own-

ers, McNamara and MacLean live upstairs above their store.

Walking past the old, now empty, Cumberland Farms building, Davol explained that, when the four-year bridge project is completed, the building will be in a prime gateway to Turners Falls. There is currently a lot of discussion over what to do with this key site.

Davol remarked "When [RiverCulture] first started, people said, 'If you put up public art, it will be vandalized,' but none of it was." Consistent with his philosophy and approach to community redevelopment, Kageyama responded: "People need to understand that the solution to graffiti is better graffiti."

Another stop was at the Great Falls Discovery Center. The center educates the public about the Connecticut River watershed's wildlife and geography, as well as its natural, cultural and industrial history. The Great Hall building once housed the machine shop for the Montague Paper Company, and kept that use through World War II.

The center, visited by many school groups, utilized state and federal government agencies, local artists and taxidermists to put together their dioramas and displays. Monthly coffeehouse meetings with music and art exhibits are held now in the Great Hall. The current exhibit relates to Amy Tan's novel, *The Joy Luck Club* and is part of the "Big Read" programming that connects communities across the nation.

The final stop was the bike path. In 2010, *Yankee Magazine* named the four-mile canal side bike trail in Turners Falls the best urban bike path in New England. Davol pointed out the Strathmore Mill, currently being marketed to developers, and the fish ladder and viewing facility, as important sites along the path. The Strathmore Mill is unique since it has the canal on one side and the river on the other. RiverCulter recently commissioned Northfield artist Terry Marashlian to install a river-themed art installation on the side of one of the vacant mill buildings, to encourage residents and developers to reimagine the space.

Throughout the tour, Kageyama asked questions that

demonstrated how his creative and practical interests intersect, questions dealing with various project costs, available town funding, sustainability, town planning, walkability and layout, as well as public interest.

Kageyama terms creative citizens "co-creators" who work along with local governments to transform communities. He believes it only takes a few active individuals. Specifically, he mentioned in his keynote, the owners of Loot and Mike and Tony's Pizzeria in Colrain as examples of regular people who are helping to shape their communities in creative ways.

Turners Falls has had to fight against negative perceptions of poverty and crime to show people that it is a good community to live own a business in. Davol stated, "Turners has suffered from negative perceptions. It takes a long time to live those down." She continued, "We've increased the number of co-creators."

At a panel discussion at the summit, Davol highlighted several projects RiverCulture has promoted: the annual Suzee's Laundromat fashion show, the downtown block party, the River of Lights lantern parade, Sunboxes: a solar sound installation, cleaned up and art enhanced walkways, and the soon to be installed reflective Strathmore Mill art installation.

Kageyama summarized his keynote this way: "All of us are in an important relationship with the place in which we live... There is a gap between the city we desire, and the city we live in. What are we going to do about it? Wait for city officials to solve the problem? Wait for local philanthropists to step in? If so, we're going to be waiting for a long time."



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG**

**Large Brush Fire; Domestic Dispute**

**Tuesday, 3/20**  
3:45 p.m. Report of a large brush fire at French King Highway. Assisted fire department.  
8:30 p.m. Suspicious activity on Maple Avenue. Report taken.  
**Wednesday, 3/21**  
12:30 a.m. Report of suspicious male walking on Route

2. Unable to locate.  
4:55 p.m. Loose dog reported on North Street. Searched area. Animal gone.  
**Thursday, 3/22**  
2:30 a.m. Suspicious persons and motor vehicle at Dorsey Road. Sent along their way.  
5:45 p.m. Mutual aid to Northfield for breaking and entering in progress.

8:10 p.m. Noise complaint on Pratt Street. Dogs barking. No one home.  
8:30 p.m. Mutual aid to Northfield for larceny from IGA on Main Street.  
**Friday, 3/23**  
11:20 p.m. Assisted Northfield police on Millers Falls Road for a possible suicidal intoxicated male. Found to be fine.  
**Saturday, 3/24**  
11:45 p.m. Report of suicidal

male subject at French King Bridge. Unable to locate. Montague police located same.  
12:40 p.m. Report of restraining order violation on River Street. Report taken. Currently under investigation.  
**Sunday, 3/25**  
8:50 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with domestic dispute at Windmill Motel. Subject placed under arrest.



## Special Town Meeting to Vote on New Water Mains for Former Montague Center School

**BY LEE WICKS** - An ambitious plan to convert the old Montague Center School to 'Green' apartments that will use no fossil fuels is still moving forward, and town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said he hopes to complete the deal by the end of the fiscal year.

In November of 2011, the Olive Street Development Group responded to a request for proposals (RFP) from the town of Montague and offered \$50,000 for the 14,182 square foot building, which sits on 3.3 acres of land on School Street, contingent on the town's financing new water mains.

