



HIKE TO HERMIT'S CASTLE

John Smith's Olde Hideaway

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CRACK OF THE BAT

Millers Falls Memories

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 16, 2009

Public Hearing on Budget, April 22nd

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE – On Wednesday, April 22nd, at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room of the town hall, the finance committee and selectboard will hold a joint public hearing on the fiscal '10 operating budget.

Finance committee chair John Hanold said the focus of the hearing will be on the town side of the budget, "to inform the public about what the town of Montague's revenue expectations are in a year of difficult economic circumstances, and what the recommended spending level is for town services."

Hanold said his committee and the selectboard have yet to agree on recommended spending levels. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the projected worst-case scenario on state aid for Montague this year may in fact get a lot worse if the House Ways and Means budget released on Wednesday becomes final. And there is still a possibility that Governor Patrick may cut more out of local aid in the present fiscal year to close a gap in the state budget that may range as high as \$400 million.

With all these uncertainties, see **BUDGET** pg 10

The Warrant's Out

BY RHYS HATCH

GILL – The Gill selectboard met Monday afternoon to review the warrant for the upcoming annual town meeting, which will open on May 4th to deal with non-monetary articles. Budget items will be dealt with at a continuation of the meeting on June 15th. A pre-town meeting will be held at the town hall on April 27th, at 7:00 p.m.

A number of the articles are unlikely to provoke much discussion. "Two or more Field Drivers; Fence Viewers; Measurers of Wood, Bark and Surveyors of Lumber," will hopefully be nominated and elected without difficulty. And it might be tough to argue with the reasoned wording of Article 10, brought forward by the planning board, which proposes changing the definition of 'restaurant' in the town of Gill's zoning bylaws to read, "Restaurant: An establishment at which the principal activity is the preparation and retail sale of food or beverage." This change in definition would see **WARRANT** pg 13



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MULLER

Phase II of the town of Montague's sidewalk replacement project, begun last fall on Unity Street, continues now in several parts of town, including Center Street, pictured above with the Congregational Church at the corner of North Street.

Sidewalks on Union Street, Chester Street, and 2nd Street are also being repaved. The contractor is Caracas Construction, out of Ludlow. The work is being paid from a \$250,000 bond approved by town meeting three years ago.

Parzych Returns to Riverside School



Joe Parzych returned to the same classroom where he attended 8th grade in the Riverside School – his teacher's name was Miss Rule – to teach a lesson in local history and storytelling to the students of the Four Winds School.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GILL – The author of *Jep's Place* finally showed up at the Four Winds School on Tuesday to answer students' questions about local lore, and to offer a few pointers from a master memoirist and journalist. He sat in a circle of respectful middle school youth like Socrates surrounded by his students, and engaged them in dialogue.

Socrates may have held forth from a marble porch instead of an overstuffed sofa, but the effect was similar.

Joe Parzych was scheduled to show up at the Four Winds School to lecture on ancient history on January 15th, but he got sidetracked by an unexpected trip

to Baystate Medical in Springfield for sextuple bypass surgery that same day, after waking up early in the morning with a pain like chilblains in his hands, and it took him almost three months to reschedule the appointment.

The middle schoolers didn't seem to mind. They'd used the intervening time to read *Jep's Place* cover to cover, taking extensive notes, and had begun working on stories of their own on imaginative themes of American history, young romance, and their own childhoods.

Parzych complimented some of their plot ideas, and suggested they toss in a little conflict if they

wanted to earn a hefty publisher's advance.

"If you want to make a story interesting, you have to have some sort of complications," said Parzych, who seemed slimmer, and just a tad more restrained than before his recent stay in hospital. "You can't just say, 'I went to the store and bought some groceries and came home, The End.' You have to say, 'A dog chased me,' or 'I didn't have enough money to pay the cashier.'"

Parzych, who had black panthers follow him home from Greenfield and never more than five cents to rub together when he was growing up at *Jep's Place*, knows all about complications. see **PARZYCH** pg 7

County Planner Urges Caution on Gas Station Proposal

BY DAVID DETMOLD

ERVING – Of the 26 towns in Franklin County, 11 have groundwater protection zones, Peggy Sloan, planning director for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, told an overflow crowd at a hearing before the Erving planning board on Monday night. Of those eleven towns, ten prohibit gas stations within their groundwater protection zones.

The hearing was called in response to two petitioned articles brought forward by Ralph and Eric Semb, co-owners of the French King Entertainment Center on Route 2 and an abutting lot across Semb Drive that was the former location of the Countree Living Restaurant. The articles seek to alter Erving's bylaws, adopted in 2005, to allow for a drive-through fast food restaurant and gas station to be built at the Countree Living site. The lot is within the protection zone of the town's aquifer.

Sloan said the one locality in Franklin County where a gas station could in theory be constructed in a groundwater protection see **PLANNER** pg 8

New Superintendent for Gill - Montague

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE

Chair Mary Kociela opened the school committee meeting on April 14th with the news that Carl Ladd has officially accepted the position of superintendent of the Gill-Montague Regional School District, pending completion of contract negotiations.

Ladd was expected to meet for a required discussion with Commissioner of Education Mitchell Chester in Boston on Wednesday. Kociela said the committee hoped to complete negotiations in time for a full school committee vote to confirm him at the April 28th meeting.

Kociela then turned to interim superintendent Ken Rocke and reflected on his impending departure from the district at the end of the school year. She said, "It's really been an honor working with you." She said Ladd was looking forward to working with Rocke to insure a smooth transition.

Rocke said, "I think he's a tremendous fit for the district." In talking about the budget for see **NEW SUPER** pg 12

PET OF THE WEEK
Chic & Petite



Francesca

Hi, I'm Francesca. I'm a one-year-old short hair cat in need of a good home. I'm a sleek, black and beautiful gal, playful and very affectionate. I love people. But trust me, I do not want to live with other animals. I need to be the only furry person in your life. And I will reward you with the greatest purrs, the best pounces, and the most loving cozy naps. For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email:lev-erett@dphvs.org.

Turners Falls Sports Booster Club's
5th Annual Fundraiser presents
A Comedy ESP/Hypnosis Show
Saturday, April 18th
at the French King Entertainment Center
Dinner at 6 p.m., Show at 9 p.m.
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Postmaster: Send address changes to
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MONTAGUE CENTER LIBRARY NEWS

Montague Center Children's Book



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

Martha Daniels presented the Montague Center Library with a copy of her first book, *Inky and the Red Hat*, a true children's story set in Montague Center, on Monday, April 13th.

BY LINDA HICKMAN
MONTAGUE CENTER – Martha Daniels spent the first 25 years of her life in Montague Center, and it shaped her in many ways. She developed a strong love of nature, and part of this

was through a friendship with a crow named "Inky."

Forty-five years later, she has written and published the true story of this unique friendship, "Inky and the Red Hat."

On Monday, April 13th, she donated a copy of the picture book to the Montague Center Library. She also donated a copy to the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls. After they are processed, they will be available for borrowing. The water-based illustrations by Christy Patrick of Easthampton show many familiar Montague Center landmarks, including the Library and the Montague Center School. The illustrations are delightful. The artist based the pictures on photographs provided by the author.

Proceeds from the book's sales will go to the Montague Center Historical Society renovation project at the Montague Grange. Paperback copies of the books are on sale at World Eye Books in Greenfield, and at Broadside Books in Northampton.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Under Our Skin

On Tuesday, April 21st at 7 p.m. the Wendell Free Library will screen *Under Our Skin*, the 2008 documentary by Open Eye Pictures, in the library's new high-definition 'theater'. The documentary, which focuses on the science and politics of Lyme disease, will be followed by a discussion led by local naturopathic physician Emily Maiella.

Under Our Skin presents a dramatic tale of microbes, medicine and money. The film investigates the untold story of Lyme disease, an emerging epidemic, and the insurance industry's efforts to keep long-term Lyme disease from being recognized. It

looks not only at the science and politics of the disease but also at personal stories of those whose lives have been affected. From a few brave doctors who risk their licenses, to patients who once led active lives but now can barely walk, the film uncovers a hidden world that will astound viewers. As suspenseful as any Hollywood thriller, *Under Our Skin* has won countless awards on the independent film circuit.

The documentary will be viewed in the "Wendell Library Cinema," with its large screen and high-quality projection and sound. For more information, call 978-544-3559.

Earth Day Clean Up

GREAT FALLS - Volunteers will meet at 10 a.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Saturday, April 25th, to clean up a number of parks and open spaces around downtown Turners Falls, in honor of Earth Day. With backing from the Commonwealth

Corporation, the ACT Volunteer Center in Greenfield is organizing local volunteers to help clean up the grounds of the Discovery Center, Unity Park, the Brick House, the 3-D Sculpture Park, the community gardens on 3rd and L and 4th and L,

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – April 20th to April 24th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities. Council on Aging Director is Bunny Caldwell. Congregate meals are served on Tuesday through Friday. For information or to make reservations, call 863-9357 or 863-4500. Meal reservations need to be made a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

Monday, 20th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:00 p.m. Pot Luck Lunch followed by Bingo
Tuesday, 21th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
1:00 p.m. Canasta

Wednesday, 22nd
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 23rd
9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Health Fair at the Discovery Center
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 24th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Scrabble

WENDELL Senior Center is located at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Kathy Swaim at (978) 544-2020 for hours and upcoming programs.

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For



Montague Police Chief Ray Zukowski and Detective Dong Brown were Guest Chefs at Winslow Wentworth congregating bousing in Turners Falls on April 14th, serving lunch to seniors there. If you'd like to guest chef, call Margo Townley, House Manager, at 413-773-5555, Ext. 282 or email info@fchcc.org. Read more at www.fchcc.org.

Turners Falls Fire District Annual Meeting

On Tuesday, April 21st, at 7:00 p.m., the Turners Falls Fire District will hold its annual meeting at the Hillcrest School auditorium, at 30 Griswold Street. All district residents of Millers Falls, Montague City, and Turners Falls are invited to attend and eligible to vote on the district operating budget – proposed for \$1,563,399 from taxation, and \$516,150 from water fees – and special articles.

Among the articles on the warrant is one to replace an underground storage tank at the Turners Falls fire station with a smaller aboveground tank, for \$7,000; an article for \$2,000 of renovations at the fire station; an article to replace the variable frequency drive at the

Tolan Well #2 for \$40,000; an article to set aside \$100,000 in stabilization for the eventual purchase of a new fire engine; another to spend \$250,000 for the construction and testing of a new well at Hannegan Brook; and another for \$6,666 to pay separation pay for unused sick leave to a retiring fire fighter.

The following week, on Tuesday, April 28th, elections for prudential committee and water commissioners will take place at the water district office, at 226 Millers Falls Road.

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

- Grade 6**
Ian MacPhail
- Grade 7**
Danielle Loynd
- Grade 8**
Nate Cross
Kelli Dubay

Benefit for the Erving Senior Center
SPAGHETTI SUPPER
April 24th, 5 & 6 p.m.
Menu: Salad, pasta with choice of sauce, garlic bread and ice cream
Tickets: \$7, children under 12 \$4
For reservations call Polly at 413-423-3308

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Peskeomskut Park, and perhaps, if enough community members turn out, Cabot Woods. Volunteers are also welcome to help Sebastian Gutwein with his Woven River art pathways project on the pedestrian walkway from 7th Street to High Street. For more information, call Kate Allen at 774-7054 extension 106.

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Townwide Cleanup and Earth Day Festivities

BY MARIANNE SUNDELL WENDELL – The Wendell Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 25th will include a variety of opportunities for Wendell residents to help with the stewardship of town properties and to join in mid-day festivities on the town common and in town hall.

