



Oresman Gallery
Kevin Kunstadt
photography



Tom Wessels
Reading the
Forested Landscape

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 11 - NO. 1

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

SEPTEMBER 27, 2012

In the Event of a Nuclear Disaster at Vermont Yankee



Ira Helfand, M.D., co-founder of the Nobel Peace Prize winning Physicians for Social Responsibility, speaking at GCC.

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GREENFIELD - Ira Helfand, M.D., co-founder of the Nobel Peace Prize winning Physicians for Social Responsibility and an emergency physician in Springfield, came to Greenfield Community College on Monday to talk about lessons learned from the Fukushima triple meltdown in Japan to a crowd of about 100. Helfand, recently returned from a conference dealing with the aftermath of that ongoing catastrophe in Japan, warned that Franklin County is not immune from the possibility that a similarly devastating nuclear catastrophe could

strike the troubled nuclear reactor in Vernon, VT, less than 15 miles from the college. "The connection between Vermont Yankee and Fukushima is that the six reactor units operated at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant complex are of the same age and design as the General Electric Mark 1 boiling water reactor in Vernon, VT," Helfand said. Activist Deb Katz of the Citizens Awareness Network, who led the successful fight to shut down the Yankee Atomic Plant in Rowe, closed permanently in 1992, later spoke about the ongoing fight to shut down Vermont Yankee, and

urged people living within a 50 mile radius of the reactor to get active in that effort. She cited the difficulties of trying to deal with big corporations that are more concerned with profits than community health and safety. She urged members of the audience to contact politicians like state senator Stanley Rosenberg with their concerns about living downwind of Vermont Yankee. "You need to contact your political representatives," Helfand agreed. "The government overlooks the risks of nuclear plants and even finances them because the process of enriching radioactive material for power plants and for nuclear weapons are very similar." Helfand went on to cite three catastrophic accidents in the past. "The big ones were, number one, in 1957 in [Kyshtym] Russia, a large tank of radioactive waste exploded, laying waste to 22 villages. The Russian government covered it up, and the CIA kept it secret. Number 2, an accident occurred at Chernobyl leaving large areas unfit for human habitation, and Fukushima is number three." But the worst event at Fukushima may be yet to come. "The biggest danger at see **DISASTER** page 5

I Think We Can, I Think We Can... Passenger Rail Returning to Franklin County by 2014

BY SHIRA HILLEL SOUTH DEERFIELD - Like the little engine that could, the Franklin County passenger train, with a little help from its friend, the federal stimulus package, will soon make the grade. On Thursday, September 20th, at the Franklin County Selectmen's Association meeting held at the Polish American Club in South Deerfield, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's executive director, Timothy Brennan, updated the crowd on plans to bring passenger rail back to Franklin County.

Discussing the ambitious transit goals of the Massachusetts rail system, Brennan quipped: "We have traction, no pun intended." Brennan outlined the details of the rail project along the north-south corridor, what he referred to as the Connecticut River main line. The state of Massachusetts is working together with Vermont and Connecticut to return passenger train service to the main corridor to serve more riders.

Transportation finance is a big ticket item in the FY'14 budget recommendations for Franklin County. The state of Massachusetts allocates substantial funds each year toward the repair of roads, bridges, the rail system and other major infrastructure projects for the Massachusetts Department of

Transportation. North of the Springfield switch, Brennan explained, the rail track straight up to Greenfield is owned by Pan Am Railways, which uses the tracks for cargo trains. South of the Springfield switch, straight down to New Haven, CT, the rail tracks are owned by Amtrak, which provides passenger service. Amtrak has both inter-city trains for long distance service and commuter service trains in Connecticut during the peak hours of the morning and afternoon.

In 1989, the condition of the track north of Springfield to Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield had grown very poor. When Pan Am took over that section of the track, Amtrak had to create a workaround for their passenger train service. They moved the north route from Springfield east to Palmer and then north to Amherst before rejoining the main track at the border of Vermont. Thus, Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield lost their passenger stations.

When President Obama designated eight billion dollars of the federal stimulus package for high speed rail transportation, Brennan said his antennae went up. Massachusetts had a "shovel ready project" to pitch: rebuilding and improving the existing main line rail corridor from Springfield north.

The state of Massachusetts applied and was granted 70 million dollars in the first round of funding (there are two more rounds to apply for), which must be used within 24 months. Thus, by 2014, Amtrak passenger service should be returned to the main line, with stops in Northampton and Greenfield. Brennan made it clear that Massachusetts made a decision to upgrade their train service to "higher speed" trains, not "high speed" trains. New England will not see bullet speed trains, like the trains in Europe and Asia, which can travel up to 220 miles per hour. Those trains require an entirely new infrastructure. Instead, New England is focused on improving an already existing infrastructure so as to allow higher speed train service that will be competitive with car travel. These new trains will reach speeds of up to 100 miles per hour, and will travel at an average speed of 70 miles per hour. Brennan explained the state's studies show that by moving the train back to the main track, there should be a 24% increase in ridership, brought about by serving higher population areas. Amherst will lose its passenger train service, but Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield will gain passen-

see **RAIL** page 5

French Canadian Tales and Legends

BY ANNE HARDING GREAT FALLS - If the crowd gets any larger at the Turners Falls RiverCulture "Legends and Tales" series they'll have to move over to the Shea Theater. Local historian Vicki Valley and town administrator Frank Abbondanzio led more than 100 visitors through the French Canadian immigrant story and their influence in Alvah Crocker's planned industrial community of Turners Falls last Friday. Citing the statistic of a 32 percent foreign-bom population residing in Montague by 1880, with most of those immigrants living in Turners Falls, Abbondanzio noted the French Canadian population accounted for 40 percent of that number. Among the earlier immigrants to arrive, French Canadians began arriving in the late 1860s and were active in building the infrastructure of the town. Some French Canadians worked for a Montreal-based firm involved in the construction of the Hoosac Tunnel. They followed the construction trade to Turners Falls for the building of the dam and the excava-

tion of the power canal. The earlier immigrants to Turners included many still-familiar family names - LaPointe, LaPorte, Ducharme, Desautelles, Nadeau, Vivier, LaPeau and Moreau. Another project of Alvah Crocker, the 4 1/4 mile long Hoosac Tunnel was blasted through the Hoosac Mountain between the Deerfield River on the east and the Hoosac River on the west, creating rail passage from Florida, MA to North Adams. From its 1851 groundbreaking to its eventual grand opening in 1876, the project was fraught with geological, logistical, financial and political setbacks, and numerous workers met their deaths in its construction. B. N. Farren, another notable Montague industrialist, managed the final construction stages of the tunnel, including the widening of narrow spots and the reinforcement of some of the weaker areas with brick arching. Some areas that passed through "porridge stone" rather than granite were lined with six to eight layers of brick. Much of the brick came from the brickyards of Montague City, where French

Canadians were often employed. The Montague brickyard of R.L. Goss was producing 30,000 brick per day by 1872, and many were earmarked for the Hoosac Tunnel. The previous year the Goss brickyard sold more than two million bricks for construction in Turners Falls in addition to trainloads that were shipped to projects in outlying regions including Fitchburg, Worcester and parts of Connecticut. At the same time another Montague brickyard by the name of Adams was producing about 25,000 bricks per day, and was credited with selling more than 800,000 bricks just for the construction of the new Turners Falls Keith Paper Company in 1872. The stack is still standing today. The French Canadian population swelled in the spring with the arrival of the lumberjacks during the annual log drive. It is likely that some of this transient population eventually settled in Turners Falls and the surrounding villages. Other immigrants worked in the sawmill and the Montague Pulp and Paper Mill. A larger wave of immi-



Ken Karpowicz on accordion, Doug Feeny, banjo and Cynthia Thomas, on fiddle played traditional tunes to entertain the crowd at the French Canadian Tales and Legends at the Discovery Center

grants arrived in the late 1870s with the opening of the Griswold Cotton Mill. Like many European immigrants, the Quebecois often came from rural environments where overcrowding and lack of arable land contributed to high poverty levels. The promise of jobs drew French Canadians to New England from the Richelieu River Valley, with many from Trois Riviere and other small towns of the region. They gained a reputation as good mill workers and by the

end of the 19th century New England mills were actively recruiting Quebecois. In their search for stable employment, the Turners Falls immigrants often took a meandering route through New York, Vermont or eastern Massachusetts. As for the Polish arrivals, the church was the center of the French Canadian community and helped keep the Quebecois heritage alive. Upon their arrival in Turners, the only Catholic Church option was at St. Mary's (now Our Lady of Peace) where

masses were held in English, until 1874 when a special 9 a.m. service was initiated for the French speaking parishioners. The Quebec immigrants were ambivalent about their immigration and it seems many travelled back and forth between the two countries depending on the economic times and other events in their lives. Fierce pride in their French heritage kept traditions and language alive. The Saint Jean Baptiste see **CANADIAN** page 5

PETS OF THE WEEK Still Waiting



Niketa

I'm Niketa, a 12 year old female husky/akita mix. I'm a senior petizen, I won't deny it. But a senior dog comes with a lot of perks.

For starters, I'm very low key. I like to napa lot. I do enjoy my walks as well and love to be outside in the fresh air and sunshine.

I was houstrained in my previous home but I will have an accident if I'm left home alone for a very long time. Just a bit hard to hold it super long nowadays. I don't mind other dogs as long as they're mellow like myself. No cats please. I haven't had much experience with young children so I prefer a home with adults or teens instead. If you have room in your home and heart for an older dog like me, ask the staff to bring me on out so you can meet me in person.

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

MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS

Homeschool "Around the World" Series

TURNERS FALLS - A new Homeschool series, "Around the World," will start at the Carnegie Library on Wednesday, October 3rd. The free series will meet weekly on Wednesdays at 1:15 through November 14th. We will be studying geography, history, art, cuisine and the culture of dif-

ferent countries such as Italy, Mexico, India and England. Linda Hickman and Ruth O'Mara will be leading the sessions. Homeschooling children of all ages and their families are invited to participate. For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

GILL MONTAGUE COUNCIL ON AGING

Painting Class

The Gill Montague Council on Aging will be offering a six week painting class with David Sund beginning Tuesday October 2. The class will meet on six successive Tuesdays (excepting Election Day) from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street in Turners Falls.

David Sund is a well known local painter whose landscapes, florals, and architectural paintings are regularly exhibited at 11 South Gallery in Bernardston, 11south-gallery.com.

The class is open to senior painters of any skill level, seniors who have never painted and would like to start, and painters who would like to work on their own in-progress works with in-class support from David. Attendance will be limited to twelve and materials will be provided. The class fees, for the six session series, are \$10.00 for Gill Montague seniors and \$15.00 for seniors from other towns. You may register by calling the Gill Montague Senior Center at 863-9357.

AMHERST COLLEGE CREATIVE WRITING CENTER

Local Poetry Reading

AMHERST - Local poet Patrick Pritchett will read from his work on



Wednesday, October 17th at 8 p.m. at Amherst Books, 8 Main Street. The event, sponsored by the Amherst College's Creative Writing Center, is free and open to the public and will be followed by refreshments.

Patrick Pritchett is a visiting lecturer at Amherst College and is considered to be a major contributor to modern "American racial lyricism".

FACES & PLACES



Congressmen John Olver and Jim McGovern at the 26th Annual Meeting of the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust held at the organic, community supported agriculture Red Fire Farm in Montague on September 22nd. Retiring congressman Olver was presented the Conservator of the Region Award for a lifetime of dedicated service to forest and agricultural land conservation. Congressman McGovern, a member of the House Agricultural Committee, was the featured speaker.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Traditional Pickle Making & Seitan Demonstration

A free, traditional pickle making demonstration will be offered on Wednesday, October 3rd at the Wendell Free Library from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. by Wendell resident, Diana Smith.

Learn to make quick, short and long term pickles with a variety of vegetables from your garden. Pickles were traditionally created to aid in digestion and help people adapt to the seasons. Some of the pickles to be covered are dill pickles, pressed pickles and Chinese cabbage pickles.

Smith will also offer a free seitan making demonstration on Wednesday, October 10th at the Wendell Free Library, from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Learn to make seitan, a meat substitute made from whole wheat flour. Seitan is a protein source high in calcium and can be prepared in many different ways. Some of the ways to be shown are seitan stew and seitan stir-fry.

Diana Smith has trained in macrobiotic cooking and enjoys gardening and living in the country.

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The Montague Reporter

Published weekly on Thursday.
(Every other week in July and August.
Wednesday paper fourth week of
November. No paper last week of
December.)

PHONE (413)863-8666
reporter@montaguema.net
Postmaster: Send address changes
to
The Montague Reporter
58 4th Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Advertising and copy deadline is
Tuesday at NOON.