For investors willing to put at least a million dollars into renovating the property, the minimum bid was \$50,000, according to the terms of the RFP.

The property, which was recently assessed at \$978,400, received a new \$98,500 roof courtesy of Montague taxpayers in 2008. In addition, the town has invested at least \$80,000 in heating, insuring and maintaining the building since then.

Mark Zaccheo, principal of the Olive Street Group, said the new water mains are essential for adding sprinklers to the building.

The finance committee and the selectboard will recommend a positive vote to appropriate \$25,000 to pay for the new water mains at a special town meeting on Wednesday, April 4th.

Meanwhile, the Olive Street Group is in the process of energy marketing for the project. Zaccheo said the cost of the energy infrastructure will dictate the number of units carved from the space.

According to building inspector David Jensen, the number of proposed units in the building began at 15 and is now at 25. The units will be a mix of studio and one-bedroom units, with some two and three bedrooms apartments as well.

According to Zaccheo, these will be rentals, but it is possible they could be converted to condos in the future.

Before any contracts can be

see **SCHOOL** page 12

which the town can dig up the contaminated soil and dispose of it.


Still the town has to hire an engineer to determine the size of the spill.

Heard said highway commission chair Harry Williston would like to pave an area at the highway garage for parking vehicles and equipment to catch small leaks if they occur again.



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from **RESIGNS** page 1

At the school committee meeting, members said they would accept Ekstrom's resignation "with regret." Jennifer Waldron of Gill said, "Congratulations, and good luck."

Waldron suggested the school committee take a dual path, one to hire an interim superintendent as soon as possible, the other to form a search committee for a permanent superintendent.

A vote to accept Ekstrom's resignation was unanimous except for Michael Langknecht, chair, who voted "No!" as a symbolic gesture.

Langknecht said he agreed

with hiring an interim superintendent and suggested the committee hire someone who would not want the job permanently, who could then assist the district in hiring a permanent superintendent. He said hiring someone quickly for the permanent position would be a bad idea.

Jane Oakes of Gill also agreed to hiring an interim superintendent, saying it would be good to have a hiring process that would be thoughtful and inclusive. Sandra Brown said she approved of the parallel process – to start immediately to search for an interim, and at the same time start a search for a permanent

superintendent.

Ekstrom suggested beginning the interim search with an internal posting. If the committee could hire someone who is already working within the district, she said, it would ease the transition. After a brief discussion of whether they could do that legally, the school committee voted unanimously for Ekstrom to develop a ten-day internal posting as soon as possible.

If they fail to find someone suitable within the district, the committee will then post the job publicly. Waldron had one point to make, that if they hired from within they should not restrict that person from apply-

ing for the permanent position, and Langknecht said since that was not part of the motion, that would not be a problem.

Ekstrom will complete the balance of her contract, which ends June 30th. She said she

will take some vacation time so that her final day will be June 15th. She will attend the Turners Falls High School graduation.



**PRICE** from page 1

G4S consultant Michael Nolan received the selectboard's approval to install four new 40-foot utility poles in town, three on Bull Hill Road, and one near the North Leverett fire station, in order to speed the deployment of middle mile fiber to anchor institutions in town. Nolan expressed some amazement that the town had convinced the Mass Broadband Institute to pay for a loop to the North Leverett Fire Station, bringing high speed fiber that

much closer to residents in North Leverett, when the fire station itself does not even have a telephone.

Nolan said the installation of middle mile fiber should be completed in Leverett by the end of this summer.

D'Errico said in addition to internet services that have quickly become more or less a basic utility, allowing for email communication and web based home businesses, high speed connectivity would also allow Leverett to be at the cutting edge of rapidly maturing tech-

nologies like cloud based television, streaming video on demand, telemedicine (which can allow seniors to stay in their homes by 24 hour monitoring of vital signs) and smart grid technology that can allow homeowners to reduce their electric use, and electric bills.

Informational sessions on Leverett's proposed last mile connectivity project will be held at 7 p.m. at the Leverett town hall on Thursday, March 29th, Tuesday, April 3rd, and Sunday, April 15th.



from **MONTAGUE** page 6

Program to the selectboard. The board plans to fully review the updated agreement between the town and the FCRHRA in the coming weeks.

"The program has been good for the town and good for residents," Sherman said.

The FCRHRA web site explains, "These loans provide an affordable means for homeowners to bring their homes into compliance with building codes, perform needed repairs and weatherize their homes."

The updated Montague plan changes fee structures and gives the town options on how to use town funds optimally, Sherman said.