Activities on the common from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. will include local and regional groups focusing on environmental stewardship and sustainable living, local farmers, artists, and herbalists. There will be a community potluck at noon, and Kellianna will perform songs and chants to honor the Earth in all of her glory. In case of rain, the celebration will take place in town hall.

From 9 a.m. to noon, volunteers will gather roadside litter throughout town at the annual

town-wide cleanup, meeting at the town highway garage at 9 a.m.

Residents are welcome to start picking up and bagging litter for collection along well-traveled roads in advance of the 25th. To ensure pickup of these, please notify Annie Diemand at (978) 544-6111.

The community garden will be having the first work day for the 2009 growing season on the 25th, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the garden, behind the town office building. The tasks for the workday include mulching paths, removing invasive plants (such as buckthorn and multiflora rose), collecting and shredding hardwood leaves, and reworking the compost bins. Everyone is invited to walk over to the garden and take a tour. Please contact Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 with any ques-

tions. In the afternoon there will be a work party at the Fiske Pond conservation area to clean up winter storm damage, starting at 2 p.m. Please bring clippers and bow saws. The rain date for this work party is Sunday, April 26th.

A variety of organizations, including the Wendell open space and recreation planning committee, the Wendell sustainability group, the Millers River Watershed Council, the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, and the community garden, will participate in the festivities on the common, along with local vendors. Organizations and vendors promoting environmental stewardship and sustainable living who wish to set up at this event can contact Jeny at armygreenjeny@hotmail.com, or Marianne at (978) 544-8981, for more information.



Jessica Harmon Illustration

WASTE NOT Backyard Compost Bins Available

plastic, with a twist-on lid, the bin stakes to the ground and is easy to assemble, rodent-resistant, and designed for good aeration. The Earth Machine is available at these four locations: Colrain Transfer Station, Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Wendell Transfer Station, Tuesdays, Noon to 6 p.m., Saturdays, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Orange Transfer Station, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.; and the district office, 50 Miles Street, Greenfield (hours vary; call 772-2438).

The district office also carries kitchen collectors, plastic buckets with swinging handles and lids that snap shut. They hold approximately one gallon of food scraps, and can be placed on a counter or under the kitchen sink. The buckets offer a handy way to collect scraps and tote them out to your compost bin. The kitchen collectors are sold for \$4. In addition, the district office sells blue recycling bins for \$6.

For more information on composting or waste management

programs, call the Solid Waste District at (413) 772-2438, email info@franklincountywastedistrict.org, or visit the district website at www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.

Amy Donovan is the program director for the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District.

Correction

Carried away by his own rhetoric, the reporter of last week's story on "Jewish Culture in New England" (MR VII #27) used the phrase "burned the Salem 'witches,'" in the context of a lengthier description of Puritan intolerance.

As any good student of Colonial history could tell you, the nineteen men and women convicted and put to death on the charge of witchcraft in and around Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692 and 1693, were hanged, not burned. One of the other men so accused was crushed by stones.

We regret the error.

The Sheffield Welcome! Interactive Open House for Incoming 1st Graders and their Parents

An informal opportunity for incoming students and parents to meet the 1st grade teachers, explore the 1st grade classrooms, view 1st grade curriculum materials and enjoy simple "make & take" projects.

**Thursday, April 30th, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
at Sheffield School, 43 Crocker Avenue,
Turners Falls**

No appointment necessary, we hope you'll stop by.

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3PM - Traces of the Trade, a moving documentary in which director Katrina Brown and nine other family members make a remarkable journey which confronts them with the history of their Rhode Island ancestors, the most powerful slave trading family in United States history. We are fortunate to have one of the members of the trip, Holly Fulton, as a discussion leader for the film.

5:30 - 6:30PM - Supper - A nourishing meal of local foods will be available on a sliding scale fee basis of \$4 - \$10 with thanks from Kelly and Christine Bates

6:30PM - The Great Debaters, a powerful, inspiring drama which is based on the true story of Melvin B. Tolson, a Professor at Wiley College (a historically black college in Texas) in 1935.

Each film will be followed by discussion facilitators.

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"The Voice of the Villages"
Circulation

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Founded by
Harry Brandt David Detmold
Arthur Evans August, 2002

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A Prudent Budget for Our Schools

BY KEN ROCKE

GILL-MONTAGUE – The Gill Montague Regional School District has passed a preliminary operating budget for fiscal year 2010 of \$16,792,134, just a 1% increase over the FY '09 budget.

This is the lowest proposed percent increase in a district budget in the last six years. This 1% budget is less than the inflation rate, less than Proposition 2½ limits, and calls for a much smaller percentage of new town revenues than recent budgets have.

We have been able to achieve this budget through the combined efforts of administration, staff and school committee. Working together in a positive way over the past two years, we have joined the GIC insurance plan, consolidated elementary schools, and completely remodeled our Special Education programs. In each case, we have been able to improve educational services while limiting cost increases.

At this point our 1% budget has been achieved with no significant cuts in essential services or programs for students. On the administrative side, we are reducing our management team at Hillcrest School by a .6 full time equivalent, and reducing secretarial support there as well. We are recommending reducing our district facilities manager position from full-time to half-time, and will continue to explore similar cost-saving measures.

We are continuing to look ahead, to save additional tax dollars. We are collaborating with eight other Franklin County districts to enter a joint bid for school transportation. We are actively researching joining the Hampshire Educational Collaborative to save costs on special education, teacher training and English Language Learner services.

We have built what we believe to be a sustainable budget for the district for the coming and future years. Health insurance rate increases are within the inflation rate, as are staff salaries; spiraling special education costs have been

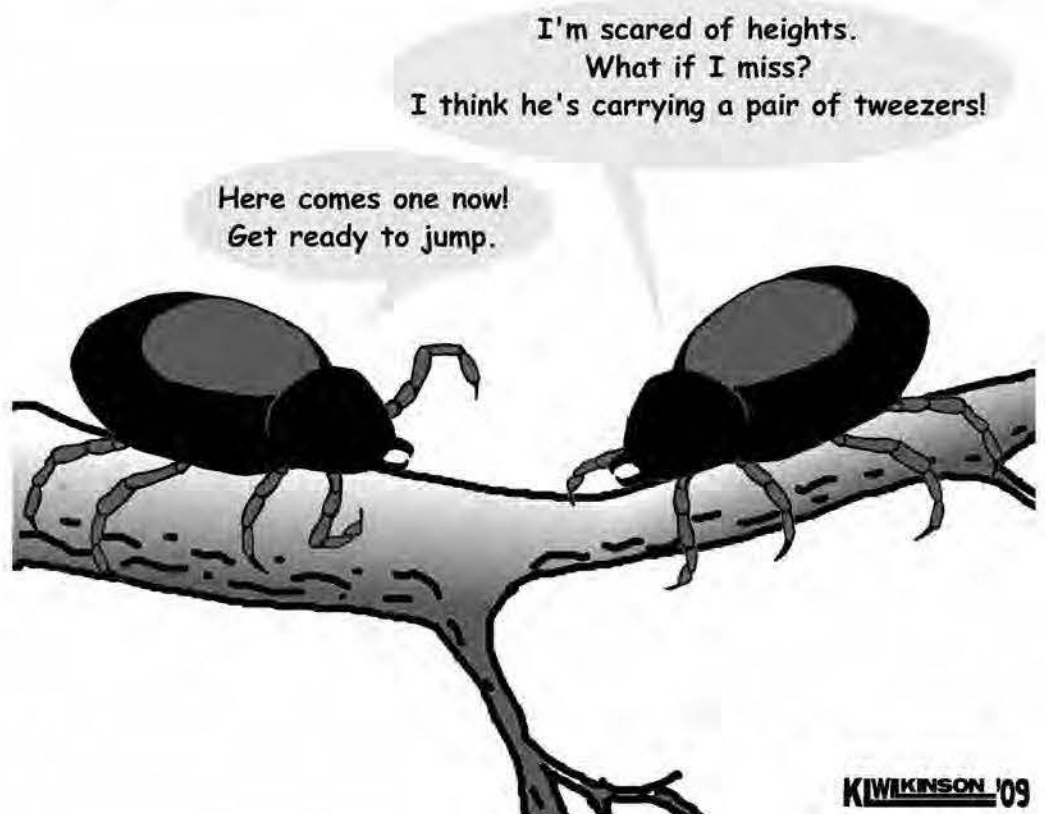
brought under control by bringing students and programs back into our schools.

We have also been able to build up district reserves. In order to limit assessment increases to our member towns, \$492,642 of excess and deficiency reserves have been applied to the FY '10 budget. Although this will deplete those reserves for the time being, we are anticipating that a rebate of approximately \$402,000 from our former health insurance group, combined with an estimated end-of-year balance of about \$300,000, will replenish our excess and deficiency account as we head towards FY '11.

We are planning to use our excess and deficiency funds and federal American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (stimulus) funds as both the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Obama administration have advised us to: first, to get through the present fiscal crisis without eliminating jobs, cutting programs, or reducing educational services; second, to use ARRA funds to build capacity for educational improvement and innovation.

Thus the gains from joining GIC, consolidating elementary schools, reducing administrative costs, and remodeling special education programs have bought us a window of opportunity – a two- or three-year period during which we can work to continue to find additional cost savings, continue to innovate and improve education at every level, and work to reduce our drop-out rate and choice-out rate.

Regional educational collaboration seems to provide the most promising avenue for achieving positive educational change linked with savings in operational cost. The recent report from the New England School Development Council may be off on some numbers, but it does clearly indicate there are gains to be made on the administrative side from school districts working together in a positive spirit to share personnel and programs.



Nervous Tick

KIWIKINSON '09

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Eggstravagant Thanks

The Montague Parks and Recreation Department, and Parks and Recreation Commission, would like to thank the well over 200 children and parents from throughout Franklin County who attended our annual Peter Cottontail's

EGGstravaganza, on Saturday, April 11th at Unity Park in Turners Falls. Children were given the enviable task of finding

well over 5,000 toy and candy-filled eggs placed throughout the park, in addition to participating in egg decorating, face painting, and pictures with Peter Cottontail.

The EGGstravaganza would not have been possible without generous support from Hillside Plastics, the Montague Elks, the Franklin County Rotary Club, Greenfield Savings Bank,

Sirum's Equipment Company, Equi's Candy Store, and Boy Scout Troop #6.

We would also like to make a special thanks to Peter Cottontail for setting aside time from his busy schedule to be present during the festivities.

– **Jon Dobosz, Director**
Montague Parks and Recreation

Does Turners Need a New Fire Truck?

The annual meeting of the Turners Falls Fire District will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21st, in the Hillcrest School auditorium on Griswold Street. Residents of Millers Falls, Turners Falls and Montague City are eligible to vote on budget items and special articles for the fiscal year that begins July 1st.

Don't let a handful of people determine what you pay on your tax bill. This past year taxes increased by 16% in the district. This was clearly unacceptable in view of the current economic climate. At the last annual district meeting, 80% of those in attendance were either district employees, officials of the district, or their relatives. There clearly is a vested interest here.

For the coming fiscal year, budgets were presented to the dis-

In short, our Preliminary FY '10 budget maintains our valuable educational programs and services to students, reduces administrative costs, lowers the burden on our towns, and is prudent, conservative and responsible. We hope you will look closely at what we have done, and measure our budget against the very real gains we have achieved.

Ken Rocke is the interim superintendent for the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

trict's finance committee for general government, fire department, and water department. The budget increases proposed were for 5.7%, 7.1%, and 1.2% respectively. The finance committee, of which I am a member, has recommended changes to 2.9%, 0.7%, and -1% respectively.