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Local Subscription Rates:
\$20 for 1/2 Year



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - It's time for a flu shot.

You can get the flu vaccine from your doctor, and at public health facilities, senior centers, pharmacies and supermarkets. The vaccine can be administered any-time during flu season.

Adults over 50 are prime candidates for the vaccine because the flu can be fatal for older people.

More than 200,000 flu victims are hospitalized annually in the United States; about 36,000 people die from it. As much as 20% of the U.S. population gets the flu each year. Flu season usually begins in October and can last through May.

Flu is a contagious illness of the respiratory system caused by the influenza virus. Flu can lead to pneumonia, bronchitis, sinusitis, ear problems and dehydration.

Droplets from coughing and sneezing spread the flu. An adult

with flu can infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five days after becoming sick. Children may spread flu for more than seven days.

The best way to combat the bug is to get the flu vaccine. You have to get inoculated annually because new vaccines are prepared every year to combat new versions of the virus. When you battle the flu, you develop antibodies to the invading virus, but those antibodies don't work on new strains.

The vaccine does not prevent flu in all people. It works better in younger recipients than older ones. Contrary to rumor, you can't catch the flu from the vaccine. The flu vaccine is not made from a live virus.

There are three different flu shots available: a regular shot approved for people ages 6 months and older, a high-dose flu shot approved for people 65 and older, and an intradermal flu shot approved for people 18 to 64 years of age.

The intradermal flu vaccine uses a very fine needle that is injected into the skin instead of muscle. This is designed for peo-

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Greetings, Dearie...

Time for Your Little Flu Shot

ple who hate needles. A nasal-spray flu vaccine is approved for healthy people 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

The recovery time for the flu is about one to two weeks. However, in seniors, weakness may persist for a longer time.

The common scenario for flu is a sudden onset of symptoms, which include chills, fatigue, fever, cough, headache, sore throat, nasal congestion, muscle aches and appetite loss.

While nausea, vomiting and diarrhea can be related to the flu, these are rarely the primary flu symptoms. The flu is not a stomach or intestinal disease. The term "stomach flu" is inaccurate.

When symptoms strike, get to a doctor as soon as possible; the faster the better. There are prescription antiviral drugs to treat flu.

Over-the-counter medicines can help relieve symptoms of the flu. You should also drink liquids to prevent dehydration, and sleep to bolster your immune system.

Send your questions to
fred@healthygeezer.com.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES - October 1st - 5th

GILL-MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at Noon. The Meal Site Manager is Kerry Togneri. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11:00 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 413-863-9357..

Monday, October 1st
10:00- a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday, October 2nd
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
12:00 p.m. Lunch
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting
1:00 p.m. Painting Class

Wednesday, October 3rd
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:00 p.m. Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, October 4th

9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
10:30 a.m. to Noon Brown Bag
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Pitch

Friday, October 5th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:30 a.m. Pizza Party
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. Call the Center to confirm activities, schedule a ride, and find out when the next blood pressure clinic will be held.

Monday, October 1st
9:00 a.m. Fitness Class
12:30 Quilting

Tuesday, October 2nd

9:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Brown Bag Program
12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday, October 3rd
9:00 a.m. Dance Classes
10:15 a.m. Weight Loss Group
12:00 Bingo

Thursday, October 4th
8:30 a.m. Foot Clinic
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:00 a.m. Posture Perfect

Friday, October 5th
9:00 a.m. Bowling
11:30 a.m. Out to Lunch

LEVERETT Senior Activities

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

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

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

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Local Briefs

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG - Mark your calendars for the fabulous 'Festival that Stinks,' the 14th Annual North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival, on September 29th and 30th. Orange is the "New Green," and the North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival is the trendsetter for 'good Green fun' across the region. Held on Forster's Farm at 60 Chestnut Hill Road in Orange.

There's something for everyone in the family at this scent-sational festival. Enjoy and support the bounty of amazing, regional artists, farmers and organizations; strengthen communities by purchasing locally crafted and grown articles and produce. New this year is "A Spoken Word" stage organized by Human Error Publishing and featuring over 40 local poets, and a new children's circle to inspire natural creativity are nestled along a peaceful forest path under the pines.

Leverett Congregational Church, on Sunday, September 30th, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. offers the first in a series of guest speakers. Peter Lindsay, Ph.D., will take the pulpit to present a thought-provoking talk, "Is There Meaning Without God?" Lindsay is an associate professor of political science and philosophy at Georgia State University. The church is located across from the Leverett post office. For more information, call or email Claudia at 413-259-1741, Claudia@ClaudiaGere.com.

What the Meadow has Taught Us. Join in for a walk and 15th anniversary party on Sunday, October 7th, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. sponsored by the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust. Parking is at the East Leverett Meadow parking area on Cushman Road in Leverett. Visit www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/events for a map. Heavy rain will postpone the event.

The Baystate Health Blood Donor Mobile will host a **blood drive** on Wednesday, October 3rd, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. behind Baystate Franklin Medical Center's main building. All blood types are needed. Eligible blood donors will receive a \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card and will be entered into a raffle for a Keurig Brewing System.

"We would like to thank the people of Franklin County who so generously donated with us on September 11th," said Suzanne Stockley, blood donor recruiter, with the Baystate

Health blood donor program. "It is truly inspiring to have so many people give so selflessly in order to help others." Stockley added, "One hundred percent of all blood collected on the blood mobile stays in our community for use in Baystate Health hospitals and facilities. There is no substitute for human blood."

There will be **Bingo** at Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A, in Turners Falls on Saturday, September 29th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. with Ivan Smith as guest caller. GSB will provide cards, prizes and light refreshments; all you need to bring is yourself. Seating will definitely be on a first call, first reserved basis. Place your call to Alisha, Linda or Kerri at 413-863-4316. No one will be admitted without a reservation.

A **caregiver information** and resource fair will be held at the GCC Downtown Center, 270 Main Street, in Greenfield on Saturday, September 29th, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Drop in and find out more about Franklin County and North Quabbin agencies that provide help to elders, caregivers and persons with disabilities. Speakers, presentations and one-on-one consultations will be offered.

After a second game of the year loss to Commerce High School on September 15th, the **Turners Falls High School football team** rebounded with a strong defensive and ground game victory over Dean Tech. Turners Falls improved to a 2 win and 1 loss record on this young season with a 34-6 victory in the away game on September 21st. Next up is a home game on Saturday, September 29th, against Belchertown with a 1:00 p.m. kickoff. NFL replacement referees will be officiating, blindfolded.

On October 1st the **Wendell energy committee** is hosting a meeting at the town hall at 7 p.m. to cover information about the Green Communities Act in general and on the Stretch Energy Building Code in particular, a part of the requirements for Wendell becoming a Green Community. Jim Barry, state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs regional coordinator, will speak and answer questions. Citizens with questions about Green Communities are urged to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Send local briefs to: reporter-local@montaguema.net.

ZBA Continues Hearing on Montague Center School Reuse - Again

BY DAVID DETMOLD - It stands at the highest point of the village, but in some ways its geographic elevation seems dwarfed in comparison to its emotional prominence at the heart of village life. The former Montague Center elementary school retains its pride of place, four years after its classroom doors closed on the last of its students.

Now, although no one professes to want the building to remain empty, very few in the village of Montague Center seem willing to accept the size and scope of the one project the town has received after two requests for proposals for the building's reuse have been issued.

On Wednesday, the zoning board of appeals again continued a hearing on a request for special permits and a variance to turn the former school building into 22 units of upscale, solar powered rental housing. The special permits and variance are needed to allow for multi-family use within the zone, to reduce the dimensional requirements of the lot, and to allow some units smaller than 700 square feet in the building.

The continuance came as the board struggled to take comment from more than 60 people packed into the crowded upstairs meeting room in town hall, which one resident noted was larger than the smaller of the 22 apartments Greenfield developer Mark Zaccheo has proposed for the former school.

"It seems so very dense," said Center Street resident Lee Wicks. "Don't you have any room for community space in the building, for community meetings? Do you have any room for compromise?"

Zaccheo, of Olive Street Developers, LLC, replied, "Developing in this area, there's not a huge payback. I've spent \$40,000 in hard cash on this project. I've been working on it for nine months. We are trying to benefit the community to take a vacant building and turn it into a quiet, well-managed property."

Zaccheo plans to spend \$1 - \$2 million on that project, creating 33

bedrooms in 22 units of an average size of 837 square feet, and he said it would impact his bottom line if he reduced the scale of his development by even one or two units. He stressed that he was trying to fit his project within the walls and footprint of an already existing building, a building he called "beautiful." And he said a traffic consultant he had hired had estimated the peak impact of his project at full occupancy would equal no more than 11 car trips an hour, far less than the former elementary school.

Still, Zaccheo's Powerpoint slide show, with plans to plant arbor vitae to shield car headlights from neighbors' view, Tibetan stone walls with recessed lighting illuminating the set back from the street parking area did little to assuage the collective angst of the neighbors over a project that could add 2% to 3% to the population of the village, or double the number of households on the street in what speakers called a rural, sleepy community.

Cindy Tarail asked the town to slow the permit review process down long enough to "take some time to look at what we want the village of Montague Center to be within the town of Montague."

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the town had gone through an extensive process to find a viable reuse for the building, including a \$20,000 feasibility study with well attended public hearings to gather community input, two RFPs, a targeted mailing to potential commercial enterprises and private schools, and specific outreach to parties such as the Conway School of Design, at one point interested in expanding to a larger space, and a Tibetan meditation center that expressed initial interest but failed to bid on the building.

Tom Bergeron, highway superintendent, noted the town has spent \$94,907 to maintain the building in the four years since the school district closed the school as a cost saving measure (not counting the

\$98,500 the town spent putting a new roof on the building in 2008).

Paul Voiland said a residential reuse of the property would probably be the lowest possible impact use for the building. Walt Burnham disputed that, saying an arts center like the Leverett Arts and Crafts center that he manages could have less of an impact on the neighborhood, and could grow in time to pay the town something equal to the \$20,000 in annual property taxes Montague expects to gain from Zaccheo's development.

Finally, zoning board chair Ernest Brown said, the ZBA will rule on the permit requests for the proposal the board has in front of it, before passing the project on to the planning board to rule on wetlands issues and other matters pertaining to the water supply protection district of the Montague Center well.

The ZBA's ruling may come at the next hearing date, Wednesday, October 17th, at 7:30 at town hall.

Maybe by that time the highway department will have found and fixed the leak in the new \$25,000 water line the town installed and paid for at Zaccheo's request, to make it possible to install sprinklers and new plumbing at the Montague Center School. The town has taken the position that water line improvement would have been necessary for whatever future use the building is put to. The residents who oppose Zaccheo's plan called the un-locatable water leak a sign the town is trying to take on a project that is too big for the village it will be set in. A village that may yet find time to come up with a reuse plan for the building for a community purpose it finds more to its liking, such as an art center, a food processing center for Montague Center's largest employer - Red Fire Farm, with farm worker housing included, or perhaps a new school.

These were among the alternatives brought up and applauded by neighbors of the former Montague Center School as Wednesday's two hour hearing drew to a temporary close.

Town of Montague Tax Bills Due

BY PATTY DION - A reminder to town of Montague taxpayers that the first half of the FY'13 preliminary real estate and fire district taxes are due by Monday, October 1st, 2012. Payments received after this date are subject to 14% interest. To obtain a receipted bill, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and both copies of your bill with your payment.

For the convenience of the town of Montague residents, you are able to pay all real estate, district, and

personal property bills on line. To pay a bill online, have your bill(s) and checkbook in hand, and then go to www.montaguema.net, click on departments, treasurer/collector, online bill payments, then complete each screen to process your payment. It's fast, convenient, and secure.

The tax office is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. and Wednesday until 6:30 p.m. The town hall is closed on Friday.

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"The Voice of the Villages"
Founded by
Harry Brandt David Detmold
August, 2002

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Armed with Irony

IF LAWMAKERS REALLY WANT TO STOP BLANK CHECKS FOR SPENDING BINGES, THEY SHOULD START WITH THE PENTAGON.

BY RYAN ALEXANDER

WASHINGTON, DC - If irony is a crucial ingredient for comedy, the House of Representatives is a laugh riot. Lately, there's been some serious silliness about sequestration and Pentagon spending.

In September, the House took up a bill to fund the government for another six months — a stop-gap measure to kick funding decisions for fiscal year 2013 to the next Congress. On the very same day, the House passed legislation introduced by Rep. Allen West (R-FL) to halt military spending cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act, yet another stopgap measure.

The irony behind West's "National Security and Jobs Protection Act," is stunning.

First, West — along with many of the new bill's supporters — was among the 343 members of Congress who passed the Budget Control Act last year. Second, the bill was debated amid a flurry of hearings and reports on wasteful Pentagon spending. And finally, the bill prescribes the very same kind of government-sponsored economic stimulus that the Florida Republican claims to despise.