The selectboard approved a grant application for energy efficiency improvements for the Water Pollution Control Facility, prepared by town plan-

ner Walter Ramsey. No town funds will be used for the program, but if the town receives the grant, approximately \$84,210 will be available for providing efficiencies for the "largest energy consuming building in town," Ramsey said. "Efficiencies gained would pay for the cost of improvements in 6.7 years."

Abbondanzio has received three bids for a wage and classification study for town staffing. Funding for the study, at approximately \$30,000 will be voted on at a special town meeting on April 4th.

Abbondanzio, town accountant Carolyn Olsen, and administrative secretary Wendy Bogusz have been appointed to a committee to review the bids by the selectboard.

The selectboard received notification from Western Massachusetts Electric

Company that the company will be making 312 power line structure replacements in the Montague Plains area.

A parade route for the annual opening day of the Newt Guilbault Community Little League season has been approved by the selectboard. The parade on April 29th will start at Turners Falls High School and ultimately end up at the ball field on Crocker Avenue.

A single sewer abatement request was denied by the selectboard because the new owner of a property on Federal Street should have negotiated with the seller for any sewer costs at closing.

There is no selectboard meeting next week, but there is a special town meeting on Wednesday, April 4th at 7 p.m. at the Turners Falls High School Theater.



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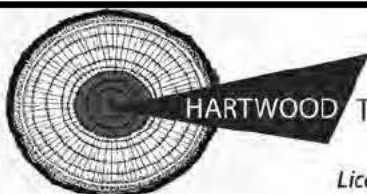
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**SCHOOL** from pg 10 signed, the Olive Street Group will go before the zoning board to request a permit for multi-family use of the site. Jensen said the board will be interested in seeing how open space will be preserved and how parking needs will be met for the building. He said the town is also looking for possible sites for a large solar array to provide energy for the building and the town.

General maintenance fees for the vacant building have been costing the town about \$12,000 a year, said Jensen.

*The former Montague Center School may be converted to solar apartments, if the Olive Street Group's proposal wins approval.*

He said, "An unused building is a drain on any community." The Montague Center School closed its doors in 2008, after serving the town's school children for decades. The closure was a contentious, hard fought issue, and the sight of the idle building in the years since has not helped to heal the wounds left from that battle. Soon, the building's new roof, which faces south, may support solar panels, if the Olive Street Group goes forward with its plans, and the building that once resounded with the voices of children will be filled with new Montague residents who embrace energy efficiency and Green living.



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**  
**Kidnapping, Assault and Battery**

The Montague Police Department reports:

On Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>,

[redacted] was taken against his will from the Greenfield Energy Park, and forced into a vehicle by a subject identified as [redacted]

The vehicle was being driven by [redacted]

[redacted] were also passengers in the vehicle.

[redacted] was driven to 144 Seventh Street in Turners Falls where he was confronted and beaten. Three additional subjects joined in on this and they were identified as [redacted]

[redacted], and [redacted]

[redacted] was knocked to the ground where he was then punched, kicked, and beaten with baseball bats. The assault had been witnessed by a neighbor on Seventh Street, who had

called this violent attack in to the police department. By the time the police arrived, the subjects had all left the scene.

[redacted] hands were taped behind his back with duct tape and he was once again put back into the vehicle. This time the vehicle was being driven by [redacted]. The other occupants in the vehicle were [redacted], and [redacted]. [redacted] advised [redacted] that they were taking him to the Montague Plains. [redacted] threatened to rape and kill him. [redacted] was able to cut his hands free of the tape with a small knife that he had in his back pocket while he was being transported to the vehicle. Once they reached the plains, [redacted] attempted to escape. He jumped for the back door of the vehicle and managed to open it. Once the door was opened, he tried to escape. [redacted] grabbed [redacted] to prevent him from exiting the vehicle. [redacted] arm was then run over by the vehicle, which pulled [redacted] from the moving vehicle. [redacted] started to run away and [redacted] exited

the vehicle and exposed a handgun. [redacted] threatened [redacted] with the gun. [redacted] continued to run from the scene. He was able to call 911 for help as well as flag over vehicles that were traveling along Lake Pleasant Road. The Montague police arrived and had [redacted] transported to the hospital.

An interview on Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup> with [redacted] confirmed this incident, and he claims that he was being accused of physically assaulting [redacted]'s fourteen year old daughter. The group decided to locate [redacted] and retaliate.

Six of the seven mentioned subjects were arrested and taken into custody by the Montague police on, March 24<sup>th</sup>. They were arraigned in Greenfield District Court on Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup> and then released. [redacted] turned himself in at the Montague police station on the morning of March 26<sup>th</sup>.

As of Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, no complaints have been reported to Montague police regarding any possible incidents between [redacted] and the daughter of [redacted].