The prudential committee had recommended that \$100,000 be set aside in the stabilization fund for a replacement fire truck. The finance committee opposes this outlay; there has been no clear discussion of the justification for the need for a replacement fire truck, nor firm figures given for the repair of the existing vehicle.

Free cash has been certified at \$340,051. This is a low number in view of past free cash levels. It is also not a great deal of money to handle a substantial emergency such as a large water main break or a pump station problem. It is not prudent to reduce this amount significantly for discretionary spending.

One of the reasons given for the 16% tax increase this past year was for the installation of a geothermal heating and cooling

system at the fire station. Originally, a 20-year payback term was mentioned. After a request for additional funds was appropriated, the payback term was labeled as "somewhat more" than the 20 years originally mentioned. The system has been in service since last fall. Fuel oil consumption has decreased as promised. However, electric consumption has increased significantly when compared to a similar earlier four month term. The "somewhat more" than 20 year payback may be significantly more.

I urge district taxpayers to attend the April 21st meeting and ask questions. Municipalities and the private sector are cutting costs. Social Security payments are projected to be flat for the next three years. The taxpayer in the Turners Falls Fire District should expect similar constraints.

– **Joseph Janikas**
Turners Falls

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American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 4/15/09

US FORCES
Casualties in Iraq
as of this date
4273

 Afghanistan 677
Wounded in Action 31169

SOURCE: US MILITARY

GUEST EDITORIAL

Politics of Lyme Disease

BY DR. EMILY MAIELLA WENDELL – Spring is finally here. We can emerge from our houses, go out for hikes, take walks, stroll around the woods, and hopefully avoid getting bitten by a deer tick. Deer ticks, *Ixodes scapularis*, have taken up residence here in Western Massachusetts, as well as everywhere else in the country. Many deer ticks now carry Lyme disease, as well as other bacterial infections that may cause harm to human health.

Lyme disease, and especially the notion of “chronic Lyme disease,” is an area of contention between many doctors. This debate is driven by a number of issues, namely science, politics and the insurance industry. It is a very heated and emotional topic for people, especially those who are struggling with their health, and suspicious that Lyme disease is the causative agent of their illness.

This disease is becoming known as the “Great Imitator,” mimicking many diseases such as multiple sclerosis, ALS, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and other non-specific musculoskeletal and neurological diseases. Lyme disease is caused by the spirochete (spiral-shaped bacteria) *borrelia burgdorferi*, which is similar to the syphilis organism.

Over the past decade, two opposing camps have emerged in the battle over this tick-borne illness. One camp is represented by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), led by a group of academic researchers. This group maintains that Lyme disease is ‘hard to catch and easy to cure,’ because the infection is rare, easily diagnosed, and treated with two to four weeks of antibiotics.

This group claims that chronic Lyme disease is rare or nonexistent. This group of researchers has written the guidelines that most physicians refer to when treating Lyme disease. But, here’s the catch: the IDSA guidelines’

authors have significant conflicts of interest which may have biased their treatment and diagnostic recommendations. These conflicts include commercial interests in tick-borne disease tests and vaccines, and supplemental streams of income from insurance companies that profit from a restrictive definition of Lyme disease.

The opposing camp is represented by the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS), led by a group of practicing physicians. Its members argue that Lyme disease is not rare, tick bites often go unnoticed, and commercial laboratory testing for Lyme disease is often inaccurate. Consequently, the disease may go unrecognized and may persist in a large number of patients, requiring prolonged antibiotic therapy to eradicate persistent infection.

An investigation into the IDSA guidelines began in 2006. This investigation was spurred by a grassroots initiative, urging Connecticut attorney general Richard Blumenthal to look into the motives behind the guidelines. The examination is ongoing. Meanwhile thousands of people will fail to be diagnosed and treated properly under the current guidelines.

While Lyme disease is increasing in every state, the CDC readily admits that under-reporting is a major issue, due to two reasons: inaccurate testing resulting in misdiagnosis, and failure to report positive diagnoses by physicians and laboratories.

An accurate diagnosis of Lyme is made from physician observation and patient history. To quote from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), “Lyme disease is diagnosed on the basis of physician-observed clinical manifestations and a history of probable exposure to infected ticks. Laboratory tests are neither suggested nor required to confirm diagnosis for patients with recent

onset (2 - 3 weeks) of a characteristic Erythema Migrans (EM) rash. However, positive results of recommended two-tiered serologic [blood] testing can provide confirmation of infection in patients with musculo-skeletal, neurologic, or cardiac symptoms.”

To summarize, the CDC emphasizes you should not rely on blood testing to confirm or deny the diagnosis of Lyme disease. Lyme disease is a clinical diagnosis, based on patient history, sign and symptoms.

Some of the most common sign and symptoms of an acute infection with Lyme disease include the following: headache, muscle aches and pain, heart palpitations, stiff neck, joint pain (usually one-sided and in a large joint like a knee or hip), and a bulls-eye rash (though less than 50% of people with Lyme disease ever get the rash). However, the list is much longer, and often overlaps with the symptoms one might expect from a cold or flu. This is where the tragic problem of chronic Lyme disease begins, when the infection is overlooked and dismissed.

The key to successfully treating Lyme disease is immediate treatment. Remember that traditional testing for Lyme is very poor, with many false negatives. Negative blood tests, such as the ELISA and Western blot, do not rule out the disease. If you have had a tick bite, with or without the typical bulls-eye rash, you should immediately seek the advice of a Lyme-literate physician, as you could have Lyme disease.

What to do if you discover a tick on you:

1. Pull it off swiftly and gently. Use tweezers or “tick spoons” preferably. Do not light it on fire. Apply Vaseline or any other topical agents to the tick while it is attached to your skin.

2. Save it, especially if you have identified it as a female deer tick. After a tick is engaged with

blood, it can be more difficult to identify by the unaided eye.

3. Place the tick in a zip lock bag and send to UMass for testing. The cost for the test is \$40, but it is a very reliable test, and will confirm if the tick is carrying Lyme disease. (Tests for other tick borne co-infections are now also available.) The website is www.umass.edu/richlab/

4. Consult a Lyme-literate physician for treatment if the tick returns positive for Lyme disease or if you are experiencing symptoms of Lyme disease.

5. Visit your physician 4 to 6 weeks after the tick bite for testing, as this is the window in which you have the greatest chance of having accurate test results.

Have faith, not fear. Educate and empower yourself, and never let a tick keep you from loving nature.

Emily Maiella is a naturopathic physician practicing with Montague Integrative Health. She will lead a discussion on Lyme disease following a showing of the documentary Under Our Skin at the Wendell Free Library on Tuesday, April 21st, at 7:00 p.m.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

The Chop is the Heartbeat of My Alma Mater

Winston Churchill once said, "A love for tradition has never weakened a nation, indeed it has strengthened nations in their time of peril."

My mother was a student at the Turners Falls High School in the early 1980s. She spent her four years there on the tennis team, taking the stats for the football team, and most prominently, banging out those four controversial notes on her drum at each parade, every rally, and all those football and basketball games as a Turners Falls Marching Indian.

As a TFHS graduate myself, I can say with certainty the most memorable moment from my high school career came at the Turkey Day Rally my senior year.

As a senior cheerleader, I was

first to escort one of the senior football captains to his place on the gymnasium floor. As the football team and the cheerleading squad waited in the hallway, outside the gym doors, I recall the nervous butterflies in my stomach and the rose my football player placed in my hands. I was saddened knowing this would be my last rally; so were the rest of the seniors in the corridor. Everything seemed so final. Everyone in the hallway seemed a little quiet.

It wasn't until "The Chop" started playing as our cue to enter the gym that I was suddenly overcome by an incredible rush of adrenalin. My nostalgia faded away and I never felt more school pride than I did at that moment or more privileged to be

a Turners Falls Indian. I turned and looked at my squad and the football team for a brief second before entering the gym, and I saw their smiles, heard their cheers, and felt unified by that energy. I remember what a gift just hearing the rhythm of "The Chop" gave us all at that moment.

It breaks my heart that this year's seniors will never know that feeling, and my little sister, a freshman, band member, and cheerleader, may also be robbed of feeling that spirit and knowing that passion that filled the air on Thanksgiving Eve in the form of four traditional drum beats.

Now before anyone gets bent out of shape, questions my motives, or assumes I am a biased European, I will inform them that I am a Canadian, Irish, Gypsy, and Cherokee. Totally and utterly set up to fail in the area of nationality stigmas, and

trust me, I have heard them all: Canuck, Drunkard... you name it. But the fact is, I take pride in who I am, and accept that assumptions will be made regardless.

I can also say that censoring a majority is not the way to solve any problem. That line is not only very fine, but hazy and skewed with jagged edges: where does it start and where does it end, and what the heck is in the middle? Taking a song away from a bunch of adolescents from a tiny school, in a small village, within a town that no one has ever heard of, will not make the CNN daily news, nor compel the NFL to change the name of the Washington Redskins. It will not entice Major League Baseball to "grow a conscience" and tell the Cleveland Indians to take a hike, or rule the Atlanta Braves can no longer play "The Chop" at their games. The NCAA is not about to take the "Florida State" chop

away from Florida State.

This is a witch hunt with no stable ground. These children are not responsible for the ill treatment of Native Americans some hundreds of years ago. They get up at 6 a.m., go to school every day, complete ridiculous amounts of homework, manage to keep their GPA at a level that allows them to participate in extra-curricular activities, and then they go to practice or get out on the court or the field and play their hearts out in the name of the Indians. Where is the disrespect?

"The Chop" is the heartbeat of my Alma Mater. It is a tradition lasting some 30 years, at least. Taking it away may ease the minds of a handful of people in this community, but in return it will break the spirit of hundreds of children.

I hope it's worth it.

— Jocelyn Glabach
Turners Falls

RAMBLING RAMPS

BY BRYAN DOLAN

TURNERS FALLS – Are bikers the most generous people in the world? Yes, they are. At least, the Mohawk Ramblers are.

On Saturday, over a dozen members of this local motorcycle club descended into downtown Turners Falls with trucks, trailers, and miscellaneous implements of destruction to move the Turners Falls Sk8 Park from its former 2nd Street site to its new home on 11th Street. The property on 11th Street was generously made available for a temporary (three-year) home for the park by owners James and Christa Capen of Greenfield.

The ramps, some as big as 14 by 16 feet, were not designed to be moved. Thanks to the volunteers, including local sculptor Joseph Landry, who brought his

tractor and trailer, and Shanahan's Construction Supply, who provided a boom truck, the relocation went off without a hitch!

Around 11:00 a.m., pedestrians and drivers along Avenue A may have noticed a bizarre convoy of enormous ramps and trucks led by the Montague police. It was an amazing display of cooperation and community involvement, and a very encouraging start for the new skate park.

The skaters and the Turners Sk8 Park steering committee sincerely appreciate everyone's help.

Donations are still being sought to pave and fence the 11th Street location. To make a donation, or to join the Friends of the Turners Falls Sk8 Park (\$10 adults, \$2 students), contact Ruth Nervig at the Brick House, P.O. Box 135, Turners Falls, 01376.

Surviving 'After the Mayflower'

Well, in Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts, we have finally survived the first televised episode of "We Shall Remain: 'After the Mayflower'". It was dramatic, anthropologically correct Hollywood in look and sound. It was not, as advertised, "PBS series retells nation's history from Native American perspective". It may speak for Hollywood screenwriters and academics who consider themselves historians, or possibly those few Puritan descendants who see their ancestors as pious, smooth talking terrorists, like (Indian heads on poles) Miles Standish. But, this first episode is far from the perspective of the Wampanoag, Pequot or Narragansett tribes referenced in the press releases.