West says he voted for the Budget Control Act to ensure that President Barack Obama doesn't get "a blank check to continue his spending binge." But his new bill — which the Senate won't touch and the White House vowed to veto — would lower the budget cap on discretionary funds while removing the "firewall" between defense and non-military spending. That means the Pentagon would get off the hook while civilian agencies like transportation and energy take an even bigger hit than anticipated.

Yet on the same day the bill reached the House floor, there were several hearings on problematic security spending and waste. The House Oversight and Government Affairs Committee held a hearing on a Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction report revealing that hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of fuel in Afghanistan had gone missing. The House Armed Services Committee simultaneously held a hearing on deadly cockpit malfunctions in the F-22 Raptor, a ridiculously expensive white-elephant aircraft that some members of Congress are trying to revive after its can-

cellation three years ago.

The very next day, there was another House Armed Services committee hearing on waste in Pentagon contracting, followed by one later that week questioning the Defense Department's slow progress toward achieving an audit. Oh, and the National Research Council reported that missile defense — the most expensive military program ever at \$200 billion and counting — is a flop.

The opponents of allowing military spending cuts to be subjected to sequestration — the automatic, across-the-board budget cuts that kick in if Congress fails to meet certain budget-cutting goals — are also launching a strangely partisan fight over the role of government in job creation.

Consider Majority Leader Eric Cantor's take. When the Virginia Republican touched on the national security consequences of sequestration, he spent the bulk of his floor time complaining about its effect on jobs in his district, down to the grocer who provides produce to military bases. The contradiction inherent in his arguments — that government-driven jobs programs are bad unless they involve defense — seemed lost on him. You can't have it both ways.

There's a simple fix for sequestration. In fact, it's written right in the Budget Control Act: Cut the budget by \$1.2 trillion to shrink the deficit. My organization, Taxpayers for Common Sense, came up with \$1.5 billion in proposed cuts last year, and in a few weeks we will release a proposal that would cut billions more in spending.

If lawmakers really want to stop blank checks for spending binges, they should start with the Pentagon, not stop short of it. Any fiscal plan that refuses to take on the military budget — which has more than doubled in the past decade, constitutes nearly 60 percent of our discretionary spending, and is rife with waste to boot — isn't just inefficient, it's dangerous. Our economic strength is our first line of defense, and the best way to protect it is to make every part of government vigilant against waste.

Ryan Alexander is president of *Taxpayers for Common Sense*, a nonpartisan federal budget watchdog. www.taxpayer.net
This article was distributed via *OtherWords* (OtherWords.org)

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LETTERS TO



THE EDITOR

Bring Our Troops Home

Recently, four United States soldiers were killed by an Afghan soldier (tuned insurgent, or an insurgent dressed as a soldier).

The enemy, which has many factions, constantly adapts to its terrain and its opponent. Historically, which

nation has ever won a war in Afghanistan? The terrain and the will of the enemy prolongs conflicts. The length of this war exceeds Vietnam, yet very few people protest it.

How would you feel as a parent or loved one of one of those four sol-

diers if the current drawdown of troops has begun, with an ending date of 2014?

Bring our troops home now!

—David Yez,
Monmouth, IL

Cherokee Nation Denounces Actions by Senator Scott Brown Staffers

The Cherokee Nation is disappointed in and denounces the disrespectful actions of staffers and supporters of Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown. The conduct of these individuals goes far beyond what is appropriate and proper in political discourse. The use of stereotypical "war whoop chants" and "tomahawk chops" are offensive and downright racist. It is those types of actions that perpetuate negative stereotypes and continue to minimize and

degrade all native peoples.

The individuals involved in this unfortunate incident are high ranking staffers in both the senate office and the Brown campaign. A campaign that would allow and condone such offensive and racist behavior must be called to task for their actions.

The Cherokee Nation is a modern, productive society, and I am blessed to be their chief. I will not be silent when individuals mock and insult our people and our great

nation.

We need individuals in the United States Senate who respect Native Americans and have an understanding of tribal issues. For that reason, I call upon Senator Brown to apologize for the offensive actions of his staff and their uneducated, unenlightened and racist portrayal of native peoples.

— Bill John Baker
Principal Chief of the
Cherokee Nation

Soapbox Derby Thanks

Montague Community Cable thanks all who helped to put on the Third Annual Soapbox Derby. From racers, their families and volunteers who helped with the many aspects of the race, to sponsors who made the event possible, vendors, parks and recreation and all the town departments, to our loyal audience, and especially to the local family who raced home

to pick up a generator for us to use when ours failed on site. We were back up and videotaping in 23 minutes flat, a new derby record!

Our gold sponsors were: Kostanski Funeral Home, Northeast Solar, Silverscreen Design, Hale Custom Signs, Montague Webworks, Bear Country, Greenfield Savings Bank, Judd Wire, and Hillside

Plastics. See the complete list of sponsors and supporters at MontagueSoapboxDerby.com.

Deep appreciation to Deb Bourbeau for her leadership and to the whole planning committee for their dedication and technical expertise.

— Cindy Tarail
Montague

Watching the Line

seeking to appeal to middle class voters in an election year.

But it is the actions of each party during the last four years that gives us true insight into who and what is important to them, moreso than what gets written down on party platforms or uttered in speeches during these self-congratulatory celebrations.

The Wendell Free Library is proud to join with Sojourners to present the new short film, *The Line*, written and directed by Emmy Award-winning producer Linda Midgett. It chronicles the very real stories of four real people struggling with real poverty in America today.

You'll meet a banker in the suburban Midwest who used to earn six-figures a year and now, after the eco-

nomie collapse, must go to a food bank to feed his three kids; a fisherman on the Gulf Coast of Louisiana who has watched his livelihood and his culture wash away in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and a devastating off-shore oil spill; a blue collar guy in North Carolina who worked hard his whole life but lost his job, became homeless, and started over as a restaurant bus boy; and a single mom in Chicago who battles daily to ensure her son is safe, healthy, and has the opportunity to go to college.

People living in and struggling with poverty telling their own stories; they are beautiful, inspiring, challenging, and full of grace.

— Laurel Facey
Wendell

U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan

as of 9/19/12

Wounded:	Deaths:
15,332	2,121



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Poets Wanted!

to submit original poems. Please email: reporter-poems@montaguema.net for consideration in the monthly Poetry Page. Include 25-word bio. Poems may also be posted to Montague Reporter, 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376. No prior experience necessary, as a poet.

CANADIAN from page 1
Society formed a local chapter in 1881 and advocated for the building of a French church in town, and recruitment of a French priest. By 1884, Father Perreault was assigned as the first French Canadian pastor and coordinated the planning and construction of Ste. Anne's Church in 1885.

Father Perreault was renowned for his involvement in community and family life. He encouraged his parishioners to become citizens so they could vote, and formed the French Canadian Naturalization Club. The right to vote was considered critical and necessary to repel the efforts of the "Yankee Protestants" to impose their values on the newcomers.

One such effort resisted by the French Canadians was prohibition. Led by Perreault, the French Canadians deemed the answer was moderate alcohol consumption rather than abstinence. They formed a society that grew to 220 members. They were self-governed with threat of expulsion for overindulgence. Their credo was to avoid saloons,

partake moderately of alcohol at home or with friends, and for good measure they took a pledge against profanity.

According to Abbondanzio, this approach worked for the most part and with the exception of the notoriously drunk and disorderly loggers, French Canadian names were rarely found in the police logs of the 1880s.

The Baptiste Society was an important aspect of the French Canadian community as they sponsored many social and recreation events in addition to their advocacy for a French Catholic Church and later a French parochial school. They brought nuns and priests from Quebec to instruct their children, and by 1895 their school was built. Many audience participants recalled their elder relatives would only respond to the children when they spoke French, and most attended Ste. Anne's School.

They reminisced about their times at Ste. Anne's Church where children sat up front with the strict nuns. They recalled the lively times ringing the church bells – the largest ones would literally lift them off their feet on the

upswing. Memories of Ste. Anne's School also abounded. Classes were taught in French in the morning and English in the afternoon; however, by the time fourth generation Donna DuSell was ready to attend school Ste. Anne's was closed and children were encouraged to use only English.

Another audience member talked of her father Joseph Girard's times at Ste. Anne's with his best friend Harold Fugere and the time they infuriated one of the nuns until she threw a statue of the Virgin Mary that narrowly missed them – flying right out the window. There was much laughter and nodding of heads following these and other stories.

There followed tales of ice skating parties, hair-raising toboggan

rides down L Street to the river, card parties, wine making and New Year's traditions where the eldest male family member would take each child aside and offer them a blessing for the upcoming year. Among the highlights of the evening was a recording of Tom Bergeron's grandfather who was interviewed in the 1980s at 90 years old talking of his immigration in 1917. He told tales of "fishing" the Connecticut River with dynamite.

Another treat was viewing a 1990s Woody Brown interview with Lionel Girard where the audience heard tales of chestnut harvesting, sneaking down to the river to see the 1915 log drive, ice harvesting, cock fighting, and even some of the Turners Falls gangs back in the day –

the Dutch Tigers (2nd Street denizens noted for their heavy drinking) and the Slippery Gap Gang.

The evening closed with lively traditional Quebecois music – Cynthia Thomas on fiddle, Doug Feeney on banjo and Ken Karpowicz on accordion. At times it was difficult to hear the music because the audience members were so busy reacquainting themselves and sharing stories with one another.

This Friday, September 28th at 6:30 p.m., the descendants of Irish immigrants will have their chance to tell their stories when the final episode of "Legends and Tales" takes place at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

RAIL from pg 1

ger rail back. By raising the number of trains to three per day (right now the Amherst station only sees two trains per day), the line will see a 100% increase in ridership, according to Brennan.

Brennan announced an agreement with Connecticut will make commuter train service available all the way up to Springfield by 2016. Direct train service from Springfield to New York City will be offered daily. These services will be funded by the state of Connecticut, but Massachusetts will benefit.

A longer term goal is to extend both commuter and inter-city train service all the way up the Valley, from Connecticut to Vermont. Tickets for commuter trains are generally much cheaper than for inter-city trains.

The places where a train stops will become "hot spots for development" and will benefit from "great economic potential," Brennan claimed.

The transit center on Olive Street in Greenfield has recently been completed and is waiting for the rail construction to catch up. Holyoke is designing a station platform. Northampton has formed a committee to weigh their station options. They could revamp the old depot platform or plan a more ambitious building project.

Finally, the state of Massachusetts is purchasing the entire line from Springfield to Northfield for 17 million dollars. Massachusetts has decided to buy the rail tracks from Pan Am to protect their 70 million

dollar investment and to retain control of the main line so there will be no conflicts between freight trains and passenger trains. Thus, Massachusetts will receive payment from Pan Am for use of the rail line by their cargo trains.

Another long term idea, which is already being implemented on commuter trains in California, is to offer WIFI internet service on the train, allowing the work day to begin during the commute. Perhaps a worker would only need to go to the office for six hours, if they are working for an hour in the morning and an hour in the evening during their rail commute, and getting paid for their working commute as well. This work day paradigm shift could "change the ball game," Brennan suggested.

The ultimate goal of the Connecticut River main line revival is to bring passenger service all the way north to Montreal. But that won't happen any time soon, especially with the increased security complications of crossing an international border on a passenger train since September 11th, 2001 and the start of the "War on Terror."

Brennan stressed that train service must be of high quality and reliable in order for people to choose to ride the train. But what are our alternatives? Brennan posed the questions: "Are we really serious about climate change and bringing down levels of greenhouse gases? Are we really serious about reducing our reliance on foreign oil?"

All aboard!

DISASTER from pg 1

Vermont Yankee is not the reactor itself, but the waste storage pool," he said. The accident at Fukushima severely damaged the fuel storage pools, and they remained critically compromised and vulnerable to any seismic events. "Once the water in a fuel storage pool gets low and spent fuel rods begin to heat up, the water dries out and the rods begin to burn, sending out a plume of radioactivity," Helfand explained. "You can't stop the fire by putting water on it. You need foam, and there's not enough foam in the whole state of Vermont to put out a fire in the spent pool at Vermont Yankee. The fire would send a huge plume of radioactive smoke far into the sky.

"There are those who say Fukushima wasn't the same, because it was caused by a tsunami, and that couldn't happen at Vermont Yankee," Helfand said. "The [Fukushima] reactor was leaking before the tsunami because the cooling system failed. The cooling system could fail at Vermont Yankee. It could be a tornado, a cooling system failure, a power failure, operator error, sabotage or a terrorist attack. The spent fuel pool is especially vulnerable."