Tuesday, 3/20

7:34 p.m. Trespassing on Woodland Drive. Report taken.

Wednesday, 3/21

8:52 a.m. Assault and battery in the area of the post office on Avenue A. Peace restored.

9:22 a.m. Restraining order violation on West Street. Report taken.

9:54 a.m. Assault and Battery at Turnpike and Montague City Roads. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted] for domestic assault and battery.

11 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Montague City Road. Advised of options.

2:44 p.m. Fight on Seventh Street.

And, 2:57 p.m. assault and battery with a dangerous weapon reported on Lake Pleasant Road. Leading to the arrest of seven individuals. See above.

3:39 p.m. Animal complaint on Fifth Street. Child bitten by dog. Medical services rendered and report taken.

4:14 p.m. Assault in the area of the airport on Millers Falls Road. Summons issued.

7:20 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Newt Guilbault Little League field house on Crocker

Avenue. Referred to an officer.

9:13 p.m. General disturbance on Avenue A including an accident on Avenue A with personal injury. Ambulance called and report taken.

Thursday, 3/22

11:09 a.m. Assault and battery on Fourth Street. Summons issued.

6:43 p.m. Harassment order violation on Third Street.

9:44 p.m. Harassment on Avenue A. Services rendered.

Friday, 3/23

12:14 a.m. Trespassing at Laundromat on Third Street. Investigated.

2:38 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Millers Falls Road. Services rendered.

5:17 p.m. Larceny on Seventh Street. Services rendered.

6 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Avenue A. Services rendered.

7:05 p.m. Fight on Seventh Street.

Arrest of [redacted] for aggravated assault and battery.

7:21 p.m. Brush fire on Migratory Way. Referred to other agency.

Saturday, 3/24

4:36 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Avenue A. Investigated.

11:17 a.m. Neighbor disturbance on Dry Hill Road. Services ren-

dered.

4:28 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Third Street. Verbal warning.

9:19 p.m. Arrest of [redacted], on a straight warrant.

Sunday, 3/25

7:43 a.m. Report of raccoon on L Street. Referred to other agency.

Monday, 3/26

6:17 a.m. Brush fire on Turnpike Road. Services rendered.

7:16 a.m. Sick or injured raccoon reported on L Street. Referred to other agency.

8:14 a.m. Sick or injured raccoon reported on First Street. Referred to other agency.

1:30 p.m. Harassment on Coolidge Avenue. Advised of options.

3:06 p.m. Report of harassment at the Franklin County Technical School. Referred to an officer.

5:33 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Bulkley Street. Advised of options.

7:59 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Chestnut Street. Advised of options.

Tuesday, 3/27

3:05 a.m. Annoying, harassing phone calls on Chestnut Street. Services rendered.

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# As You Write It, Volume II



JOEY R. PARZYCH PHOTO

Gill-Montague Senior Center Writing Group. (l-r) Laura Rodley, Patricia Carlisle, Harry Stafursky, Estelle Cade, Dorothy Hmieleski, Joseph Parzych. Seated; Lillian Fiske, Frances Hemond, Rosalie Bolton

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH**  
**MONTAGUE** - Time does not stand still. The area is rapidly changing. Old factory buildings like that of the former Keith Paper Company and the Rockdale Department Store are in decay, the reconstructed Gill-

Montague Bridge is taking on a new look, a new Greenfield Savings Bank Building stands where a railroad station once stood, and the Bank of America Building with its own rich history is up for sale. Our rapidly changing area is rife with history.

29th at 1 p.m. Their work can be best described as similar to oral history, but in this case recorded for posterity in the voices of the writers who lived that history. The stories range from fond memories of the days when

Turners Falls had a business district with a flower shop, to the touching story of befriending a stray cat. In between are stories regarding one author possibly being related to Tom Brady, another getting an unexpected education in Japan, or visiting Mountain Park, vacationing on Cape Cod at peak season with neither a reservation nor a paddle, and calling on magic, plain luck, or the luck of the Irish to solve the problem.

The titles themselves are intriguing. In, "Experience is the Best Teacher," one learns how you have to listen to yourself, even if you're very young. Next, "Superstitions and Fate," enlists the saying, "St. Anthony, St. Anthony, Where can it be found?" In "Haunts, Husbands and Mysterious Deaths," the reader is asked to ponder a strange presence emanating from the ceiling. In "Vaudeville," a song and dance man teaches his niece the old soft shoe. "Little Brown School House," and "Wildflowers" recall a time when Montague was laid back, and "War of the Worlds," recalls that famous Orson Welles broad-

cast firsthand. These stories are guaranteed to hold your interest, make you happy, and possibly a little sad. They will definitely make you want to read on to the next.