Residents of western Massachusetts might rightfully ask, "If this story portrays King Philip's War, where are the major historic events at Northfield and Turners Falls?" Wampanoags might ask, "Where were the events of the suspected Colonial assassination of Wamsutta, who for two critical years was chief of the Wampanoag, before his brother 'King Philip' – Metacom?"

The screenwriters saw only rivalry in Narragansett and Wampanoag relations. How intentionally blind is the perspective that misses Narragansett Chief Sachem Canonchet's Great Swamp refugee fort declaration to the Colonists, "Not one

Wampanoag, nor the paring of a Wampanoag's nail will I release to you."

Scriptwriters, in this beginning episode, where are the tens of thousands of years of history and culture and loving respect for our Mother the Earth that predate the coming of the Mayflower? PBS, where is the Native American perspective? How could you lose something so grand and glorious and now, more than ever, so needed?

— Doug Harris
Senior Tribal Historic
Preservation Officer
Narragansett Indian Tribe

Tomahawk Chop Redux

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE –

GILL-MONTAGUE – The controversy over the Gill-Montague school district's moratorium on the Turners Falls High School marching band's use of the Tomahawk Chop fight song continued Tuesday, with school committee chair Mary Kociela saying the committee plans to make a final decision on the issue by May 12th.

The school committee has participated in hearings with students and community members on the subject, and more meetings with students at the high

see REDUX pg 10

18th Annual Poetry Awards

GREENFIELD – The 18th annual Poet's Seat poetry awards ceremony will take place at 7 p.m. on April 29th in the Capen room at the Stoneleigh-Burnham School, on Bernardston Road.


The Poet's Seat poetry contest has been sponsored by the Friends of the Greenfield Public Library annually since 1990. The competition is held in honor of Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, who resided in Greenfield from 1847 until his death in 1873, and was considered by his contemporaries – Emerson, Thoreau, and Tennyson – to be a gifted poet.

All finalists will be reading their poems at the ceremony and awards will be given in three

categories: first, second and third place in the adult division and the two top poems of the youth divisions – ages 12-14 and 15-18. A chapbook with all of the poems will be available to all who attend.

The adult first prize winner will receive stewardship of the Poet's Seat chair, with their name on a plaque listing all the previous winners, a handcrafted Poet's Platter, a gift certificate to the Poetry Ridge Bed and Breakfast and a gift certificate to a local bookstore. All other winners will receive a handcrafted Poet's mug along with a gift certificate to a local bookstore.

This event is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served.



You Rock!

Tim de Christopher, the Stoneguy, extends a hearty THANKS to the Mohawk Ramblers Motorcycle Club and ALL the folks who helped move ALL the ramps from the SK8 Park!

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PARZYCH from pg 1

He sprinkles them liberally throughout his memoir, and piles on a few extra calamities like pandemic flu, world war, and the Great Depression whenever things start looking up for Ma and Pa and the 13 kids. The Four Winds students looked up to him with a kind of awe, as if Abe Lincoln or Job had wandered into their classroom and sat down to give them a lesson on civil strife, or patience.

"Did you ever make peace with your father?" one youngster wanted to know.

"Oh yes," replied Parzych, who seemed more than willing to put the razor strop, the serial slaughter of pets, and Pa's alcohol-fueled tirades behind him. "When he got older, he mellowed."

"Did you ever get a pet you could keep?" asked another.

"A dog," recalled Parzych,

"named Skippy."

Then he added, "Pa tried to sell Skippy when a woman came by and offered five dollars for him. Five dollars was a lot of money." But when his father ordered him to tie a rope to Skippy's collar, and the woman saw tears in Joe's eyes, she relented, and he got to keep the dog.

"Did Turners Falls have a functional, well-used trolley system?" asked one punctilious lad.

"You could get on a trolley in Turners Falls and go all the way to New York City," answered Parzych. Conversely, you could get on an excursion train from New York and take it direct to Lake Pleasant, a resort town in the old days, he added.

Asked to compare the Great Depression to the one America seems to be living through now, Parzych laughed. "There's no comparison," he said. "These would be considered good times.

There were no unemployment benefits, no government relief programs..."

He told the tale of a Riverside man who had purchased a late Model T Ford, "with four new tires on it," who wound up selling the car for four dollars when jobs dried up after the crash of 1929.

"He had to feed his family."

Parzych recalled the 30s as a fundamentally different era. "The thing was, there wasn't too much crime. People went everywhere looking for work. City folks wouldn't open their doors, but country folk were kinder. They'd give them a sandwich," and in return unemployed men would "usually split some wood; they didn't want charity."

But one night a neighbor by the name of Keating found "three or four men at his door, asking to sleep in his barn. He ran them off his property. That night his barn burned down."

Perhaps the quality of mercy

was a bit strained, considering,

One boy, impressed by the chapter in *Jep's Place* where Mr. Degrano lets young Joe blow up stumps with dynamite, asked what the fuses had looked like.

"Thick as a clothesline," replied Parzych. "Smooth and shiny, with a coating like shellac. Inside was gun powder, like a firecracker.

"Any of you get to have firecrackers?" he wondered. Not much nodding of heads at this, but a vague sense of recognition, maybe from the movies.

"Where was Cold Brook Farm?" someone else demanded.

Parzych described the place where his parents had sharecropped for a time, and said Dr. Viadero now lived at the site where his parent's house once stood, on Greenfield Road in Montague.

Asked how he became a writer, Parzych related that he became a public relations man in the army, after getting kicked out of Northfield Mount Hermon for falling asleep in advanced grammar class. "I was ashamed to go back to Turners Falls High School," he admitted. "I was the first boy to get accepted at NMH

from Gill in ten years. So I joined the army.

"I'd never been beyond Greenfield by myself before. Now I was transported all these places... drove a staff car in Washington D.C., traveled by train to California, saw the mountains and the desert, quite an eye opener."

Then he was stationed in Japan, with the Korean conflict about to break out, where he "organized various kinds of mischief," among his paratrooper regiment while enduring short rations in Hokkaido, as post-war Japan was literally starving.

He developed a talent for the written word as a PR man, "writing about how the worst drunk in the regiment got a good conduct medal or something," pieces that would be reprinted in stateside newspapers.

"Why did you use 'Faith, Hope and Other Disasters' in the title of your book?" asked one girl.

"My mother was very religious," said Parzych. "She always had great hope and faith for wonderful things to come, but what showed up was disaster."

see PARZYCH pg 11

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Arrests for Intent to Distribute Drugs

Tuesday, 4/7

8:05 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a J Street address. Arrested

Charged with assault and battery, domestic and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon. Arrested

Charged with assault and battery, domestic.

11:07 p.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested

Charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, second offense, speeding, failure to use signal, possession of an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle and possession of a class A drug.

Wednesday, 4/8

9:11 p.m. Report of animal complaint at a Fourth Street address. Peace restored.

Thursday, 4/9

12:36 a.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at an L Street address. Arrested

Charged with assault with a dangerous weapon and a threat to commit a crime.

5:50 p.m. Report of a barking dog at a Park Street address. Referred to an officer.

Friday, 4/10

12:23 a.m. Report of a neighbor disturbance at an H Street address. Arrested

Charged with disturbing the peace.

2:03 p.m. Report of an animal complaint at a Fourth Street address. Referred to an officer.

2:30 p.m. Report of fraud at a Montague Avenue address. Services rendered.

5:55 p.m. Report of an animal complaint at a Taylor Heights address. Services rendered.

6:37 p.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested

Charged with possession of a class B drug, possession of a class D drug,

subsequent offense, possession of a class B substance with intent to distribute and possession of a class D substance with intent to distribute, manufacture or cultivate. Arrested

Charged with possession of a class B drug, possession of a class B substance with intent to distribute, possession of a class D drug and possession of a class D drug with intent to distribute.

Saturday, 4/11

4:37 a.m. Assisted Greenfield police at a Conway Street address.

11:07 a.m. Report of vandalism at a Main Street address.

2:05 p.m. Report of larceny at an Oakman Street address. Services rendered.

8:47 p.m. Report of an accident with property damage. Arrested

Monday, 4/13

12:29 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Griswold Street address. Investigated.

12:38 p.m. Report of trespassing at a Seventh Street address. Reporter advised of options.

1:56 p.m. Report of larceny at a Montague City Road address.

2:44 p.m. Report of an animal complaint at a Park Street address. Peace restored.

10:10 p.m. Arrested for two default warrants.

Tuesday, 4/14

6:14 a.m. Officer initiated investigation of vandalism at Our Lady of Czestochowa church on K Street.

7:32 a.m. Report of vandalism at a K Street address. Investigated.

9:06 a.m. Report of larceny from a Rod Shop Road address.

2:25 p.m. Report of animal complaint at a Central Street address.

4:25 p.m. Officer initiated arrest of on a straight warrant.



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Great Falls Treasure Hunt



Karen Foster helps Sam Pollard uncover a letterbox at the Mt. Tom Reservation

BY MARCY MARCHELLO

TURNERS FALLS – Looking for a different activity to enjoy locally with your family this spring? Do you enjoy mystery and adventure on a small scale? If so, letterboxing may be right up

your alley.

Letterboxing has been gaining popularity in the U.S. for the past ten years, yet it is still a relatively unknown pastime, in part due to its secretive nature. In this unique type of treasure hunt, seekers fol-

low clues to locate hidden boxes that contain rubber stamps. Imprinting the stamps in your personal logbook proves you were there and serves as a souvenir of the experience.

Once you “stamp in,” the stamp is replaced inside the letterbox and re-hidden for the next seeker to find. Letterboxing is especially appealing to kids, seniors and those of us who can squeeze a micro-adventure here and there into our busy lives.

Letterboxes are usually hidden outdoors, but sometimes indoors too. Finding them may involve a short walk or a long hike. The clues are posted on-line and the experiences you have finding them are crafted by the person who plants the letterbox.

Those who take to letterboxing are likely to start carving stamps and creating letterboxes of their own. Part of the mystique of letterboxing is that stamps are typically handmade, thus this

curious pursuit often has personal, artistic and sometimes even educational twists.

The Great Falls Discovery Center now offers a letterboxing experience to the public. Clues can be obtained on-line or at the Center. Several letterboxes are hidden on site and provide a scavenger hunt-like opportunity that might take up to an hour. Most of the boxes just contain a stamp, but one box also has a logbook inside where finders can note their visit and leave a stamp imprint of their own.

If you take to this activity, you may choose to create a trail name of your own and a signature stamp to leave in all the logbooks you find. Part of the fun of finding a letterbox is flipping through the logbook to see all the stamps other letterboxers have left inside from far and wide.

Letterboxes are also hidden at Bartons Cove, and Wendell State Forest has quite a few. More can

be found along the Connecticut River Valley. There are thousands in Massachusetts.

To find out more about letterboxing and to locate letterboxes wherever you may travel, visit www.letterboxing.org or www.atlasquest.com.

On Friday, April 24th, the Great Falls Discovery Center will host a letterboxing program designed to assist people with mobility impairments and other disabilities in finding letterboxes. Anyone is welcome to attend this free introductory activity, which takes place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, call All Out Adventures at (413) 527-8980. The program is sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Universal Access Program. For more information on accessible recreation activities offered throughout Massachusetts, call (413) 545-5353 or visit www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access.