The seventh story spent fuel pool at Vermont Yankee is covered by an unsecured metal roof, the sides of the pool are not hardened. Helfand said that if an accident were to happen at Vermont Yankee, with a hydrogen or steam explosion, members of the public would not be likely to receive accurate information from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or from the Louisiana-based Entergy Corporation, which owns Vermont Yankee. During the massive radiation release at Fukushima, spreading fallout more than 170 kilometers away, the Japanese government sent out press releases, "No danger to anyone."

"Evacuation was compromised by government misinformation.

Problems were minimized," Helfand said. "Evacuation could not be done, so they ignored it. That's what happens in that kind of situation."

"There needs to be a 50 mile evacuation around any nuclear power plant," Helfand said. One and a half million people would need to be evacuated from a 50 mile radius in the event of a major accident at Vermont Yankee, he added.

The question naturally arises, "Evacuate in which direction?"

With leaf peepers clogging the highway in the fall, accidents shutting down a highway, or a major snow storm with high winds and power outages, how would hoards of people evacuate? And where would they go? High winds would blow radioactivity far beyond a 50 mile radius. Who take in the radiation refugees?

"Alpha particles get incorporated into your body," Helfand said. "There's no way to get them out."

In the question and answer period, a question came up about the effectiveness of taking potassium iodine tablets to ward off the threat of radioactive iodine, one of the many deadly byproducts of the core fission process at Vermont Yankee and other reactors. It appears people downwind would need to take the tablets, immediately, to protect their thyroids, once the warning sirens blow.

"But, what siren?" Helfand asked. There aren't any sirens in Greenfield.

In Gill, which is inside the ten mile radius of Vermont Yankee, a siren would sound on the Mount Hermon campus. If a Gill resident were fortunate enough to hear the siren, it would be time to start taking an iodine tablet, once daily, for as long as the danger of ingesting radioactive iodine persists. The town of Gill has tablets available at the town hall - one per person. After that, Gill town administrator Ray Purington said, residents would wait for further orders.

In the town of Montague, you'd need to turn up your hearing aid and listen for the siren in Northfield, to begin taking potassium tablets. Unfortunately, the town doesn't have potassium iodide tablets to offer. You would need to get them prescribed by your doctor.

In the event of a nuclear accident at Vermont Yankee, should you take shelter at home or immediately evacuate?

"That depends on which way the wind is blowing" Helfand replied. You might be better off to take shelter a few days until the radiation stops blowing about. GCC is an evacuation site -but GCC is only 15 miles from the nuclear plant.

To take shelter, what kind of shelter do you need? In hospitals that use far less radiation, the walls are lined with lead. How many homes are so equipped?

American Red Cross representatives handed out family disaster supply kit pamphlets at the meeting, along with a detailed family disaster plan for work, school, or in the car. The four steps to safety have more complicated moves than a performance of Dancing with the Stars.

As the evening went on it became clear that in the event of a Fukushima accident at Vermont Yankee, you would not be compensated for the loss of your home or property, your job, your injuries, or your life. People in the audience began murmuring, "Shut the damn plant down."

That is the same approach the governors of Japan's prefectures have unilaterally taken since the Fukushima disaster last March, shuttering all 54 of the country's reactors within 14 months of the nuclear catastrophe.

That is the same approach Vermont governor Peter Shumlin is attempting to take with Vermont Yankee, although his effort has been blocked in federal court so far.



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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Emergency Management Director Resigns

BY KATIE NOLAN - Luke Hartnett has resigned as the town's emergency management director, effective October 1st.

In a letter to the selectboard, Hartnett wrote, "I find it best for me to step back, as current and future circumstances in my life will be limiting my availability to give the full attention that this position deserves." Hartnett added, "It has been with great honor and respect that I have served this town, and this decision has been an extremely difficult one to make. I am grateful to those who gave me this wonderful opportunity, and to those who have helped me in any way."

Town administrator Tom Sharp said Hartnett had "done a nice job" as director and that he "stepped up to the plate" coordinating the town's response to the 2011 Hallowe'en nor'easter and the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

Selectboard chair Eugene Klepadlo told his colleagues on the board that Shutesbury had voted to withdraw from the U-28 elementary school union and join Amherst regional school by September 2014.

To clarify this matter, in a follow up interview, Shutesbury town administrator Becky Torres told the Montague Reporter that Shutesbury has not, in fact, voted on a school regionalization plan. Torres, who is a member of the regionalization planning committee that includes representatives from Shutesbury, Leverett, Amherst and Pelham, said the four town planning committee recently went out to bid for a consultant to help develop a regionalization plan.

According to Torres, "No plan has been developed, and there is no plan to vote on yet. We are no different from New Salem or Wendell; we are all going through the process."

Back in Erving, selectboard chair Eugene Klepadlo noted the town regionalization committee set up by the 2010 annual town meeting now has only two active

members. He said Erving needs to create a new committee to develop regionalization strategies for Erving Elementary School. "We're under the gun," he said. Klepadlo continued, "We have 18 months to figure this out."

Sullivan commented the town needs to find "dedicated people willing to do the research" to fill a new regionalization committee.

The board asked Sharp to contact town counsel to determine the correct legal method for setting up a regionalization committee.

For two of the three new positions in the reorganized public works department, the selectboard approved hires from within the department. Glenn McCory was hired as highway/building/maintenance foreman and Jim Paulin as highway/building/maintenance laborer. Peter Walsh of Orange was hired as the second highway/building/maintenance laborer. Under the reorganization, public works will perform highway tasks such as plowing and road maintenance, maintain town buildings, and do outdoor maintenance for town properties, such as mowing and clearing.

Public works department director Paul Prest complimented the interview committee on "a great job."

Sharp informed the board that J. R. Vinagro will start demolition and cleanup work at the former Usher Mill site in early October. Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin asked Sharp to chart the schedule for project milestones with the town's engineering consultant, Tighe & Bond, Inc., which is acting as the Usher Mill demolition project manager for the town.

The selectboard accepted the bid of \$58,500 from Authorized Services of New England, Inc. for Generac emergency generators, one

for the new senior and community center (\$23,500) and one for the town hall and fire station #1 (\$35,300).

Goodwin told Prest that residents have expressed concerns about road maintenance in several areas. He has toured some of the areas with residents. He asked Prest to check on several issues, including overgrown brush and a poorly marked sidewalk on Crescent Street, the pipe to the fire well at the former Usher Mill, the sidewalk on Forest Street, a retaining wall at Key Up Brook near North and Church Streets, and the fire well at Key Up Brook.

Prest was asked to provide an action plan and schedule for work in these areas. Police chief Chris Blair provided the board with recommendations for taser policies and procedures. The police department does not currently own a taser, but Blair would like the department to obtain one. The board will consider the policies and procedures at a future meeting.

The selectboard will meet September 29th at 1 p.m. at the meeting room at Taylor's Tavern for a selectboard retreat, where the board will consider long-term goals. According to Sharp, the retreat is a chance to step back from the daily minutiae of governance and focus on the bigger picture for the town.

The selectboard closed the open session at about 7:50 p.m. and entered into executive session "for the purpose of considering the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health and/or the discipline, dismissal of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual..." and to "comply with, or act under the authority of any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements."

NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Issues Budget Recommendations

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The selectboard has issued budget recommendations for the upcoming special town meeting on Monday, October 15th at 6 p.m. The town has only \$14,497 available to spend - that is the amount Gill has left beneath its levy limit to raise and appropriate for FY'13, according to administrative assistant Ray Purington - but supplemental budget numbers from the police, highway, fire departments and the Slate library total nearly \$42,000. So, not every town department will get its wish list granted this year, that much is obvious.

According to Purington, the board recommended spending \$1905 to add four more open hours at the Slate Library - the trustees have suggested adding open hours on Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 6 p.m. - for the rest of the fiscal year. Additionally, the board recommends spending \$928 to boost the salary of library director Jocelyn Castro-Santos to a level the personnel board considers to be on par with other part time directors of small rural libraries in the area.

The board also proposed spending \$3,000 to increase the budget for trees and forestry this year. Purington said the highway department has been supplementing the trees and forestry line out of their own budget lately, and this account has been hit hard by a spate of severe storms in recent years, requiring the town to call in contractors to clear damaged trees. Supplementing the amount available for tree work will, in effect, alleviate some of the pressure on the highway department to live within their budget for the remainder of FY13.

Beyond that, the board settled on very small sums to bring up the amount already budgeted for cost of living

raises for the town clerk and treasurer, tax collector (\$90), to recognize the salary increases voted for these positions at the annual town meeting on June 19th, along with \$99 in increased interest payments for the recently completed Siemens energy upgrade project at the elementary school, and \$400 to supplement the cemetery commission's lawn mowing account.

The board recommends putting the remaining amount of available funds, about \$8000, into stabilization. The town presently has about \$132,940 in the general stabilization account, \$38,495 in an education stabilization account, and \$28,098 in a capital stabilization account. Purington said these sums are not necessarily adequate to meet the town's anticipated needs, to say nothing of emergencies that may arise, but the stabilization accounts have recovered to a level Gill can begin to feel comfortable with.

Although the board made no direct budget recommendations to supplement the fire or police departments, it is also true that voters have recently approved a debt exclusion vote to purchase a new police cruiser, while the fire department, along with police and highway, have each benefited from \$5,000 from the Northfield Mount Hermon gift to the town in lieu of taxes. On Monday, the selectboard also approved spending \$3,000 for body work on one of the town's fire engines, along with \$1200 for new rims on one of the fire engines.

As far as repair work on the fire department's engines, Purington said these sums represent a down payment, with "more to come."

In other news, the town will hold an informational

hearing on proposed sewer rate hikes for Riverside sewer users on Tuesday, October 2nd at town hall at 6:30 p.m.

As far as how to spend the town's recent \$139,000 Green Communities check from the state's Department of Energy Resources, the town energy commission has made the following recommendations, approved by the selectboard. The town proposes to spend \$9430 for energy audits of the town hall, library and Riverside municipal building, along with \$3,000 for bike racks at the town hall, elementary school, safety complex, library and Riverside building. The town will also spend \$4,000, approximately, to cover the difference between a new police cruiser and a new hybrid fuel efficient police cruiser. Additionally, \$3,222 will be spent on six anti-idling devices and remote starters for the three police cruisers, two gas powered fire department vehicles, and a one ton highway truck. Finally, the town will spend \$1,000 of the grant on an energy savings public awareness campaign, and hold the remaining \$119,338 of the grant in reserve to accomplish whatever tasks the energy audits of town buildings identify as most pressing for energy conservation.

Also, Purington said the town will be going out to bid shortly for a new metal roof for town hall. Voters approved a \$73,000 debt exclusion for this purpose at the same time they approved spending \$33,000 for a new police cruiser.

Deb Loomer has resigned from the recreation commission, and Rose LeVasseur is also stepping down from that commission, which is now in need of new members.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Cows; Marijuana Growing; Breaking and Entering; Youth "Fooling Around"

Sunday, 9/9

6:10 p.m. Reported Domestic Dispute at Franklin Rd residence, parties involved located on W Gill Road.

7:00 p.m. Noise complaint on Franklin Rd, quieted down residence involved.

7:30 p.m. Harassment report taken from parent of youth on Walnut St, informed of Harassment Prevention Order options.

8:20 p.m. Arrest of resident on Chapel Drive re: Domestic Incident.

Monday, 9/10

7:20 a.m. Reported cows in roadway on Main Rd, area of Lyons Hill.

10:15 a.m. Reported fire on side of the roadway area of 142 W Gill Rd, same put out

11:05 a.m. Trespassing issue on Riverview Drive, subject informed of rights and process.

12:55 p.m. Resident on Main Rd reported telephone scam for home alarm systems.

Tuesday, 9/11

1:30 p.m. Resident on Main Rd reported telephone scam for home medical alert systems.

4:15 p.m. Removed party from selling vegetables from side of roadway on Rt 2.

Wednesday, 9/12

2:35 p.m. Reported motor vehicle accident on Rt2 possible fatal.

12:45 p.m. Reported medical at French King Hwy residence, transported same.

6:30 p.m. Arrested Boyle Rd resident for Attaching Plates

7:00 p.m. Reported a Herd of cows running loose on Bascom Road.

Thursday, 9/13

6:12 p.m. Assisted Fire Dept with alarm on Franklin Rd

7:00 p.m. Located a marijuana grow off the road in the woods near French King Bridge.

8:08 p.m. Reported TT Unit causing traffic jam at entrance of GM Bridge.

8:20 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with motor vehicle stop at the French King Bowling Center.

Friday, 9/14

6:00 p.m. Assisted Montague Police Dept. with a fight on Ave A.

9:15 p.m. Assisted citizen broken down at entrance to Barton Cove Road.