Laura Rodley leads the weekly sessions, throwing out prompts that invariably trigger memories. Pens scratch away furiously until a warning from Rodley to "Wrap it up." Then writers read their stories aloud, creating their variation of oral history by recounting the past as only they knew it, as it will never be again.

*As You Write It, a Franklin County Anthology, Vol. II* is a continuation of the work of Anna Viadero, who compiled and edited ten books in a well-received series, titled, "Local Color." The anthology of that work Viadero published is now sold in book stores and online with Amazon.com. The only problem with that series is it was too popular. People reading the books in waiting rooms sometimes stole them, prompting one doctor to drill a hole in a book to secure it with a length of light chain.

No need to resort to thievery. *As You Write It, a Franklin County Anthology, Vol. II* will be available at local bookstores, a steal at \$12.00 each, ideal for gift giving, reminiscing, and for the young to learn of life and lore.

The historical societies of Gill, Montague, Buckland, Shelburne, selectboards, and the oldest person in the local towns will each receive a copy. This publication was sponsored, in part, through grants from the towns of Gill, Leverett, Shelburne, and Wendell, through the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and by other local sponsors. The reading, on Sunday, April 29th is free, and refreshments will be served.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

### Report of Possible Jumper; Found Dog

Monday, 3/12

6:40 a.m. Dog complaint on West Gill Road. Spoke with owners about restraining their pet.

10:45 a.m. Complaint of tractor trailer unit creating a hazard on the Gill-Montague bridge. 11:25 a.m. Animal complaint on South Cross Road. Clear of roadway upon arrival.

Tuesday, 3/13

5:12 a.m. Motor vehicle complaint of truck on West Gill Road. Subject stopped and dealt with.

10:30 a.m. Responded to request to explain town leash law at West Gill Road residence.

2:30 p.m. Subject taken off of

French King Bridge and transported to Franklin Medical Center.

3 p.m. Report of possible jumper on French King Bridge. No one located by unattended motor vehicle found in parking lot. Cleared scene because unattended motor vehicle operator came out of the trails approximately 35 minutes later.

Wednesday, 3/14

9:20 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle on Grist Mill Road. Located jogger in area who stated it was hers.

12 p.m. Reported intoxicated party walking on side of roadway in the area of Barton Cove. Subject transported to family member.

3:35 p.m. Reported Cyber-bullying case at the Elementary School.

Under investigation.

Friday, 3/16

8:35 a.m. Motor vehicle complaint on Barney Hale Road made by bus driver. Suspect under investigation.

4:10 p.m. Animal complaint area of River Road in the field.

Sunday, 3/18

6:10 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle located at the French King Bridge. Owner located.

Monday, 3/19

8:35 a.m. Animal complaint on River Road. Dog running loose, not located.

10:30 a.m. Assisted Bernardston police with subject.

11:40 a.m. Found dog brought to Police station. Under investigation regarding ownership.

6:50 p.m. Reported motor vehicle complaint on Riverview Drive, truck "burning" out in roadway. Subject identified.

Tuesday, 3/20

4:20 a.m. Motor vehicle accident on Barton Cove Road. No injuries reported, report filed. 5:25 a.m. Reported breaking and entering suspect from Montague at the Gill Mobil Station. Subject identified and cleared of incident.

Wednesday, 3/21

12:10 p.m. Responded to Gill-Montague Bridge for reported person trying to jump. No one located.

12:35 p.m. Searched wooded area north of Mountain Road for reported suspect threatening to kill family members and law enforcement officials.

2:30 p.m. Found license plate at

the Gill Mobil Station on French King Highway.

2:50 p.m. Responded to Montague police to assist with a report of 6-7 people beating one person with baseball bats.

Thursday, 3/22

8 a.m. Reported Elderly Female walking on Main Road in a bathrobe. Party assisted. 10:10 a.m. Motor vehicle complaint of landscaping company parking in roadway on Main Road.

8:55 p.m. Assisted Northfield police with robbery of store.

Friday, 3/23

6:50 p.m. Assisted resident with past motor vehicle accident.

11:50 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle, person at Jan's Package Store. Provided a ride to their residence.

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## Ferry Meadow Farm - part XXXIII

Turners Falls 2017

**BY ELOISE MICHAEL** - Leah begins by saying, "I told Marissa everything I know," then adds, "which isn't very much. Seems like someone at Ferry Meadow needs to know what your situation is."

"Yeah," I say, "that makes sense. For one thing, I need to sleep during the day."

Marissa's eyes widen, and I think that she is believing for the first time that I actually have a doppelganger.

"And you're hiding from someone," Leah says.

"Uh huh," I say. "The FBI."