Hike to Hermit's Castle



Hermit's Castle

ERVING – If a man's home is his castle, then a certain cave in Erving might well be a castle: it was the home of British-born hermit John Smith in the latter half of the 19th century.

Protected within Erving State Forest, the cave today is wild and woody, albeit with telltale signs of Smith's gardens. On Sunday, April 19th, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Allen Young and Clare Green will show visitors how to find it, starting off on the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail and then taking a spur to the cave.

Sponsored by the Athol Bird & Nature Club, the hike is free

and open to the public. Hikers will meet in the Freight House Antiques parking lot on Route 2 in Erving Center. The terrain ranges from easy to difficult, with a few steep stretches. Participants should dress for the weather, with appropriate footwear, and bring lunch and water. Inclement weather cancels the outing. Questions? Call Young at 978-249-7612 or Green at 978-544-7421.

A resident of Royalston, Young

is the author of *North of*

Quabbin Revisited, which includes the story and photos of Hermit's Castle. Green, a resident of Warwick, is an educator and a naturalist, and a graduate of the North Quabbin Woods Guide Training Program.

The Athol Bird & Nature Club manages the Millers River Environmental Center and maintains a natural history collection there, holds meetings featuring members or outside speakers, organizes field trips all over southern New England, offers intensive workshops and institutes on specific natural history topics, and organizes regional biological inventories, including biodiversity surveys, bird counts, and butterfly and dragonfly records.

More information about the ABNC is available on the web at www.millersriver.net. New members are welcome.



View of the Millers River from Hermit's Castle

PLANNER from pg 1



A show of hands in support of Ralph and Eric Semb's proposal to amend the zoning bylaws to allow for drive through restaurants in Erving

zone is in Greenfield, where the commercial district overlies a small corner of the aquifer. On Wednesday, Eric Twarog, senior planner for the city of Greenfield, said since Sloan had brought the matter to his attention, “I’ve talked with the chair of our planning board, Roxanne Wedegartner, and she agrees we should probably amend our zoning bylaws to prohibit gas stations anywhere within our groundwater protection zone. If you read the purpose defining our zoning bylaws, it would be unlikely that a request to put in a gas station within the protection zone would be approved. We agree the zoning bylaw needs to be amended to prohibit gas stations entirely for the groundwater protection zone.”

The nearly 60 town residents who showed up at the hearing did not seem much persuaded by Sloan's information. A straw poll taken towards the end of the meeting, when only about half the audience remained, found the great majority raising their hands in support of changing the town's zoning to allow a gas station to be

constructed in the groundwater protection zone, with only three hands raised in opposition, and a smattering of undecideds.

“I’m all about safety and protection of the groundwater,” said Eric Semb, who gathered 176 signatures in support of the bylaw change at his bowling alley, where for the past few weeks the neon sign out front flashed an invitation to residents to attend the public hearing.

He brought an expert, Andy Bissonette from SRS Petroleum Services, to address the crowd.

“I build gas stations,” said Bissonette. “I clean them up. I do different things with them.”

Although the petition was written to amend the bylaws to allow for aboveground petroleum storage tanks, Bissonette brought a large diagram of a double-lined underground fiberglass storage tank. When planning board alternate Jacquie Boyden pointed out that Department of Environmental Protection regulations prohibit underground storage tanks in an aquifer protection zone, someone in the crowd

continued on next page

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from previous page demanded, "Then why are we talking about underground storage?"

Bissonette explained the leak detection system for both types of storage tanks was similar.

"Has there ever been a failure of containment of one of these aboveground tanks?" asked planning board chair Jeff Dubay.

"I won't say there's never been one. Very seldom do I go in and find a double-walled tank that I'm replacing," Bissonette replied.

Semb said the two storage tanks at his proposed gas station, each of which would hold up to 12,000 gallons of fuel, would be computer monitored, "twenty-four hours a day."

"I am the chair of the board of health," said Deb Mathey, rising from her seat in the crowd. "I want assurance there will be no leakage at all. We have the best drinking water in the state. I know, because I test it!"

Sloan read the findings of a three-year DEP "leak autopsy study" from Florida, which has more of a track record with aboveground gas station storage tanks than Massachusetts. Between 2003 and 2006, the study showed, 284 leaks were reported at aboveground tanks in Florida, mainly due to problems in the dispensing system, including loose connections in the pipes, with spill bucket problems and tank overfills being less frequent causes. Since Massachusetts requires aboveground storage tanks to be of metal construction, Sloan said regular painting and maintenance should prevent the rust and corrosion that was often the cause of failure of single walled underground tanks.

"At all cost you should try to prevent spills from happening, because it's a very costly endeavor to replace a public water supply," Sloan said.

Dubay estimated it would cost the town of Erving \$2 million to replace the Erving side well, provided a place could be found in town to create a new public drinking water supply, if the present well were to be contaminated.

Semb said his insurance company would sell him a million-

dollar policy for \$750 to insure against damage to the aquifer, because the risk of accident was considered so slight.

Still, Erving has some recent experience with leaking oil in the aquifer protection zone. Selectboard chair Andy Tessier recalled that a leak had occurred at the 3,000-gallon underground fuel storage tank at the Erving Elementary School, the site of the public hearing, back in 2002.

"Nothing happened to the water," Tessier said.

In a phone interview after the hearing, DEP spokesperson Catherine Skeba confirmed, "The groundwater was not impacted," by the elementary school leak, which occurred in Zone II of the aquifer. She said an estimated 588 gallons of heating oil leaked from a double-walled fiberglass storage tank installed in 1994 at the elementary school, and the cause of the leak "appeared to be a cracked pipe fitting." Remediation work to clean up the soil, install monitoring wells, and test for contamination continued until 2005.

Charlie Paulin, business manager for Erving School Union 28, said to his recollection the cost of the multi-year cleanup was paid

for by the contractor's insurance, as the oil tank was moved during the course of renovating the elementary school. The school discovered the leak by comparing invoices for fuel deliveries.

Tessier said if Erving amends the bylaws to allow the construction of a gas station within the aquifer protection zone, the DEP would probably require the town of Erving to conduct and pay for quarterly testing of the groundwater, at the cost of "several hundred dollars a test." The current bylaw allows the town to score higher on the state's rating system for grant eligibility, and a change to the aquifer protection bylaw would likely lower the town's score for grant eligibility somewhat, Tessier said.

Responding to a question from the floor about the possibility of a collision causing an accident to aboveground storage tanks, Bissonette said the tanks would be protected by dikes and bollards from truck or vehicle collision. In terms of fire risk, he said static electricity and vapors were more of a concern than collision to the storage tanks.

Sloan said gas stations are currently permitted by special permit in Erving Center. She said the site

Semb was proposing for a gas station near the bowling alley was "up gradient" from the town's well, meaning any spills would flow toward the public drinking supply.

After the hearing, she said, "It all comes down to what level of risk is acceptable to the residents of Erving."

Proponents of the zoning bylaw change have argued the town needs a gas station, so residents don't have to drive to Gill or Orange to fill their tanks.

An earlier straw poll showed overwhelming support for Semb's proposal to allow for drive-through restaurants in the Central Village zone.

Responding to a question from the floor as to whether the planning board would work to establish an area in town where drive-through restaurants could be located, Dubay talked of traffic problems and sprawl between Athol and Orange, and on Federal Street in Greenfield, and noted, "After we worked on the bylaws and worked for the rules, it's hard for us to turn around and say, 'Yeah, forget that rule,' because the town voted on it."

Both petitioned articles, according to town counsel Donna

MacNicol, are incomplete, and would fail to pass muster with the attorney general's office. She advised the town to amend the articles at town meeting to allow for a referendum - which would in effect be a straw poll of town sentiment - as to whether to allow a gas station in the aquifer protection zone, or a drive-through restaurant in the Central Village zone. A simple majority would suffice to pass the amended articles.

The planning board and selectboard have agreed to work together to enact the specified changes according to the zoning bylaws, if town meeting votes affirmatively to ask them to do so.

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If you would like to apply your graphic skills to some editorial cartooning for your local community newspaper, please send a sample of your work to the Montague Reporter at 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376, or email to: reporter@montaguema.net. We are happy to receive original cartoons, or to suggest a topic for illustrators to draw. For more information, call 413-863-8666.

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Prom Fashion Show

BY JOSHUA GAMMON

TURNERS FALLS – On March 11th, the National Honor Society presented another installment of the TFHS annual Prom Fashion Show. The event showcased many different gowns and tuxedos for high school students attending prom in the coming month. Attire was provided by Aliber's Bridal Shop, and was modeled by the members of the Turners Falls High School National Honor Society. Each year, ticket sales and donations are sent to a charity of the group's choice, varying from year to year, generally to help people in foreign countries or benefiting local families in need. But this year the show had a personal touch.

After the recent loss of long-time art teacher Mary Forrest, the society decided to donate the funds to the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research in her memory. Junior

member Evan Pleasant thought of the idea as a way to represent the school's deep sorrow after Mrs. Forrest's death, and to help find a cure for pancreatic cancer.

HIGH SCHOOL LIGHTS

With that in mind, many businesses in the community donated door prizes and other goods to add to the benefit in Mrs. Forrest's memory. All of the ladies' hairstyles were donated by Chris & Co., Absolutely Fabulous Hair, and A Turning Point; all corsages, boutonnieres, and flowers were designed and donated by Floral Affairs. The outpouring of community support for this year's event, even in light of the economic downturn, proved to all involved that this year's fashion show was special.

The show was a great success; it raised over \$600 in ticket sales

and donations for the Hirshberg Foundation, and over \$50 for the newly created Mary Valley Forrest Memorial Scholarship Fund for seniors pursuing a major in the either art or music.

"The family of Mrs. Forrest are very appreciative and moved by the decision to remember and honor Mary in this way," said one colleague and family member of the late Mrs. Forrest. "Mary loved working with the students in Gill-Montague, and I know she is missed by her students as well as her family and friends."

Donations to the Mary Valley Forrest Scholarship Fund are welcomed, and can be sent care of the Turners Falls High School, Turnpike Road, Montague, MA 01351.

REDUX from pg 6



Marisa Vanasse, center, and students from the Springfield Renaissance School

school are planned.

Strong Oak, a member of the local Native American community, attended the meeting on April 14th, and spoke of her personal experience of being taken away from her community as a child, and of the history of the genocide of Native Americans, as well as the discrimination that continues

against Native Americans to this day.

Students from the Springfield Renaissance School, led by their history teacher, Marisa Vanasse, gave a presentation to the school committee on what they considered to be the harm done by racial stereotyping of Native Americans as symbols and mascots for sporting events. The presentation included a slide show,

followed by the students making statements individually on what they considered to be a long tradition of distorting the history between Native Americans and European settlers, with Indians typically portrayed as savage warlike aggressors against white settlers, rather than describing the systematic destruction of the Native American peoples that nearly wiped out the original inhabitants of this land. Those that survived have continued to be marginalized, the students from Springfield Renaissance contended, and the use of Native American symbols for sports teams, mascots and themes at sporting events can be seen as a continuation of the humiliation and disrespect of their culture.

One said, "Native Americans are the only race that are used as sports mascots. The other most common mascot are animals."

The school committee thanked the Springfield students for coming to the meeting and sharing their perspective. The committee decided, with the approval of high school principal Jeff Kenny, to invite the students from Springfield Renaissance to come back and make a presentation to a morning meeting in the high school.

Kociela and other members of the school committee will meet with the student council prior to the next discussion session with the student body, to address continuing concerns among the students at TFHS about the ban on the use of 'the Chop'. They agreed to allow students to ask direct questions of the school committee members and get answers from them.