9:40 p.m. Assisted Citizen

that was walking on Main Rd in dark clothing, safety.

Saturday, 9/15

2:15 p.m. Responded to GM Bridge for reported youth "fooling" around in the construction area.

2:45 p.m. Assisted northfield pd with arrest of subject with 2 warrants.

Sunday, 9/16

10:16 a.m. Responded to domestic issue on Main Rd

4:45 p.m. Meet with subject regarding information about the fatal mv accident earlier in the week.

Monday, 9/17

8:50 p.m. Message left for resident on Main Rd regarding property removal.

1:00 p.m. Restraining Order issued for resident on Munns Ferry Road.

2:30 p.m. Trespass Orders

issue to two parties from Riverview Drive.

Tuesday, 9/18

8:30 p.m. Motor Vehicle complaint made against resident on Mountain Road.

12:45 p.m. Larceny complaint taken for Oak Street Resident against hired worker

3:15 p.m. 911 call from Mt Hermon, problem with phone line.

5:35 p.m. Assisted Bernardston Police Department with motor vehicle accident.

7:35 p.m. Tree reported in the roadway, Main Rd, removed same.

8:44 p.m. Erratic operation of motor vehicle reported, east on Rt 2.

Wednesday, 9/19

6:20 a.m. Reported tree in roadway on North Cross Rd

3:05 p.m. Assisted State Police with arrest at the Gill

Mobil station.

8:16 p.m. Harassment Protection order served on 2residence living on Riverview Drive.

Thursday, 9/20

3:05 p.m. Breaking and Entering occurred at business on W Gill Rd, under investigation.

10:35 p.m. Breaking and Entering occurred at Main Rd business, under investigation.

Friday, 9/21

1:58 p.m. Trespass Order issued to Main Rd resident

5:20 p.m. Medical injury of youth on Mt Hermon soccer fields, transported same.

11:50 p.m. Assisted Montague PD with large fight on M Street.

Saturday, 9/22

4:58 p.m. Medical assist to youth at Mt Hermon field, transported same.

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Taxes and Interest at Issue in Verizon Claim Against Localities

BY DAVID DETMOLD - "Did you get your rebate when the power was off for a week?" asked selectboard chair Rich Brazeau...

administrator Margie McGinnis to look into how long those local charges have been billed to customers.

In other news, the selectboard was unhappy that a long sought agreement on how to allocate payments for central office employee benefits at Union 28 appeared to still be eluding final signature...

"I got interest on mine," deadpanned Peter d'Errico.

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue advised cities and towns to collect taxes on phone company poles and wires in their localities for FY'09...

But Verizon has continued to fight a court battle to claw back the taxes levied on their infrastructure in 2009...

Leverett is now being asked to pay back the \$9,600 it collected in taxes from Verizon that year...

Trouble is, the DOR did not advise towns to put away extra money in case Verizon won the court battle...

"When my power goes out for a week, I didn't get one quarter off what I pay on my bill," repeated Brazeau.

Administrative assessor Steve Schmidt noted that a recent itemized charge on the phone bill shows that Verizon has begun billing customers individually to recover the cost of the new local property taxes.

D'Errico, referring to a bill of several thousand dollars for one central office employee's retirement benefits...

Brazeau said, "I find it amazing we have no charter [establishing] School Union 28 but have to go through this frigg'in' agreement to pay a few employees benefits."

The town will have to repeat water quality tests at a number of private homes

along the eastern end of Teewaddle Road after trace levels of volatile organic compounds, manganese, and other contaminants showed up in the most recent round of well tests.

Some of the new windows at the elementary school appear to be leaking. Either that, or the bricks on the wall where some of the windows have been recently installed...

The hiring committee considering candidates for a truck driver laborer for the highway department will meet, tentatively, on October 3rd.

On Saturday, November 3rd from 9 a.m. to 11:30, a meeting to consider K-12 regionalization between Amherst, Pelham, Shutesbury and Leverett will be held at the Amherst regional school library.

The town will soon go out to bid for lighting efficiency upgrades at the town hall, safety complex and the library.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Declines to Halt ZBA Process on Montague Center School

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Speaking for a group of Montague residents who are concerned about the scale of the redevelopment planned for the former Montague Center School...

Boswell brought up everything from the difficulty firefighters or EMTs might have rescuing people from third story apartments if the Montague Center fire department does not have a ladder truck to reach that high...

Primarily, Boswell objected to the fact the project had gone to the zoning board of appeals for disposition, when, by his reading, it should be before the planning board.

Building inspector David Jensen allowed that the town had overlooked these applicable sections of the bylaws, and admitted the project would probably go from having about 12% of the lot paved to having about 22% of the lot paved when new parking lots, and one wider driveway were put in.

Further issues were raised about the excavation that would likely occur to widen one of the driveways, and

how that would be handled under the terms of the water supply protection bylaw, and what body should be looking into dredging the water retention pond, or "puddle," as Boswell termed it...

Summing up, Boswell said, "The last thing anyone wants is adversarial litigation; the only ones who benefit from that are lawyers. Pull the project back from the ZBA, because it has to go before the planning board. Why don't we have a sit down and see if we can work some of these matters out?"

The board did not take him up on that offer, saying the conservation commission, planning board and zoning boards had the expertise and authority to rule on all the questions raised.

Selectboard member Mark Fairbrother asked highway superintendent Tom Bergeron about progress, or the lack of it, on the leaking water line recently installed from the Montague Center School down Station Street to Main.

Bergeron said the leak, estimated at an ounce and a half of water every five or six minutes, has still not been located, but efforts are still being made to find it.

"The folks down there are tired of it," said Fairbrother. "The road's been dug up a long time."

In other news, the selectboard approved a request from Dan Kramer, owner of the Element Brewing Company, located in the

Ward Block in Millers Falls, to allow on premises pouring of beer for people who come in to their artisanal brewery on Bridge Street. "We don't want to become a bar," said Kramer. But currently, they are allowed only to give out free two ounce samples of their local brew, and tourists from as far away as Boston are leaving their brewery thirsting for more.

The board approved a public gathering permit for the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition to hold a march and vigil in memory of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault on Thursday, October 18th, starting at Peskeomskut Park at 5 p.m., and continuing up Avenue A to 3rd Street, L Street, to 5th Street and back to the park, where a clothesline will display graphically altered t-shirts made by victims of sexual assault or domestic violence, and Chinese lanterns will be released.

The board approved a request by acting police chief Chip Dodge to grant head of dispatch Marcia Odle a \$5.77 a week stipend for use of her private cell phone in managing the dispatch center. Dodge invited the public to attend an open house at the safety complex, sponsored jointly by the police and the Turners Falls fire department, on Sunday, October 14th, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Both sergeant Richard Suchanek and detective Lee Luster will be doing some desk work at the police station as they recover from injuries, under an agreement struck between the town and the police union.

The Central Franklin County Veterans District will vote for a new slate of officers at 5 p.m. on Thursday, October 11th at the district office, next to Rubin's Auto at 190 Millers Falls Road in Turners.

The selectboard signed a contract with the Berkshire Design Group of Northampton for the design of the second phase of Unity Park renovation project, and allowed Alice and Ted Armen to continue using a 7,000 square foot plot of town owned land to the rear of their house on Main Street in Montague Center as a "community garden," at the nominal price of \$10 a year.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Trees Down on Lines and Blocking Roadway

Tuesday, 9/18

1:40 p.m. Report of trees and wires down on Dorsey Road, WMECO on scene to repair same. 6:30 p.m. Report of tree on lines on Central Street, found to be branch on lines, power company called. 6:55 p.m. Report of tree blocking roadway, Route 2 westbound near paper mill, same. 7:35 p.m. Report that Pratt Street is flooded, DPW advised, roadway blocked off. 8:40 p.m. Missing person reported from Forest Street, report taken. 10:30 p.m. Orange Police requesting assistance for large fight in front of Cumberland Farms.

Wednesday, 9/19

2:30 a.m. Removed debris from roadway, Route 2 at East Main Street. 4:15 a.m. Alarm on Northfield Road, found to be due to tree across driveway, building secure. 1:00 p.m. Report of harassing phone calls, North Street, under investigation. 6:20 p.m. Resident came into station with cell phone found on Swamp Road, owner identified and located. Thursday, 9/20 12:39 p.m. Report of canine hit on Route 2 in Farley area, owner located. 4:50 p.m. Found dog, unable to contact owner, taken to the pound. 11:15 p.m. Suspicious vehicle at

French King bridge, was found to be a disabled motor vehicle.

Friday, 9/21/

1:10 a.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating with suspended license and speeding, French King Highway. 1:30 a.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for unlicensed operation and speeding. 5:45 p.m. Report of minor motor vehicle crash in bowling alley parking lot, report taken, under investigation. 7:12 p.m. Report of missing pit bull, advised owners to contact pound. 9:30 p.m. Report of Internet harassment, Pratt Street, report taken.

Saturday, 9/22/

12:30 a.m. Assist Montague Police with fight in progress, Rt. 63 Roadhouse, subject left scene, same located. 6:30 a.m. Assisting Northfield Police and MSP with felony warrant service, subject arrested. 3:30 p.m. Assisted Northfield Police on Main Street with disturbance. 4:30 p.m. Medical emergency, Old State Road, assisted on scene. 7:30 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Papermill Road, owner making

arrangements for removal. 8:45 p.m. Report of fireworks going off at Old State Road and Ridge Road. Sunday, 9/23/ 5:15 p.m. Walk in to station reported that debris fell off truck on Route 2 near paper mill, hitting her car. Report taken. Monday, 9/24/ 8:28 a.m. Report of assault and battery in Dunkin Donuts parking lot, report taken. 8:30 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle reported on Route 2 bypass, gone upon arrival.

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The Gill Gourmet Crummy Baked Fish

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

Ingredients

- 1 Fish (essential ingredient)
- 1 cup of crumbled Ritz crackers
- ½ cup of crumbled low fat potato chips
- Tartar sauce

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Spray butter flavored Pam on one of those aluminum pie plates you've been saving.
- Spread a layer of cracker crumbs on pie plate.
- Rinse fish and pat dry with paper towel.
- Slather the fish all over with tartar sauce
- Lay slathered fish on cracker crumbs. If too long; cut fish to fit.
- Sprinkle potato chips crumbs on top of fish.
- Bake until the fish flakes nicely.

Back in the days when dinosaurs roamed the earth, I fished the Connecticut River in Gill. Friends and I crossed a tributary at the Connecticut River's edge on a log over the stream. While fishing, I lost a fishhook on a snag and returned to my bicycle to get another one. On my way back, I spotted an enormous fish idling in the tributary. It looked like a giant pickerel lying in wait, with its head just a few feet from

where the log lay. It was at least four feet long.

I'd just had an experience with a pickerel in the brook running by our farm when I'd swished a baited hook through the water. A bull frog sprang from the stream bank to clamp onto the bait. Almost simultaneously, a pickerel leaped out of the water to grab the frog, creating a ferocious explosion of water. I hauled the frog out of the water with the pickerel attached, but before I landed them, the pickerel bit the frog in two and swam off with half the frog in its mouth.

Now, here I was at the river, faced with a giant pickerel that could easily bite me in two. I tip-toed over the log, ever so gingerly. Once past the peril of the giant fish, I couldn't wait to tell my friends. But, then, I hesitated, because if the fish left by the time we headed back home, they'd think I was just telling a fish tale. I couldn't stretch my arms wide enough to show how long that fish was. They would just have to see it with their own eyes.

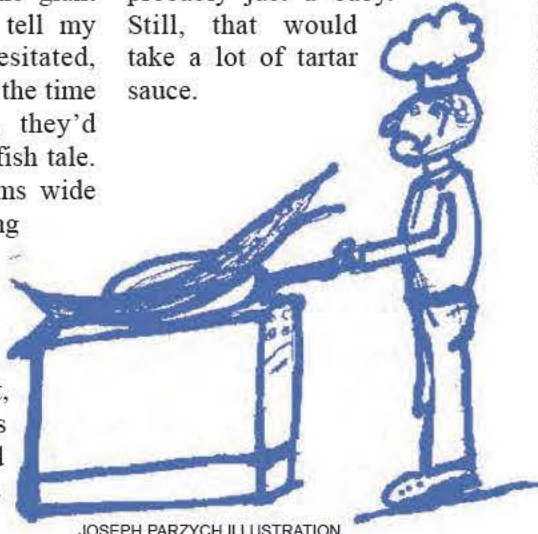
I kept quiet, but to my great disappointment, the enormous fish was gone when we headed home. I never told this fish tale to them, or any-

one else, in all these years, even though I'd learned a few years after the sighting that fish of that size, sturgeon, inhabit the Connecticut River, although they are on the endangered and threatened species list.