They both look surprised and a little worried. "Well, they probably won't look for you here," Leah says, as though she is trying to convince herself.

"Are you in trouble for hacking computers?" she asks. "Or leaking information?"

"I can tell you know Jason," I laugh.

"I met Jason six years ago," Leah tells me, "while I was working in D.C. We were at some of the same protests. One time we were camped out in a park for a week. You get to know people fast when you're living like that."

"Have you been in touch with him this whole time?" I ask, trying not to seem as interested in Jason as I am.

"Oh no! Not at all. But I remember him, and I wanted to help when he called and asked me last winter."

"Last winter? He called you?"

What did he need help with?"

She looks a little surprised and doesn't say anything at first. After a moment she says, "He wanted me to look out for you."

"Oh," I say. "Right." He told Leah about me last winter but didn't say anything to me until May. I am feeling confused and change the subject, saying, "I'm not a computer hacker, and I didn't leak any information. I helped Jason with a project once, with a bank's computers. I guess they are starting to suspect me."

Marissa says, "We just farm here. No big political agenda besides feeding people. And giving them a place to live."

"Those people can't stay in tents all winter," I say. It comes out like a question. I wonder how long I will have to stay here before it's safe to go home.

"We're always building more housing. When we're not needed on the farm, we work in the big house." She waves at a building which I had thought was a barn at first. Now that I look at it, I notice that it has windows and doors; it's not a barn at all.

"We should have eight bedrooms ready by the time it gets cold. Maybe more." Then she says, "You can't sleep in the tent during the day. You'll roast in there. I'll give you a space in my room. I'm not in there much during the day anyway."

"And I can give you some clothes," Leah adds.

We eat dinner in the main house. I remember a few names, meet a few more people. It's rare for me to eat two meals in a single day in the company of other people.

I am relaxed and happy, even laughing, at the end of the meal. I almost forget the FBI are look-

ing for me. After dinner I join a group of people who are cleaning up. Dave is one of them.

We talk while we work. When the kitchen and the big room are clean enough that you could eat off the floors, people start to move onto the couches or the deck. Some just leave, and I don't know where they are going.

When Dave and I are the only ones left, he says, "Someone probably has a fire going. Want to go out there?"

I go outside with Dave. It's easy to blend into the group, sitting on a log by the fire.

Someone has a guitar, and people start singing.

I feel like I am hundreds of miles from my house in town.

- Continued Next Issue

## Gill Montague Education Association Votes No Confidence in Gill-Montague School Committee

On Wednesday, March 10th, 2012, members of the Gill-Montague Education Association and members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 1459 voted to express "no-confidence" in some of the actions of the Gill-Montague Regional School District school committee.

In a document sent to Commissioner of Education Mitchell Chester at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Karl Dziura, president of the Gill-Montague Education Association, outlined members' concerns.

"Despite the seriousness of this declaration," Dziura noted, "we hope it serves to identify issues as a step to their future resolution so that all the stakeholders in the district can move forward together to provide the best possible education for the students of the Gill-Montague Regional

School District."

The full text of the "no-confidence" document follows:

The Gill-Montague Education Association has voted to declare "no-confidence" in some of the actions of the Gill-Montague Regional School District School Committee. The Gill-Montague Education Association (GMEA) is taking this stance in order to identify specific actions that have caused, and continue to cause, the membership of the GMEA great concern.

Among the school committee's actions that may impede the district's progress are:

- Focusing on fiscal responsibility to the towns, overshadowing their obligation to advocate for the best quality of education that our limited resources can provide.

- Voting to adopt a mission statement for a Long Term

Education Plan with the caveat that it could be revisited for amendment and then not doing so.

- Pursuing discussions and actions that result in persistent friction with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- Inviting concerned staff to attend meetings and ask questions without responding adequately to the staffs' concerns.

"Pursuing goals beyond the state accepted Accelerated Improvement Plan at the risk of causing confusion and undermining the success of the district.

- Declaring a "reform of collective bargaining."

- Discussing personnel matters in public.

- Contributing to lack of continuity in retaining and attracting administration.

The GMEA continues to partner with the GMRSD in the development and imple-

mentation of the Accelerated Improvement Plan to ensure the overall success of students and the district.

The GMEA has supported the GMRSD and its limited budget by bargaining for a minimal raise tied to the rate of state Chapter 70 funding which will not be received because Chapter 70 funding will not increase.

Also, teachers are individually purchasing an increasing amount of classroom supplies that are not provided for in the limited budget.