BUDGET from pg 1

neither Hanold nor Abbondanzio would commit to firm budget numbers on Wednesday, but both said Montague is facing an FY '10 budget gap of its own that ranges somewhere between \$250,000 and \$315,000, without further cuts in state aid.

Among the expected changes to town services and spending likely to be recommended to town meeting this year are:

- A switch to private hauling of curbside recycling, eliminating one or two jobs at the DPW, and allowing for the sale of the town's two recycling vehicles.
- A cut from 20 to 17 hours for the soon-to-be-advertised position of senior center director, so benefits will no longer be paid for that position.
- The completion of the planned two-year reduction in the amount the town pays towards employee health benefits, from 90% to 80%, allowing for a slight reduction in that line item in the coming fiscal year.
- An increase in operating expenses for the police department, based on a pre-occupancy estimate of what it will cost to run the new police station on Turnpike Road.
- A hoped-for shift in payment for the school resource officer to the Gill-Montague school dis-

trict, now that the grant which paid for that program has run its course."

Hanold said, "We are interested in questions and comments from the public, which we will take into consideration in presenting final recommendations to town meeting."

He added, "We've shaved everything as thin as we can. We are making sure the library is still funded at the level that meets state certification guidelines, to retain eligibility for interlibrary loans."

Abbondanzio said, "If the House Ways and Means budget becomes final, we might as well close up shop and go home," since that would mean a cut in state aid of more than a half million dollars since July 1st, '08.

The town administrator said it may be that the Ways and Means committee is trying to make the situation look as grim as possible to build support for raising new revenues, in the form of an added penny on the sales tax, a higher gasoline tax, or local option taxes on hotels, motels, and restaurants. If the legislature pursues the latter option, Abbondanzio said, the question becomes how that money would be shared. "Will everyone share in the benefit, or just the Northampton of the world?"

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10 A.M. TO 2 P.M. - CELEBRATION ON THE COMMON & TOWN HALL INCLUDING: LOCAL AND REGIONAL GROUPS FOCUSING ON ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING, LOCAL FARMERS, ARTISTS, HERBALISTS & MORE.

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Skate Park Funded

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The fortunes of the Turners Falls Sk8 Park have improved markedly in recent weeks. First, the Montague parks and recreation commission voted to include the Sk8 Park in plans for a renovated Unity Park, contingent on town meeting approving the discontinuance of Williams Way at the special town meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 30th. Second, a great crew made up of the Mohawk Rambler motorcycle club, local businesses like Shanahan Construction and Young Construction, and concerned residents like Nancy Holmes and Joe Landry, got together on Saturday morning and moved the skate park ramps from their original location on

2nd Street to the park's new temporary location on the corner of Avenue A and 11th Street, a lot owned by Jim and Christa Capen, of Greenfield.

Finally, on Monday, the Montague selectboard agreed to provide \$4,000 in program income funds towards the fencing and paving of the park's new location, with the understanding that \$1,000 of that sum will be paid back by the skate park committee by July, after they hold planned fundraisers, including one scheduled for this Sunday at 8:00 p.m. at the Rendezvous on 3rd Street, in Turners Falls.

Ruth Nervig, of the Brick House, and Bryan Dolan, of the skate park steering committee, said the committee already had

\$1000 in hand to help pay for the estimated \$5000 cost of paving and fencing at the new lot, but doubted they would be able to raise the rest of the needed cash without town assistance before the season was over the year.

"If we could get it going and have the summer to pay back the thousand while it's up and running, that would be great," said Dolan.

Chair Allen Ross urged the skate park organizers to "Keep it neat," and Dolan assured the board, "We're under the microscope for the next three years."

The committee will also seek \$16,500 in program income funds to pay for the design of a permanent concrete skate park at Unity Park, following the vote of

town meeting on whether or not to discontinue Williams Way.

In other selectboard news, the board approved a permit for the Great Falls Farmers Market to operate on Wednesday afternoons, at the corner of 2nd and Avenue A, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., from May 6th to October 28th.

Market master Don Clegg said, "We want Turners Falls to be the place to go on Wednesdays, with the Discovery Center open until 4 p.m., the fish ladder open till 5:00 p.m., and the farmers market open until 6:00 p.m. [soon]."

Clegg said new vendors were encouraged to join the market, and local musicians were welcome to sign up to play, by contacting him at sealeggsdc@yahoo.com. The market will feature baked goods, maple products and honey, fresh

eggs, vegetable and herb plants, perennials and annuals, and local fresh produce in season. Community organizations are also welcome to set up tables at the market.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Scam Empties Bank Account

Wednesday, 4/8 4:15 p.m. Breaking and entering into a vehicle on Boyle Road, under investigation.

Thursday, 4/9 11:15 a.m. Animal complaint on Walnut Street. 6:04 p.m. Report of erratic operator on French King Highway, located subject. All OK. 7:31 p.m. Alarm on Mount Hermon Campus, all OK.

Friday, 4/10 6:33 p.m. Report of possible restraining order violation on North Cross Road, investigated same. 7:33 p.m. Suspicious subjects at a residence

on Mountain Road, checked same.

Saturday, 4/11 2:00 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against

Charged with failure to register as a sex offender, operating a vehicle with revoked registration, and expired inspection sticker. 11:15 p.m. Checked on North Cross Road resident for past suspicious activity.

Sunday, 4/12 10:15 a.m. Motor vehicle accident on French King Highway with injuries. 1:33 p.m. Arrested

for outstanding warrant.

Monday, 4/13 4:20 p.m. Information received of past breaking and entering attempt on Grist Mill Road.

4:25 p.m. Report of a scam that occurred to French King Highway resident, depleting all of his funds from his bank account. Under investigation.

Tuesday, 4/14 6:33 p.m. Assisted Erving police with a disturbance.

7:20 p.m. West Gill Road area investigated for past reported disturbance.

PARZYCH from pg 7

Except for the time the Sears and Roebuck salesman showed up with a gas-powered wringer washer, and left it for Ma on special dispensation from Saint Jude for a free one-day trial, at which she washed every last item of apparel along with all the sheets and curtains in the house, spreading them to dry outside on the bushes and lawns until the farm resembled an exploded clothing factory.

The dozen students assembled at his feet liked that chapter the best, and Parzych told them that story had been accepted and published at Yankee Magazine, and by Readers Digest, and went on to take its place in a University of Texas textbook. Who needs advanced grammar?

"When you write a story, write it like you're telling it to a friend," he told the students. They looked up at him and nodded, as if they understood.

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MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

Planting the Seed for Energy Savings

BY SALLY PICK

MONTAGUE CENTER – As the temperature outside slowly warms up (read: when will spring ever get here?) you may not think this is the time to have an energy audit and consider installing insulation and other energy saving items. However, since May is typically the slowest month for MassSave's energy audit work, you'll get a jump on others for the next heating season by calling for an audit now.

And, while you may think tightening up your house is only helpful for reducing heating bills, sealing up air leaks and adding insulation to your house will also lower your air conditioning needs this summer. For example, more insulation in your attic will keep the heat that builds up in the attic from coming down into other parts of

your home.

Planting trees and shrubs is another way to cut down on your cooling bill this summer; moist, early spring weather is an ideal time for planting. According to the book, *Landscaping that Saves Energy & Money*, by Ruth Foster, "One mature tree... provides as much cooling as fifteen room-size air conditioners."

The best place to start planting is on the south and west sides of your home. On the south side, plant only deciduous trees that grow tall, so that their branches will not shade out winter sun (you can lose about 25% of the heat generated from low winter sun from the shade of branches). Remember to imagine the mature size of whatever you plant, to leave enough space for the tree or shrub to spread its roots and branches without get-

ting too close to the house.

Since winter sun from the west has no heating effect on your home, you can plant either deciduous or evergreen plants on the west to shade out the hot, afternoon summer sun. You also might look at where your air conditioner is located and plant a shrub or tree to shade it, saving you as much as 10% on your air conditioner energy costs.

And for added winter warmth, planting evergreens to the north and northwest protects your home from cold winter winds.

For a source of low-maintenance plants native to our area, check out Nasami Farm in Whately. Their website is www.newfs.org/visit/nasami-farm; their telephone number is 413-397-9922. Spring and summer hours are April 16th through June 14th, Thursdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

If you'd like to get a jump on your neighbors for energy saving work on your home, call MassSave at 866-527-7283 and take advantage of their 75% subsidies up to \$2,000! More information is online at www.MassSave.com.

NEW SUPER from pg 1

the school administration, Rocke said it was important the committee keep the administrative staff in place. "We need good administrators just like we need good teachers," he said. He stressed the importance of maintaining the stability of the administrative team when the district will have a new superintendent and a new school committee. Rocke told the committee he had already spoken to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and they had assured him they will approve the contracts for the administrative staff.

Rocke said he's been told the GMRSD will qualify for \$770,000 in Title I federal stimulus money. He said that in Boston, Franklin County is considered at the "cutting edge" in developing methods of inter-district collaboration.

Sargent Center

Sixth grade students from Gill came to the school committee meeting with a slide show presentation documenting their visit to Boston University's Sargent Center for Outdoor Education in New Hampshire this past February. The Gill students raised money for their weeklong visit to the center by making pies, pack-

aging them and distributing them to the community. They sent out letters asking for donations and raised over \$4000, successfully covering the entire cost for all of the students who attended the center. The students showed photos of themselves engaged in a variety of outdoor activities, and answered questions from the school committee members about their experiences. The all seemed to have enjoyed the trip and found it very educational. The group thanked the school committee for their support, especially as this will be the last time Gill students will be able to make the annual trek. Boston University plans to close the Sargent Center in August, after 80 years of providing outdoor education at the Hancock, NH facility.

Efficiencies

In Monday night's school committee budget meeting, special education director Nadine Ekstrom reported on her progress in developing new procedures to make the special education programs she administers run more efficiently, and to bring them into compliance with state and federal guidelines. She has moved Linda Ellis into the position of chairperson of the elementary special edu- see **NEW SUPER** pg 13

MCTV ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

The Montague Community Cable, Inc. annual board meeting will be held on April 22nd, at 6:30 p.m. at the MCTV studio located at 34 Second Street in Turners Falls.

The agenda will include board officer nominations and changes to bylaws, such as residency requirements. Now is the time to get involved. Please join us and support your local cable access station.