This recipe is not for baking sturgeon. I understand they are very boney and probably not that great eating. Plus, you would need your entire collection of aluminum pie plates to even begin baking or frying one of those monsters.

Incidentally, sturgeons are a primitive fish that lives up to 100 years old. They have boney armor instead of scales and Atlantic sturgeon can reach a length of 12 to 14 feet, so the sturgeon I saw was probably just a baby.

Still, that would take a lot of tartar sauce.



JOSEPH PARZYCH ILLUSTRATION

First Annual K Street Porch Crawl



ANNE HARDING PHOTO

The First Annual K Street Porch Crawl took place last Sunday in Turners as residents and friends wandered from porch to porch – eating, drinking, making merry and music at every stop. Pictured here are the Bunwinkies who started the day's festivities at noon, followed by Michael Baines, Southern String & Blue Grass musicians, Tawdry, Heather Maloney and John Keating. A good time was had by all.

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Reading the Forest Palimpsest



CLAUDIA WELLS PHOTO

Tom Wessels, a terrestrial ecologist and professor at Antioch University New England, where he founded a master's program in conservation biology, is shown here after his talk at the Leverett Library to an overflow crowd on Tuesday.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

LEVERETT - Seventy-five people crowded into the community room of the Leverett Library on Tuesday to hear Tom Wessels, author of *Reading the Forested Landscape*, talk about the keenly perceptive ways he has divined to read the historical imprint of man on the forest floor.

But first, Wessels told the audience a story about a hometown boy from his little Connecticut River town of Weathersfield Bow, VT who probably did more to affect the forested landscape of New England than any other before or since.

Appointed by Thomas Jefferson as consul to Portugal, William Jarvis imported the first Merino sheep to America in 1811.

Until Napoleon conquered Portugal, that nation had maintained a strict embargo on Merinos, which produced an ample fleece

used in the production of coveted fine, soft woolsens. Jarvis brought 4000 Merino back to America, and two years later, tariffs went up on the trade in wool, giving a market advantage to anyone who owned the sheep.

A few years after that, Wessels said, textile mills were developed in this country, and three decades later, Jarvis's 4000 sheep had multiplied to 4 million, and 80% of New England forests had been felled to clear pasturage for them.

Then, after the sheep had seriously overgrazed the denuded hills of New England, "In the 1840s, the whole thing went bust." What Wessels called 'sheep fever' abated as suddenly as it had first swept the region. And Vermont, for example, lost half its human residents to westward migration by the 1850s.

But that brief burst of sheep crazed forest razing and fence building left telltale imprints on the landscape that Wessels, and students of his methods, can read still. Of course, even someone walking through the woods with their nose

in a book, like a character in the *Trouble with Harry*, could stumble across an old stone wall and know it for what it was. An outcropping of yeoman labor that ultimately produced 125,000 miles of stone fencing, equal to seven times the mass of the great pyramids. If laid out end to end, the stone walls of New England could wrap the globe five times around.

Wessels said most pasturage in New England was first partitioned with split rail fencing, until the insatiable felling of forests rendered wood too scarce to be used for this purpose. The 20% of New England forests that were not cut down were kept as wood lots, to provide fuel for the winter. Wessels noted the colder climate of the 19th century was intensified by radiational cooling from the cleared New England landscape, leading to temperatures on winter nights 20 - 25 degrees colder on average than those of today. Rambling, drafty, uninsulated New England farmhouses often consumed 25 to 70 cords of wood a year, burned on open hearths.

As sheep farms waned and market dairy farms rose to take their place, with the advent of railroads connecting rural farming communities to industrial urban centers, the high tide of forest clearing in New England gradually began to ebb.

Wessels described the four stages of succession by which overgrazed pastureland typically returned to forest. He can generally tell how long ago an area of land was

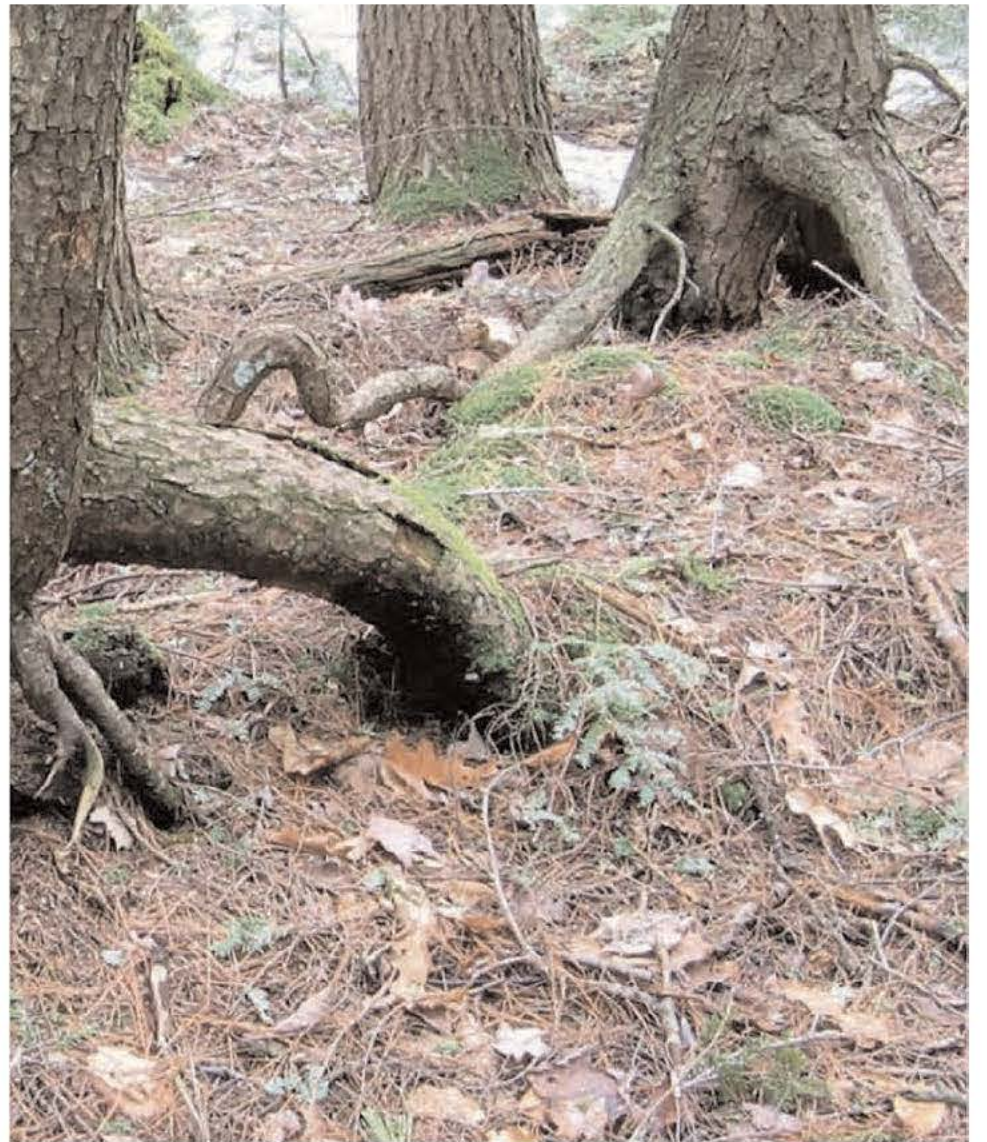
last used for pasture, hayfields, or cropland just by reading the signs left from these four stages of succession.

First come basal rosettes, herbaceous broadleaf plants that grow so low to the ground they are difficult for grazing farm animals to dislodge, such as sheep sorrel, yarrow, or hawkweed. Most of these are not native to New England, Wessels noted. They were probably brought to these shores on British ships built to carry extremely heavy loads of white pine to be used for masts on naval vessels. The British were amazed to find white pine growing as high as 230 feet tall and eight

feet around in New England tributary valleys. They built ships capable of carrying 20 to 30 of these huge, straight trees in their holds. But on the journey across, the British filled their ship's holds with ballast, often just mounds of dirt. Of course, the dirt also carried seeds of non-native species that took root in New England when the ballast was shoveled out to make room for the huge white pine logs.

The second phase of succession is indicated by thorny or unpalatable plants like the native milkweed, or exotics like the gaudy this-

see FOREST page 10



Trees growing in line with aboveground roots stretching between them - evidence of a 'nurse log,' a fallen tree that provides a growth environment for its successors.

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MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

A Treat for Montague - Solarize Program Extended to Hallowe'en!

BY SALLY PICK - Great news! The Mass Clean Energy Center (CEC) has just announced it will extend the deadline for another month - until October 31st - for Montague residents who would like to participate in the Solarize Montague program.

Due to high demand from local residents and businesses looking to go solar, the Mass CEC worked with Solarize Montague contractor Northeast Solar to extend the program for an extra month. This gives us four more weeks to sign contracts for new photo-voltaic (PV) systems to take advantage of group purchasing savings in Montague.

The program has already been a huge success here in Montague, with residents and businesses already signing contracts for 17 solar PV systems, equal to a total of 68.8 kilowatts (kW) of energy. That places us now at Tier 3 pricing, a 5% discount on Tier 1 prices for people buying or financing

their new system, and an 11% discount on electricity prices for people leasing PV. If we get to Tier 4, prices drop 10% from Tier 1 for people purchasing a system and anyone leasing a system would see a 14% drop in electricity prices from Tier 1 prices.

Northeast Solar says another 40 or so kW is likely to come to contract, according to current interest; if all of those Montague residents sign contracts, we'll only need another 40 kW or so to get us to Tier 4.

The October 31st deadline will allow the many people already considering going solar in Montague a bit more time to make their decision. Maybe you're just learning about the program. Maybe you have a proposal for solar from Northeast Solar but haven't had time to review the proposal or check into financing. Maybe you'd like to look into the \$0 cost lease option. Or, maybe, as is human nature, you've just put off deciding.

Now's the time to act and come together with our community to bring photo-voltaic power to Montague and help drive down the price further for everyone. Be sure to spread the word to anyone you know who would be interested in the program, and tell those who have delayed that now is the time to sign a contract.

Together, we can help lower the cost of solar installations for everyone involved in Solarize Montague.

For more information:
• Contact me, Sally Pick, Montague's community solar coach, at 367-0082, or by cell at: 413-559-7257.

• NE Solar at 413-247-6045 (email: info@north-east-solar.biz)

• Or visit the Solarize Montague program website: www.SolarizeMass.com/Montague

And, thanks to all of you for your enthusiasm for Greening our town!



WENDELL ENERGY CORNER

Wendell Pursues Green Communities Designation

BY NAN

RIEBSCHLAEGER - The Wendell energy committee is working on an application to the state for Green Community designation. On October 1st the committee will host a meeting at the town hall at 7 p.m. to go over information about the Green Communities Act in general and the Stretch Energy Building Code, a part of the requirements for Wendell to become a Green Community, in particular.

Jim Barry, the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs regional coordinator, will be on hand to speak and answer questions; citizens are urged to attend, and refreshments will be served. The state provides communities that gain Green Communities status with grant funding for local energy conservation projects.

On October 9th at 7:15 p.m., the planning board will hold a hearing on another requirement of the designation, a bylaw that allows solar installations as-of-right with a site plan review by the planning board. The hearing documents, along with a new fee schedule, are available on the town website www.wendellmass.us on

the planning board page. They are also posted at the town offices and the library.

On October 10th the selectboard will be reviewing the requirements for a Green policy for town vehicles. Wendell's vehicles are all exempt from the Green Communities requirements, but nevertheless a vehicle policy must be put in place that commits the community to purchasing the most energy efficient vehicles available for a particular purpose. Other possible approaches to make Wendell a more Green town in terms of transportation include adding a bicycle rack at the town offices and town hall, using biodiesel in town vehicles, and encouraging hybrids by setting aside a parking space for hybrid vehicles.

On October 17th a special town meeting will be held for citizens to vote on the bylaw changes and the stretch energy building code. The town is also working on a plan for a 20% reduction in energy use for municipal buildings and vehicles over a five year period. Past use has been entered into a database and potential changes to reduce energy use are being examined. Town counsel has been

consulted for a letter stating that permitting and site plan review for a solar installation will take less than a year.

The committee received word in July that the next application date for Green Communities will take place this fall, with an October 30th deadline. This put a lot of pressure on the committee to get the five criteria in place so that Wendell can qualify for Green Community status this year.

To gain Green Communities designation, a community has to provide as-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable and alternative energy generation, research and development, or manufacturing facilities; adopt an expedited application and permit process for as-of-right energy facilities; establish an energy use baseline and develop a plan to reduce energy use by 20% within five years; purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles; and set requirements to minimize life-cycle energy costs for new construction; one way to meet the last requirement is to adopt the new stretch energy building code.