The GMEA has taken this action in the hope of expanding the dialogue so that the students, residents, and staff can move forward together to ensure the ongoing success of the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

- Karl Dziura, President  
Gill-Montague Education Association

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### TOWN OF LEVERETT PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be held at the Leverett Town Hall on Thursday, April 12th, 2012 at 7:00PM to discuss proposed changes to the "Code of Leverett" as follows:

To add a section to Chapter 78: Dogs, which would address the outdoor confinement of dogs. These proposed changes would prohibit dogs from being chained to any stationary object for more than two (2) hours. Dogs could be attached to a cable run or enclosed in a pen or fence for up to eight (8) hours daily. No dog could be kept outside between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a. m.

The full text of these proposed changes is on file at the Town Clerk's office.

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

## EVERY WEDNESDAY

Winterland, Greenfield: *TNT Karaoke*, 9 p.m.

## EVERY THURSDAY

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

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

## EVERY FRIDAY

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

## EVERY FRIDAY and SATURDAY

Montague Inn: *TNT Karaoke*.

## NOW through APRIL

Leverett Library: *Photographs from the East Leverett Trails*.

Wendell Free Library: fabric arts exhibition, *Painting with Thread*, by Helen V. Purple of Petersham.

## APRIL 1st - APRIL 29th

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Sculpture by David Flood* in the Great Hall. Open Fridays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Fervor from the Truth: Spiritually Obsessive Works by Edite Cunha, Gina Vernava and Others*.

## TUESDAY, MARCH 27th

Senior Center, Turners Falls: *A Celebration of Song*, singers *Moonlight & Morning Star* will be joined by their son, pianist *Miro Sprague*, 1 p.m. Free.



Lindsay Lou & The Flatbellys play Mocha Maya's on Saturday April 7th at 8 p.m.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 29th

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Larry Klein Trio*, jazz, 7 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Larry Kopp*, 8 - 10 p.m.

## FRIDAY, MARCH 30th and SATURDAY, MARCH 31st

Memorial Hall Theater, Shelburne Falls: *Pothole Pictures* presents *The Fifth Annual Looney Tunes Cartoon Festival*. Showtimes at 7:30 p.m.. Saturday matinee at 1 p.m.

## FRIDAY, MARCH 30th

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *The Lonesome Brothers*, with special guest *Jeremy Schriber*, 7:30 p.m.

The Pushkin, Greenfield: *Cuddle Magic with The Milkman's Union*, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Hobson's Razor*, 9 p.m.

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

## SATURDAY, MARCH 31st

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Chenda Cope*, 12 p.m.

Leverett Library: *What's So Cool about a Vernal Pool?* A hands-on program for families and beginning naturalists with Dawn Marvin Ward. 1-3 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Heather Maloney*, with special

guest *Jessica Smucker*, 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Simon White & Friends*, 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Groove Shoes*, funk, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Tracy & Company*, 9:30 p.m.

Sloan Theater, Greenfield Community College: *GCC Chorus*, Music by Women Composers, 7:30 p.m.

## SUNDAY, APRIL 1st

Brick House Community Resource Center, Turners Falls: *Open House and Cabaret*, 3-6PM; refreshments, tours, free demo yoga and dance classes, multi-media presentations, and a smashing cabaret of local performers; Free.. 3 - 6 p.m.

115), Amherst College: Local favorite *Peter Gizzi* will read from his work, 8 p.m.

## THURSDAY, APRIL 5th

Montague Public Safety Complex: *Sawmill River Restoration*, a public meeting regarding the proposed design and methods to restore a portion of the Sawmill River in Montague that will help reduce erosion and sediment loads, improve water quality and habitat for fish and other wildlife, 7 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Collected Poets Series featuring Lea Banks and Jeff Friedman*. 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Fall Town String Band*, 7:30 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Relics*, 8 - 10 p.m.

## FRIDAY, APRIL 6th

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

Montague Bookmill: *Kath Bloom, Arborea, 200 Years*, 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*, 9 - 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Moose & the High Tops* - Classic Rock, 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bunwinkies & Chicopee Family Moose Project*. 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, APRIL 7th

Unity Park, Turners Falls: *Seventh Annual Peter Cottontail's Eggstravaganza*, for ages 4 - 12. We will have face painting, egg coloring, pictures with Peter Cottontail, and our Egg Hunt where kids will

have the challenge of finding approximately 5,000 candy & toy-filled eggs that will be placed in designated areas throughout Unity Park. Bring your own basket. Bake sale and cotton candy! Rain or shine. 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Lindsay Lou & The Flatbellys*, 8 p.m.

Montague Grange: *Old-time square dance* with caller &

live music, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Captain-Salls Orchestra*, 9-11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Caught In the Act* - Classic Rock, 9:30 p.m.

## SUNDAY, APRIL 8th

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sunday Locals with Bryan Gillig and friends*. 6 p.m. Free.