MCTV Channel 17 Afternoon/Evening Schedule 4/17 - 4/23

visit www.montaguema.net for complete schedule

<p>Friday, April 17 2:00 p.m. Reconciliation Ceremony 2:30 p.m. Refusal 15 3:00 p.m. The Looming Crisis in Oil Depletion 5:00 p.m. Seabrook 1977. 6:30 p.m. Seneka Falls 7:00 p.m. GMRSD 4/13/09 & 4/14/09 Saturday, April 18 1:00 p.m. Rozners Car Show 2:30 p.m. Christmas Candle Light Service 3:30 p.m. Inside The Artists Studio: Ted Graveline 4:00 p.m. Common Man Jeff Brewer 5:30 p.m. Common Man Stephanie Marshal 7:00 p.m. Rozners Car Show 8:30 p.m. Christmas Candle Light Service 9:30 p.m. Common Man Concert-Tim Van Egmond 10:40 p.m. Rozners Car Show 12:00 a.m. Common People</p>	<p>Fall Town String Sunday, April 19 2:30 p.m. Both Sides of the Bridge 3:30 p.m. 2009 District Wide Spelling Bee 5:00 p.m. All About Bats 5:20 p.m. Discovery Center: Northern Bats 6:30 p.m. White House Chronicle#1013-1014 7:30 p.m. Why or Why Not Nuclear Power? 10:30 p.m. Women Girls & HIV:Services 11:00 p.m. UNpanel1 Monday, April 20 1:30 p.m. They Are Still There 2:30 p.m. The Spirit of Lake Pleasant 4:30 p.m. The Flow of Time 5:30 p.m. Sustainable Energy 6:30 p.m. On The Ridge: Arrow Head Sports Shop 7:00 p.m. Select Board 4/13/09 8:00 p.m. Falls Table Mike</p>	<p>Ryan 9:00 p.m. Mind Control 9:30 p.m. Michael Nix 11:00 p.m. MCTV Video Camp 2007 Tuesday, April 21 1:30 p.m. Inside The Artists Studio: Ted Graveline 2:00 p.m. Independent Voices 45 2:30 p.m. Health Hill: Transfat 3:00 p.m. 2009 District Wide Spelling Bee 4:30 p.m. 2009 Worlds Largest Concert 5:30 p.m. 2009 Discussion Deval Patrick 7:00 p.m. Select Board Live 8:00 p.m. GMRSD (Live)Join in Progress after SB Wednesday, April 22 3:00 p.m. Discovery Center Fossil Tracks 4:00 p.m. Cruise Aboard The Quinnetucket 4:30 p.m. Cops 5:00 p.m. Common People</p>	<p>Celtic Harp 6:30 p.m. Changing Face of Turners Falls 8:30 p.m. Carlos W. Anderson "Big Fat Lie" 9:30 p.m. Both Sides of the Bridge 10:30 p.m. 2009 Discussion Deval Patrick 12:00 a.m. Encore Body Art #4 12:31 a.m. Encore Body Art #10 1:01 a.m. Encore Body Art Halloween Thursday, April 23 3:30 p.m. White House Chronicle#1013-1014 4:30 p.m. Why or Why Not Nuclear Power? 7:00 p.m. Select Board 4/21/09 9:30 p.m. Coffee House Series Ferne Bork, Dan Tinen, Bruce Kahn Trio 10:30 p.m. Common Man Denise Grendan</p>
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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Q. *I'm having surgery and I'm afraid the doctor will operate on the wrong side of my body. Is there anything I can do to prevent this?*

Absolutely. Ask your surgeon to mark the site of the operation. Some surgical organizations recommend their members use a marking pen on patients. Don't be reluctant to request this service to make your surgery safe.

(Surgery is a topic that requires more than one column. Today we'll discuss surgeons and

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Choosing a Surgeon

healthcare facilities. Next week, we'll cover the surgery itself.)

Every year, more than 15 million Americans have surgery. The process of surgery from the initial questions to the recovery is complex. Probably the most important decision to be made is the choice of surgeon.

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) recommends that you look for a surgeon who is board certified and a fellow of the college.

Specialty boards certify physicians who meet published standards. For physicians to become board certified in a surgical specialty, they must complete the required years of residency training in that specialty, and then pass a comprehensive examination.

The specialty boards issue certificates that are valid for six to ten years. To retain certification, physicians must become recertified and must show continuing education in their specialty.

Fellows of the ACS are board-certified surgeons whose education, training, professional qualifications, surgical competence, and ethical conduct have been found to be consistent with the college's standards. The letters "FACS" after a surgeon's name stands for Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

If you want to know about a surgeon, you can phone your state or county medical association for help. Or you can just ask a prospective surgeon to provide credentials. Often, you can find the information you need hang-

ing in frames on a surgeon's office walls.

In addition to having credentials, your surgeon should have a lot of experience performing your operation. You should ask any prospective surgeon about his or her track record doing your procedure.

You should have your surgery done in an accredited healthcare facility.

Hospitals are accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). Surgical centers are accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) and JCAHO. Cancer treatment facilities are approved by the Commission on Cancer (CoC).

Most surgeons work at one or two local hospitals. Find out where your surgery will be done and how often the same operation

is done there. Research shows that patients often do better when they have surgery in hospitals with more experience in the operation.

Ask your doctor about the success rate at the hospitals you can choose between. The success rate is the number of patients who improve divided by all patients having that operation at a hospital.

It is a common medical practice to get a second opinion about surgery. With a second opinion, you will get expert advice from another surgeon who knows about treating your medical problem. Don't be reluctant to get more than one opinion.

Medicare may help pay for a second opinion. If you have a private supplemental health insurance plan, find out if it covers a second opinion.

If you have a question, please write to fred@healthygeezers.com

WARRANT from page 1

clarify that a coffee shop, for example, is indeed a restaurant, as far as the town of Gill is concerned.

However, Article 11 does propose a change in both the designation and authority of the position in town hall which up until now has been known as the administrative assistant. If approved, this article would authorize the selectboard "to appoint a town administrator, who may be appointed...for a term of one or three years, and be removed by the selectboard at its discretion."

Tracy Rogers, the current administrative assistant for the town of Gill, would in all probability be first in line for the appointment if the article passes.

The proposed change in the administrative assistant's job title and description was recommended in a recent report on the town of Gill's financial practices conducted by the state Department of Revenue.

Rogers said she is already working "above and beyond" her current title, performing the requisite clerical tasks as well as some departmental management duties and other responsibilities.

Appointing her as town administrator would more accurately reflect the work she already does for the town of Gill, and, with the approval of the selectboard, it would enable her to exercise some degree of autonomy in decision making. Currently, Rogers said, as administrative assistant, she has "no authority to sign any documents or act on the selectboard's behalf."

Among the warrant articles that may spark lively debate are Articles 13 and 14, to see whether the voters will declare two town-owned properties "surplus and available for disposition," or in plain terms, available for sale. One is the "Riverside Municipal Property" at 54 French King Highway; the other is the "Boyle Property" on Center Road.

The Riverside property – a former public school – sits on 1½ acres, and presently houses the Riverside water district office, the Gill historical society's museum and archives, and is also home to a small independent middle school, the Four Winds School, which leases space there for \$850 a month.

The Boyle property, on the corner of Center and Lyons Hill Road, is comprised of a 2.9-acre

open field, deeded to the town for recreational use.

Articles 6, 7, and 8 relate to the Gill-Montague Regional School District and Gill's position within it. Respectively, they suggest that the town "form a committee to study and recommend for consideration possible changes to the GMRSD Agreement;...form a Regional School District Planning Committee...to study the fiscal and educational advisability of joining the Pioneer Valley Regional School District;..." and "request that the Gill Montague Regional School Committee draw up amendments to the GMRSD Agreement setting forth the terms of Gill's withdrawal from the GMRSD."

Though that wording sounds like the town is already contemplating a definite course of action – to leave the Gill-Montague school district and join the Pioneer District (just as lengthy repairs to the Gill-Montague bridge get under way) – it seems that these are merely the formal steps the town must take in order to set up an exploratory committee to examine these options. It would take a second town meeting

vote, a year from now, for Gill to leave the GMRSD. By then questions about the town's equity in the high school, responsibility for retirement pay for teachers at the elementary school, and other concerns may be answered.

According to Dot Storrow, co-chair of commission for education in Gill, the passage of these articles would not in any way obligate Gill to withdraw from the district or even necessarily indicate the town's willingness to do so.

"Article 8 is not at all a referendum on whether we should withdraw," she said. "It would merely ask the school committee to come up with the details of what would happen if we chose to withdraw."

Storrow went on to explain that the commission has gone as far as they can in examining the matter. The steps outlined in these articles must be taken if the town wants to allow for "further study" of the regionalization issue.

So, fellow residents of Gill, consider yourselves duly notified and warned. The warrant's out, and clearly there'll be plenty to talk about come May 4th.

NEW SUPER from pg 12

Ellis maintains consistency with Individual Education Plans, has effected cost savings for expensive test-taking materials, and acts as a central contact person for parents.

On the subject of ELL (English Language Learners) student education, Ekstrom said the district needs more teacher training and curriculum training in this area. Rebecca Olson, ELL teacher and coordinator said, "We need to start supporting these kids."

ELL students are expected to take MCAS tests within one year of entering the district. The ELL team spoke of the difficulty of communicating with parents of English Language Learners, but stressed these parents are dedicated to their children succeeding.

Ekstrom said her budget for FY '10 was reduced by 2.4% with the help of a grant, saving \$200,000 next year.

Rocke praised Ekstrom for her work, saying she is reorganizing existing resources to make more efficient use of what she has available. He said this is an example of what the district as a whole needs to do: improving services to children without increasing cost through efficiency.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUSHLIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, APRIL 17th
First Annual Franklin County Technical School DodgeBall Tournament in the school gym, 7 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Heros**, classic and modern rock & roll covers, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Josh Levangie**, country folk guitar featuring Johnny Cash favorites, 9 to 11 p.m.

At The Bookmill, Montague Center: multiple bands **Area C**, **Paper**, **Mudboy**, **Dark Inside the Sun**, 8 p.m. \$8

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, APRIL 17th to 19th
Staged Production of *My Antonia* at the Deerfield Teachers' Center, 10 Memorial Street, Deerfield. As part of this year's Big Read Project, Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and Lady of the Lake Productions will present *My Antonia*, a play for the stage by Charles Jones, adapted from Willa Cather's novel *My Antonia*. Fri. & Sat. at 8 p.m. Sunday at 2 p.m. Continues 4/24 to 4/26. \$12/\$10 for seniors, and \$5/students.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18th
Earth Day Party at the Carnegie Library, Turners Falls at 10:30 a.m. Children of all ages and their families are invited to join Ruth O'Mara for making fun, creative projects out of recycled materials. Refreshments will be served. Info. call the Carnegie Library at 863-3214.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: **Exploring Insects**. Engaging activities, a nature walk, and a story about insects. All ages. 1 to 2 p.m.

The Shea Theater Family Series Presents: The PaintBox Theater: *The Princess and the Pea*. All tickets \$7, 2 p.m. Reservations: (413) 863-2281. The



Mentalist Rory Raven, presents an interactive stage mind-reading show as a benefit for the Shea Theater. Minds are read, spoons are bent, volunteers test their own "powers," and, if appropriate, the evening concludes with a re-creation of the kind of manifestation you might have witnessed in a trance chamber over a century ago! 8 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m. 10, Shea Theater, Ave A, Turners Falls.

PaintBox Theater combines classic tales with a modern, high energy twist and lots of audience participation. It is an hour of fun and non-stop laughter for the whole family!

Organic Gardening at Keller Farm, Wendell. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA/Mass) workshop on how to start and maintain successful organic gardens. Info & registration: www.nofamass.org, or Ben Grosscup (413) 658-5374.

Montague Grange, Montague Center: Contra dance from 7 to 10 p.m. Gender-role-free contra dance. Open to all. Info. (413) 586-9610 or (860) 749-3863.

Tag, Bake & Rummage Sale Presented by the Women's Group of Our Lady of Peace. Held at Our Lady of Peace Church, Turners Falls. 9 a.m.

Providence RI's premiere entertainer, **Mentalist Rory Raven**, presents an interactive stage mind-reading show that defies conventional wisdom and stretches the boundaries of the imagination. Neither a psychic nor a magician, Raven offers a new and compelling experience unlike anything you've ever seen. Beer and wine served before the show and during intermission! 8 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m. \$10 to Benefit the Shea Theater, Turners Falls.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **D.J.X.** classic and modern rock & roll covers, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Karaoke** by TNT Productions, 9 to 11 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Watcher**, 8:30 p.m., and **Rocketqueer**

Dance Party, begins 9:30 p.m. \$3 cover.