FOREST from page 9

which developed their prickly exterior in a bid for survival in Old World pastures of yore. These plants have very small seeds, that must to land on bare soil in order to germinate, and they take root easily in between the basal rosettes of the first succession phase.

Wessels talked about all the towns in Massachusetts along the Connecticut River

that have the suffix 'field' in their names, such as Northfield, Greenfield, Deerfield, Hatfield, Springfield and Enfield. He said Native Americans had long employed fire to clear croplands along the river, where the rich alluvial soil was easy to cultivate. Allowing some fields to remain fallow, grow up with milkweed and the like, the Natives would return and

burn the fields back, and plant crops again, keeping the forests back from the river for 600 years or more.

Third in succession are berry producing shrubs, whose seeds are spread by mammals or birds like cedar waxwings and robins, Wessels said. The seeds of shrubs like barberry and hawthorne have to land in coarse weeds in order to have a decent chance to grow. Spiny shrubs need two years to form woody growth, so the coarse weeds of the second phase of succession provide a nursery for the third phase plants.

Finally, the shrubs provide a kind of nursery space for the fourth succession phase, when trees like white ash and other deciduous varieties take root and begin to shade out the earlier succession species. Eventually, overgrazed pasturage with scant topsoil and ledge rock poking through gives way and a young forest grows up again.

Juniper is a good indicator species, pointing to where an overgrazed pasture once lay, Wessels said. Once it dies, often after being overshadowed by the growth of a young forest, juniper will stay rooted in place and identifiable for decades. Juniper is slow growing and intolerant of shade, but it only takes root initially in one of four areas: dry sandy soil carpeted in moss, the crevices of rocky outcroppings, under a power-line cut where herbicides are in use, or in overgrazed pas-

turage or abandoned cropland.

Wessels told many other secrets of the forest. He thinks it is quite possible, for example, that species of trees have ways of communicating with each other. He gave an example from 1981, a time when gypsy moth infestation was decimating some deciduous species, and researchers tried to determine how trees like red oaks knew when to produce more tannin in their leaves to keep the moths at bay.

The researchers used some red oaks as a control group, and began tearing up the leaves of other nearby oaks by hand, mimicking the attack of gypsy moths. Sure enough, those oaks quickly began producing more tannins. But interestingly, the red oaks in the control group began producing more tannins simultaneously, as if their brethren with the torn up leaves had signaled to them that gypsy moths were coming.

Wessels said many species seem to communicate also about when to produce large quantities of acorns. These so-called mast years come at irregular intervals, sometimes seven or more years apart. That length of time might be sufficient to dis-

courage or kill off the larvae of the acorn weevil, which is a far more voracious consumer of acorns than grey squirrels, he said.

Wessels talked of the tell-tale characteristics of some stone walls (such as the presence of a large amount of fist sized rocks) that can show when a fenced plot has been used for cropland, with its annual freeze and thaw upward leverage of small stones, as compared to hayfields, which are generally plowed only a few times to level the land. Hayfields do not render up an annual crop of small rocks, like crop fields and gardens do.

He told of how coniferous stumps rot from the outside in, and deciduous stumps from the inside out.

He told about a particular area of American chestnut stumps in Vernon, VT, that to him told a clear tale of a hurricane blowing up the Connecticut River sometime before the 1500s, blowing down all the trees in one direction, leaving pillows and cradles behind where the root balls of the living trees had been pulled from the soil. On top of these earthy pillows, squirrels had buried many chestnuts, and many of these grew to maturity before being harvested at about

1875. New chestnuts sprouted in circles from the exterior of these stumps, reached a diameter of about one foot each, and then were clear cut in about 1915 when the American chestnut blight struck.

He talked about the chestnut blight itself, which spread from an Oriental variety in 1904 in the Bronx Zoo to wipe out what was once the most common and useful species in the Eastern forest. One out of every two trees east of the Mississippi was an American chestnut, he said.

Wessels predicted this species, and other blighted species like hemlock and ash will someday stage a comeback, perhaps thousands of years from now, when they reach equilibrium with the fungal blights or insect species that are attacking them.

It will be for other humans to read the record of man in the forested landscape then. But they would be wise to adopt Wessels' philosophy, which he summed up as an "intimacy of place." Wessels said, "I've gotten deeper and deeper into it. Just like when you get intimate with another person. You want to know their history and what molded them. So with the land."



Spiraling lightning scar.

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The editors would like to thank the following for their generous financial underwriting of The Poetry Page:
Klondike Sound, Green Fields Market, Dr. Robert Koolkin,
Montague Dental Arts, Carlin Barton, and Michael Muller

Readers are invited to send poems to the Montague Reporter at 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376; or email us your poetry at reporter-poems@montaguema.net

Poetry Page edited by Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno
 design by Claudia Wells

The Poetry Page

It is difficult to get the news from poems yet men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there.

—William Carlos Williams

The Pleasure Principle

for Leidy Celeste Nicole

The middle of me bottoms out. Bastion drops, resigns to open. Are you okay? Nod yes. I decide to let my neck relax. Inch the shoulders down with each exhale. Supra sexed prosthesis cameo ultra hot mirage. Physical is platform for fantastical inclinations. The nasal wail of a daytime drinker interrupts this thought. "The next time I fall in love it ... " The midst of me trails off. Bastion drops, cards turn and show their faces. Flash totality a small white triangle recedes from my precognition. I decide to let my neck relax. Trompe l'oeil. We get it.

There's a rock in my chest across from my heart, mirroring the heart but protruding. Thirty year old female with mass on or near the right third costochondral junction. Calcium deposit baroque pearl boutonniere? Tender to the touch and hot, my joint sac grows a gemstone. X-rays inconclusive.

Sty in the eye. White bloom fungal skin. Errant tooth in roof of the mouth. Benign recurring sticky tumor on tendon of right hand. Acid reflux. Hemorrhoids. Irritable bowel syndrome. Bunions, yeast, sciatica. The true face of the age is decorum.

What do I choose to pull through the picture while the neighborhood slurps oysters? From a pink splotch on yellow-white a deeper red emerges. My grandmother calls it digging to China. Insatiable itch at the center of the scalp. Translucent salve applied with cotton swab. Soft white square laid on top of red. "It feels so good to scratch," she says.

— Corrine Fitzpatrick
 Brooklyn, NY



Edna's Magnolia

For Mother's Day

I bought my wife a white magnolia tree
 Like those we saw when traveling in the south.
 I planted it in the back yard by our patio,
 And it grew to over twenty feet high,
 Blossoming in a white array of blooms.
 I killed it when I accidentally dug up the roots on one side.
 The next Mother's Day, I bought her a magenta magnolia shrub
 And planted it out in front of the house.
 To her delight, the magnolia bloomed, every spring,
 Edna is dead, now, but the magnolia blossoms, still.
 This year, it bloomed again in the fall.
 The blossoms do not unfold as usual
 But remain closed until they turn brown and die.
 I wonder - is this a message?

— Joseph A. Parzych
 Gill

Contributors' Notes:

Corrine Fitzpatrick works for the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church as Program Assistant and Friday Late Night Series Coordinator. Other poems can or can soon be read online at son-aweb.net and EOAGH. She resides in lovely Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY.

Jonathan Stevens is co-owner of Hungry Ghost Bread in Northampton, an elaborate front for what is in fact a vanity press: poems are snuck into customers' purchase bags on the back of the week's bread schedule. Actually, we like to say that poems are \$5 each, and

the loaf is free.

Kevin Smith is a Turners Falls resident, tubist and therapist as well as poet.

Brett Price lives and writes in Brooklyn, NY. He recently served as the Friday Late Night Series Coordinator at the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church. His writing has been published in Brawling Pigeon, Bright Pink Mosquito, The Brooklyn Rail, and Well Greased.

Joseph Parzych is a gourmet cook of Austro-Hungarian Russian descent, living at the top of the hill in Gill.

2.14.12

sun up busted lip
 gristle turning bright
 some real time past endangered throb

high def
 strings and lamplight

handsome tikes
 chasing fireflies

around the neck
 of a little too clean
 American dream

there's smoke and tear gas
 on warmer coasts
 closing the newsprint
 distances between us

— Brett Price
 Brooklyn, NY

Connecticut River Kayak Haiku

ants crawl
 on kayak deck
 as helpless stowaways

river bank roots:
 see the tree's
 wood tributaries

Meander was
 a Greek interpreter
 of wind's water ripples

hey, goose!
 no worries-
 I'm Canadian, too

bald eagle
 peering down
 on my endangered braids

turkey wing
 snagged on tree
 flotsam flies beneath

coxswain cries
 crewboat cuts
 through the former quiet

— Jonathan Stevens
 Northampton

IAMBS FOR AN IMPOSTOR

Euterpe bore a mutant son, a glib and feckless breach,
 Who thinks himself poetic though the muses all beseech
 Euterpe to ameliorate the mess that has been made;
 The scorn of DNA, alas, is endlessly inveighed.

The bard of bullshit spews his load of verbal gonorrhea,
 Some narcissistic nonsense which insults an honest ear.
 Its tone is tepid, contents dull, anemic at the core -
 The ostentatious prating of a callous, cunning whore.

And yet, he struts to accolades from others of his ilk,
 A clique of primadonnas who disguise their sludge as silk.
 Collectively, they form a troupe of dubious renown,
 Intent to castrate Eros and create a sterile clown.

Their lyric ode to fraudulence is pretense minus art,
 Enthralling to observers who can't tell the two apart.
 Its permeative poison turns fecundity to waste -
 The metaphoric maelstrom of humanity debased.

I now conclude this chapter from a Swiftian parade,
 Where those with Lilliputian minds are garishly displayed
 As artists of sublime and meritorious degree,
 While bags of stale, insipid air are all that I can see.

— Kevin Smith
 Turners Falls

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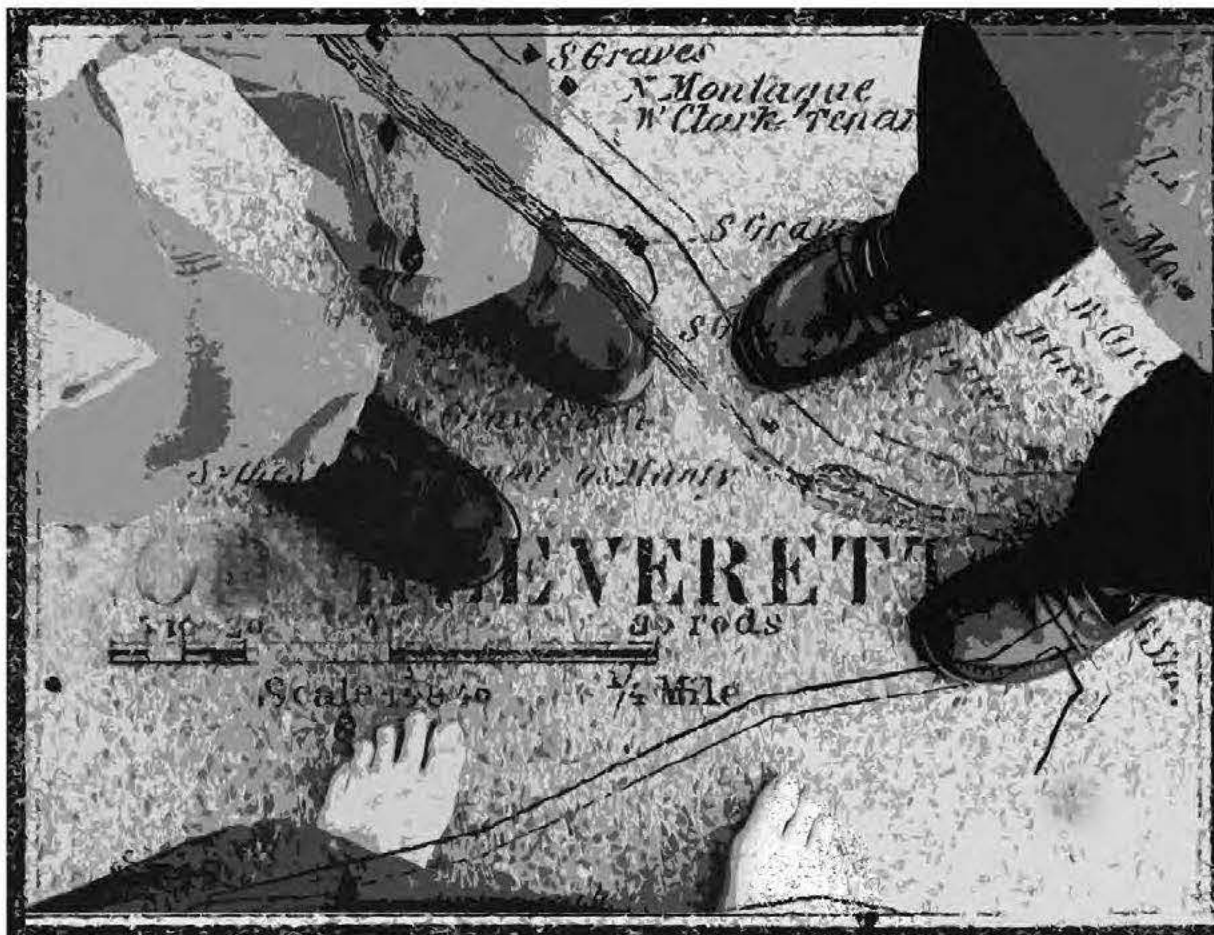
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The Creative Spirit of Leverett



BY RUTH WEST - Fall is upon us and we are looking for great grant ideas. Have an idea and want to talk it through?