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

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4th

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Special Craft Night, Ukrainian Egg Painting*. Come learn the fine art of Ukrainian Egg Painting as taught by Anne



Peter Gizzi reads his poetry at Amherst College on Wednesday, April 4th at 8 p.m. at Pruyne Lecture Hall.

Harding. Suggested \$5 Donation for class and supplies. 7 - 10 p.m.

Millers River Environmental Center, Athol: *Reintroducing the Watershed New Currents* - a presentation by the Millers River Watershed Council on its new initiatives. 7 p.m.

Pruyne Lecture Hall (Fayerweather

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

## THURSDAY APRIL 12th

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Signature Sounds presents *NRBQ and Lux Deluxe*, 7:30 p.m.



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# Gill-Montague Bridge Update



JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO  
Work continues on the Gill-Montague Bridge, which will be closed entirely to traffic from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. on Monday, April 2nd, as SPS New England removes fascia beams and repairs diagonal struts below the deck.

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH**  
The Massachusetts Department of Transportation recently notified the towns of Montague and Gill that the Gill-Montague bridge will be closed entirely to traffic during late evening hours on several days this week. The bridge will also be closed to traffic on Monday, April 2nd from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Removing fascia beams requires that all traffic be excluded. Some of the time, only heavy trucks are excluded during the replacement of sub-structure beams.

On March 26th, work on the bridge consisted of replacing a diagonal strut similar to struts seen in the accompanying

photo.

Lack of visible activity on the surface of the bridge does not necessarily mean that SPS New England or their sub-contractors are not at work underneath the bridge, cleaning, repairing or replacing components of the substructure.

On Monday evening, one-way traffic resumed by 9 p.m.

## NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### G-M School Committee Approves \$16.5 Mil Budget for FY'13

**BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE**  
On Tuesday, the Gill-Montague school committee approved an operating budget for FY'13 of \$16,567,540, an increase of 1.47% over FY12.

This amount is below the budget agreement in the compact for fiscal sustainability signed onto by the school district and members towns with the support of state legislators.

Also approved was a request from Gill Elementary principal and Early Childhood Department coordinator Kathleen Adams to increase the cost of tuition for the pre-school.

Tuition costs are now \$15 per half-day and \$30 per full day.

Adams requested these fees be increased to \$18 per half-day and \$32 per full day.

She said this increase would amount to an average annual hike of \$356 for pre-school students, but the cost will vary for each family.

Adams emphasized that there is a sliding scale, and parents have a variety of arrangements from which to chose.

The pre-school has been operating at a loss in spite of the fact that the pre-K classes are full, with a waiting list.

Adams said the pre-school has not paid for itself this year and next year's budget includes the cost of \$48,000 for one additional pre-K teacher.

She said the tuition costs are on the low side for the region and what the school has to offer is very cutting edge. The fact that the district uses the Tools of the Mind curricu-

lum is a real plus in that it includes elements of play and puts children on a trajectory for academic success in the future.

With all the district has to offer for pre-schoolers, Adams said the district should make the tuition for pre-K classes more competitive with other districts in the area.

Michael Langknecht, school committee chair, informed the other members of the school committee that he had drafted a letter to Commissioner Mitchell Chester at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regarding the vote of no-confidence in the school committee taken by the Gill-Montague Education Association (GMEA), and joined by other union members.

Langknecht said the letter expressed only his personal view, and was not intended to represent the view of the school committee as a whole. He said he has not heard from the commissioner as yet regarding the letter sent to the DESE by GMEA president Karl Dziura, and said he felt some response was preferable to just waiting to hear from the DESE.

Committee member Marjorie Levenson, of Montague said she hoped the school committee and the teachers could find a forum in which to have a dialogue to resolve their differences.

The next regular school committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 10th at Turners Falls High School at 7:00 p.m.

## Fifteen Hundred Protest Vermont Yankee's Continued Operation



CATE WOOLNER PHOTO  
The line of march stretched for nearly a mile as 1500 residents of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts turned out on a warm and sunny Thursday, March 22nd, to protest the continued operation of the 40-year-old Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor. One hundred and thirty protestors were arrested at the corporate headquarters of Entergy VY in Brattleboro, and a dozen more were arrested in peaceful protests at Entergy headquarters in White Plains, NY and New Orleans that same day. The state of Vermont, by the overwhelming vote of the State Senate in February of 2010, sought to close Vermont Yankee on March 21st, when its original operating license expired. As Vermont's court case against Entergy, the corporate owner of VY, winds its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, protest continues with a mass legal rally in support of the State of Vermont on the Brattleboro town common, from noon to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 14th, with U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) as keynote speaker.

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