The Leverett Cultural Council is looking for creative grant ideas on the theme of Who we are now: the Creative Spirit of Leverett. These could take the form of dance, music, poetry, art or theater, inside town properties or out of doors, any time during 2013.

So what do you need to do if you have a great idea? Find a venue in town to host you. Figure out your expenses and write a

short grant proposal for the Leverett Cultural Council. The grant is not due until October 15th. It's easy!

Things to think about. The Cultural Council receives about \$4000 a year, which also goes to support pass grants for cultural opportunities for elementary school students, and library programs. We fund what we can, but love to receive grants that can be partially funded elsewhere. An example would be -ticket sales at the door, a band willing to give a price break, a group art show

where we fund the advertisement and opening.

What have we funded? This year we funded Read it Leverett, a lecture series at the library, and the scrolls project on the Leverett trails. Next year we are hoping for a year of events that celebrate what makes Leverett special - all the creative people who live in our town.

Have an idea but need help? Give me a call at 367-2694 and we can talk it through. All the forms can be found at: www.mass-culture.org/Leverett.

SWELL, A First Novel by Wendell's Corwin Ericson



BY GLORIA KEGELES

Menacing prehistoric snapping turtles in the hill town of Wendell, sure. But whales? Well, yes, teeming in the fecund mind of Wendell's Corwin Ericson, a transplant from eastern Massachusetts.

A poet at heart, Ericson has recently gifted us with his first novel. *Swell* takes us on a mad adventure on the island of Bismuth off the New England coast, where visitors from ancient whaling factions renew old rivalries. Bodacious Estonian and Finlindian hunters and herders, along with their Korean money-launderers,

find advantage in alternately befriending, figuratively catching in the harpoon cross-fire, and casting a sadistic, sexually-tinged spell over our hero, Bismuthian Orange Whippey, their unwitting native "guide".

Orange's yearning for the unknown beyond the shellfish, sun-fish, six-packs and questionably-related cousins populating Bismuth, propels him into a vortex of forces of enormous proportions rivaling the immensity of the whales.

Ericson vacillates between events both ethereal and mundane throughout the novel. A Korean cookout with squid in a meat-tenderizing Bismuth marinade and a side of stench of kimchi, a sauna with two lovely sisters that evolves into a trial of survival, encounters with the goddess-like whale hunter Waldena alternately excite and terrify young Orange.

Ericson is not content to focus solely on ancient whaling traditions. Twenty-first century technology that allows inter-species communication also figures prominently in *Swell*. Anachronisms abound and chaotic equilibrium becomes a goal as the factions attempt mediation and cooperation.

Hilarious, as irreverent of political correctness and modesty as the great 1800s American whaling novel was of religion, and forever reeling us in, this whale of a fish story is a keeper. Teeming with lyrical, disarming, made-up-words prose, *Swell* is a catch not to be thrown back.

As Orange would put it, readers are left feeling not merely OK. We are *all set!*

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

TOWN OF WENDELL PLANNING BOARD

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40, Chapter 40A, Section 5 and Section 9 of M.G.L., the Wendell Planning Board will hold a public hearing on October 9, 2012 at 7:15 p.m. in the Town Office Building at 9 Morse Village Road to consider changes to the Wendell Zoning Bylaws as described herein: In Article I, Section E, add a provision for the appointment of an Associate Member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. In Article I, add Section G providing for the appointment of an Associate Member to the Planning Board. Add Article XIV SOLAR INSTALLATIONS to provide for ground mounted solar installations As-of-Right with a site plan review. In Article III. DEFINITIONS add the following definitions: As-of-Right Siting, Building Permit, Extra-Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Electric Installation, Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Electric Installation, Small-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Electric Installation, Solar Electric Installations, Site Plan Review, Site Plan Review Authority, Special Permit, Zoning Enforcement Authority. Article VI, Section F add to Residential Uses, Small Scale Ground Mounted Solar Electric Installations - Y, add to Industrial uses, Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Electric Installations Site - PB, Extra-Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Electric Installations - Site PB. In addition, we will be presenting a new fee schedule.

On or before September 24, 2012, the proposed text of the Bylaw changes under consideration will be posted outside the Town Offices for review and will be available on the Planning Board door and at the Town Library during their regular business hours. A copy will also be available on the Planning Board page of the town website at <http://www.wendellmass.us>.

Nancy Riebschlaeger
Chair, Wendell Planning Board

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Assaults & Larcenies

Tuesday, 9/18
2:26 p.m. Burglary report taken, [redacted] Avenue A in Turners Falls.
4:16 p.m. Larceny reported at [redacted] Chestnut Street in Turners Falls.
5:01 p.m. [redacted], arrested on warrant at [redacted] Third Street in Turners Falls.

Wednesday, 9/19
1:21 a.m. Burglar alarm reported and investigated at Thomas Memorial Country Club in Turners Falls.
1:22 p.m. Larceny reported at [redacted] Avenue C in Turners Falls.
1:30 p.m. Larceny reported at [redacted] Fourth Street in Turners Falls.

Thursday, 9/20
3:20 p.m. Breaking and entering a vehicle reported at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls.
8:57 p.m. [redacted], arrested near [redacted] Third St, Turners Falls. Charges include operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Friday, 9/21
8:22 a.m. Burglar alarm reported at [redacted] Migratory Way in Turners Falls.
11:20 a.m. Larceny reported at [redacted] Turnpike Road, Turners Falls.
1:44 p.m. Assault reported and investigated near [redacted] M Street, Turners Falls.

Saturday, 9/22
12:41 a.m. Burglary investigated at [redacted] Randall

Wood Drive, Montague.
1:23 p.m. Burglar alarm investigated at Thomas Memorial Country Club, Turners Falls.

Sunday, 9/23
5:40 a.m. Burglar alarm investigated at Route 63 Roudhouse, Millers Falls.
6:02 a.m. Burglary reported and investigated at Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club.

Monday, 9/24
10:12 a.m. Vandalism reported at [redacted] Fourth Street, Turners Falls.
2:11 p.m. [redacted], arrested on warrant at his home.

Tuesday, 9/25
11:03 a.m. Burglary reported at [redacted] G Street, Turners Falls.

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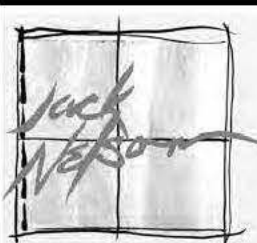
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Village Sketchbook

Journey to Rome

BY DAVID BRULE

ERVINGSIDE - In a few weeks' time, two women from our neighborhood here in the Erving side section of Millers Falls will set out on a very long journey that will lead them to Rome.

They will travel there with lightness in their steps and joy in their hearts, for these two women, members of the Mohawk nation, will be part of a ceremony that will close the circle of a story that began more than 325 years ago with Kateri Teakakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks.

Anna Jarvis and her daughter Roberta Allen will go to Rome also with the name of Josephine Warisose Angus, Anna's mother in their thoughts.

Soon, in Rome, on October 21st, 2012 Kateri Teakakwitha will become Saint Kateri, in the Roman Catholic ceremony of canonization to be performed by Pope Benedict XVI. This ceremony will mark the final step that leads to sainthood. Josephine Angus was present to meet Pope John Paul II when the next to the last step, beatification, was performed in 1980.

The story of Kateri Teakakwitha began in 1656 when she was born in the heart of Mohawk lands in northern New York. This was a time of great unrest and shifting alliances in the New World as Indian nations and European colonizing forces met in a clash of cultures, religions, and warfare. French, English and Dutch competition created new conditions that challenged traditional tribal existence. The repercussions of growing conflict were felt throughout New England right into our own region, as warfare reached to Pocumtuck, now called Deerfield, and Peskeompskut, now called Turners Falls.

European rivals and enemies were all fighting here in an extension of their age-old rivalries on the continent of Europe.

Religion played an important part in the power struggles. The Mohawks became strong allies of the English, who were Protestant, and other tribes such as the Abenaki and Huron, who counted Mohawks as their traditional enemies, lined up with the French who were Catholic.

Caught up in the middle of this was Kateri. She was a Mohawk, one of the six Iroquois nations who sided with the English, for the most part. Many in these tribes had not converted to European religions, and held strong to their traditional beliefs and creation creed. But each religion, through their preachers and missionaries, found ways to convert tribal people to one religion or the other. Kateri, as a young girl, was strongly drawn to Catholic beliefs,

possibly through her mother, who was a Catholic convert from the Huron regions around the St. Francis Mission at Kanawake and Trois Rivières.

European diseases were ravaging the native populations during those times, with many members of her family being carried away by smallpox. Kateri herself was afflicted by the disease, but she survived, although the pox left her scarred for life. She became deeply religious, scorned by her father and shunned by tribal members who followed traditional tribal beliefs, but she remained steadfastly Catholic and spent the rest of her short life at the mission, in deep prayer and piety.

When she died at 24, the Jesuits who interred her wrote that in death "her body glowed" and the smallpox scars disappeared. Thus the fame of Kateri began to grow.

She became a figure to whom thousands prayed for relief from disease-caused afflictions, and even in 2006, a young boy of tribal origin was cured of a fatal skin disease through the prayers of thousands who sought Kateri's intercession. The church investigated this occurrence, and determined it was the miracle that could lead to sainthood for Kateri.

We spoke of all this, just last week, sitting on the sunny deck of the house where Anna and Roberta reside with their families. The heavy windstorm and rain from the night before had passed, leaving branches and leaf litter strewn about in the street. Still, a friendly chickadee came and went, just over our heads, getting her sunflower seeds as if nothing had happened.

Anna spoke with pride of the honor and respect given to her by the Mohawk elders. Even though she has not resided on the reserve for many a year, being one of the oldest members of the tribe, she was asked to take part in the journey, with her daughter.

She spoke quietly of a world few of us have heard of. Born on the reserve at Akwasasne, her first language is Mohawk. She of course learned English as she grew up, as well as French when she attended school in Montréal. She tells of how she was sent to a residential school by the authorities who made her parents feel it was the best way for her to get ahead. There, with the other Mohawk children, she was forbidden to speak her own language, and was punished when caught!

Anna added, with mischief in her eyes: "But we used to sneak away sometimes and talk Mohawk when the teachers couldn't hear us!"

Anna's mother, Josephine, started the Kateri Circle on the reserve,



Anna Jarvis and Roberta Allen with Kateri

and represented her Circle, and her people, in Rome in 1980. Anna's sister continues to teach Mohawk and the traditional ways at the Freedom School at Akwasasne.

Her daughter Roberta added, "Although my mother still has her fluency, I don't speak much of the language, a word here and there, but I can understand a lot of what the speakers are saying."

When her extended family came to this past Saturday's fundraiser at

the Roadhouse in Millers Falls, Roberta said they were all speaking Mohawk. She added she understood most of their talk, but would like to learn the language for herself and for her children, to help preserve it, as her aunt Elvira Sargent is doing at the Freedom School.

As the day of departure approaches, their excitement grows.

"I've got so many people who want to sneak into my suitcase! I tell them there's no room, because my

sister is already there!" laughed Roberta.

They will leave for the reserve on October 17th, where the Homemaker Club, run by the tribal elders, will honor them with a send-off dinner. The next day they will join a growing stream of tribal people, as well as non-Native Americans from all over the US, who will journey to Rome for the canonization ceremony. There are more than 6000 members of the Mohawk nation living in several centers of the sprawling reserve in places such as Kanawake and Akwasasne, but Anna and Roberta will be among the chosen few.

You can be sure that there will be a third person, Josephine Warisose Angus, in the small family group, who although in the spirit world now, will be right there with Anna and Roberta too.

"I'll be wearing my grandmother Josephine's ribbon dress and the shawl I made her, to the ceremony. The one she wore to Rome in 1980," said Roberta. "We are completing her journey, and the journey of Kateri. We are closing the circle."

If you wish to help Anna and Roberta complete their journey, please call 413-824-8811.

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