The Bookmill and The Lady Killigrew, Montague Center present, with thanks to Michael Metivier: **Arborea**, **Nuda Veritas** at 8 p.m. \$10.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 18th & 19th
6th Annual Green Fair, 10 to 5 p.m. Presented by the Greenfield Business Association. A showcase of environmentally-friendly goods, products, services and demonstrations. Held at Franklin County Fairgrounds.

SUNDAY, APRIL 19th
Deja Brew Acoustic open mic is happening 8 to 10 p.m. Bring some songs to share and your instrument.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21st
Baby Emus from Songline Farm in Gill visit the Carnegie Library, Turners Falls, 10 to 11 a.m. Children of all ages and curious adults are invited to come learn about emus and meet some cute baby emus. Information: 863-3214.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22nd
Deja Brew, Wendell: **Knitting & Crafts Night**, 7 to 10 p.m. Any craft/skill level.

Spring Film Series & Discussions with Experts. 6:30 p.m. held at the Greenfield Public Library. **Kilowatt Ours**. A personal approach to the need to conserve is the story of Jeff Barrie, who is concerned about the social and health problems arising out of the way electricity is made and undertakes to reduce his energy use. Discussion leader: Peter Letson, retired professor from GCC and presently a member of Greening Greenfield Energy Committee.

THURSDAY, APRIL 23rd
Jazz at DiPaolo's, Turners Falls: **Live Jazz Band**, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Larry Kapp Country and City Blues Guitar** with vocals, 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24th
Deja Brew, Wendell: **Zydeco Connection** 9 to 11 p.m. Come on out, shake it loose and party down to some hot zydeco. We are a dance band serving up a spicy gumbo of Louisiana zydeco, blues, and boogie woogie guaranteed to get your toes tapping.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Love Bomb**, dance rock & roll covers, 9:30 p.m.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, APRIL 24th to 26th
The Diary of Anne Frank performed by The Arena Civic Theatre, directed by Sondra Radosh at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. \$12/\$10 students & seniors. 4/24 & 25 at 8 p.m. 4/26 at 2 p.m. Continues 5/1-5/3.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25th
Harmony Sounds at the 5th Annual Gala. Two fabulous a cappella groups from the area, The Zumbies from Amherst College and The Heart of the

Valley Chorus. At 7:30 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School Theater. www.thegmef.org. Advance Tickets \$15/\$20 at the door.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **James Montgomery blues band**, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26th
Family Dance, Montague Grange, Montague Center, 4 to 6 p.m. Family-style contra dancing, caller Tim Van Egmond and live music from traditional contradance band *Shingle the Roof*. Simple contras, circle dances, and singing games, easy instruction for beginners of all ages, especially those with little feet. \$4/person or \$10-15/family, includes a light snack. Info. (413) 367-9608.

ONGOING
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: UMass Ventures in Science Art. Exhibit of student photographs of microscopic organisms! Taken using a variety of scientific methods, including Electron Microscope. See the world around you in a whole new way! On display through April 30th.

Historic Deerfield Exhibition: *Stimulating Beverages, Tea, Coffee, and Chocolate Wares*. Explore the fascinating role played by tea, coffee, and chocolate in New England through an examination of Historic Deerfield's vast collection of hot beverage wares. Examples of the novel "equipment" designed to serve these drinks. Open daily. 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Through Saturday, May 23rd

Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls; In Gallery 52: **Blake Fitch - Expectations of Adolescence**, a ten-year photographic project documenting the emotional and physical growth and emotional maturation of two young girls. In Gallery 56: **Founder & Museum Collections - Selections II**. Museum Curator, Paul R. Turnbull has selected a limited overview of some of the

Museum's collection. And in Gallery 85: **Stan Sherer - Life Studies**. Three documentary projects. 'Albania' and 'Shopkeepers' are straightforward studies of people & places. 'Lantern Slides' is a personal visual interpretation and construction by Mr. Sherer. Exhibits on display through June 14th.

AUDITIONS
The Country Players auditions for **Oliver!** **Sunday, April 26**, from 2 to 5 p.m. at GCC Downtown, Greenfield & **Monday, April 27**, 6 to 9 p.m. at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Attend either or both sessions. *Oliver!* will be produced at the Shea Theater July 10, 11, 17, 18 & 19. The cast includes 10 men of all ages, 6 women in speaking roles, and a chorus of children & adults.

Full open auditions for **Curtains** on **Thursday, May 7**, 6 to 9 p.m. Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts, 110 Industrial Blvd., Turners Falls. Info: Nick Waynelovich, (413) 863-0001/nick@jaduke.com. Be prepared to sing a song from the show and read from the script. A group dance audition will be required.



Come see baby Emus at the Carnegie Library, Turners Falls on Tuesday, April 21st 10 to 11 a.m.

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- MONSTERS VS ALIENS PG** DAILY 6:30 9:00 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- OBSERVE AND REPORT R** DAILY 6:45 9:15 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- HAUNTING IN CONNECTICUT PG13** DAILY 6:45 9:15 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- FAST AND FURIOUS** DAILY 7:00 9:30 PG13 in DTS sound FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
- STATE OF PLAY PG13** in DTS sound DAILY 7 9:30 (NO WED 7 PM) FRI-THUR 12:30 3:30
- TAKING ROOT NR 7 PM. FREE**

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Saturday, 4/18, 9 to 11 p.m. Karaoke with TNT Productions
Sunday, 4/19
Letters to the Editor Party, help stop the relicensing of Vermont Yankee, 4 to 6 p.m.
Acoustic Open Mic Night 8 to 10 p.m.
Thursday, 4/23 8 to 10 p.m. **Larry Kapp Country & City Blues Guitar**
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SAT: 4/18 | 9:30PM | \$3 Watcher at 8:30 **Rocketqueer Dance Party** at 9:30
SUN: 4/19 | 8:30 PM | DONATIONS **TURNERS FALLS SKATE PARK BENEFIT**
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Village Sketchbook

The Crack of the Bat

BY DAVID BRULE

MILLERS FALLS – It might be the chill wind of early April, or the teasing faint green of the grass coming from the bare ground, but there's an old ephemeral springtime feeling that comes over some of us this time of year. The saying goes something like, "Ah, Springtime! When a young man's fancy turns to... baseball!"

It happens to many of us, the young and not so young, and it is a wonderful feeling indeed, however brief. This bit of reminiscence intertwines a wistful poem, memories of a ballfield here on the Flat, the Housing Project, and a baseball stalwart from the village of Millers Falls. Just bear with the author for a moment.

As a youngish university student far from home in Paris, invariably the fever would come over me when, as a sure sign of spring, the *International Herald Tribune* would publish a poem by sports writer Dick Rorabuck, his elegy to baseball. He probably wrote it to send an attack of homesickness through the American expatriate community in Paris. And it always worked. It began:

"Away on this side of the ocean,
When the chestnuts are hinting of green,
And the first of the café commandos
Are moving outside for a 'fine'
And the sound of spring beats a bolero
As Paris sheds her coat and her hat,
The sound that is missed more than any,
Is the sound of the crack of the bat.

There's an animal kind of a feeling
That's a-stirring down at the Vincennes Zoo
And the kid down the hall's getting restless
Taking stairs like a young kangaroo
Now the dandy is walking his poodle
And the concierge is sunning her cat
But the heart's with the Sox and the Tigers
And the sound of the crack of the bat..."

Then the memories would always come back to Turners Falls, when even as younger boys we would all meet up for a pick-up game at the Housing Project on the Hill. We never called it sandlot baseball, but that handy term probably best describes it. It was a wonderful way to play ball when you were somewhere between 9 and 13!

The Project and the nearby neighborhood were full of classmates and friends. There was Thomas and Ducharme, Couture, Cadran and Dobosz, all kinds of Curries, Tuminski, Higgins and I. Whether or not we lived in the Project, we all showed up for a game after school or during those glorious summers before working on tobacco, when we were still free.

Those were days of wonderful kid-directed games. Hardball for sure, a piece of cardboard for a base, or just an x on the ground. No adults to organize us, we made out just fine in the field in the center of the buildings. We played with Mantle, Musial, Schneider or Williams in mind, and we played hard.

When we weren't playing, we practiced: throwing a tennis ball at a wall to work on fielding skills, playing catch with your Old Man, or if you had no choice, with your sister!

Later, as we reached Little League age, the pick-up game at the Housing Project faded. Baseball got more serious, adults were in charge, uniforms, standings and play-offs were important, and I do still miss the feel of the crack of the bat from those days.

Now, as an ex-pat no more,

"No, a Yank can't describe to a Frenchman
The rasp of an umpire's call
Nor a good rhubarb at home plate
Or the continuing charms of statistics
Changing history with each strike and ball
Not the self-conscious jog of a the slugger
Rounding third with a tip of his hat
Nor the half smothered grace of a hook slide
Nor the sound of the crack of the bat."



PHOTO COURTESY OF ADRIAN SAVAGE

This vintage photo from the collection of Adrian Savage shows the Millers Falls Baseball Team in 1935. The team posed in Highland Park. They are, left to right, back row: Kibby Cole, "Shorty" Marvel, Ken (Ninny) Smith, Raymond Bartlett, Delbert Towne and Joe Kersavage. Front row: John Kersavage, Joe Cafarella, Bill Craig, Bob Dauphanais, "Red" Yez, "Skinny" Merriot and Doug Smith. In front is the team's mascot, Charlie Gloski.

and safely ensconced back in the family homestead in Millers Falls, or Ervingside if you prefer, the April baseball mood continues to tug at memory. Well after I settled back here, the stories of baseball in this family began to surface. Long Sunday dinners spent with my grandfather Abe Smith and his brother Doug brought out baseball tales about which I've written in other articles, in other Aprils. Abe always liked to repeat stories of the team he and his brothers had formed with himself as catcher, his brother Perry at second, brother Clint at third and brother Doug on the mound.

To hear him tell it, the Smith brothers were unstoppable in those days. And although Clint was reputedly "quick as a cat" at third, it was undoubtedly the burning fast ball of Doug Smith that crushed opponents game after game. Both Abe and our uncle Rusty Smith caught for Doug on occasion, and had the twisted, even broken fingers as reminders of that fast ball.

While a star at TFHS, Doug drew crowds in the thousands to his games, and he often fanned upwards of 20 batters in an outing on the mound. As some of you may well know, he was recruited by the Red Sox in 1912 and pitched that year in Fenway Park. (There is a book on that 1912 Red Sox championship team currently being researched and written; it should be published in a year or so.)

Then just the other day, once again giving into April pangs of

springtime fever, something drew me to the family collection of old newspaper clippings and a photo taken in 1935 of a team with many of the legends in the Millers Falls Hall of Fame. In the middle of the picture, not far from my grand-uncle Doug sat Red Yez. Born and raised on the Flat, just a few doors up the street. And in no time at all, after a quick phone call and short drive from Ervingside to Erving Center, I made my way up to a snug home on Flag Hill, to where Red now lives with his daughter Judy, a classmate of mine, and Judy's husband Craig Moore.

Red had a gentle smile and a good chuckle as we looked over the old photo of that 1935 team, at the kitchen table. The names of his old teammates came back to him and to all of us, because of the local legends and contemporary connections with the descendants of the players in the photo. Red recognized Shorty Marvel, a tall, lanky 6 foot 2 inches in spite of his nickname, who played first base with the Smith brothers team. There was Kibby Cole who still lives up on Old State Road, cousin Ken Smith, a curly-headed Joe Cafarella, and Red himself, among many others.

Red played shortstop on the team and laughed when asked if he could get a hit off Doug and his fastball. "Was more likely to get beamed," admitted Red. Doug not only had a the fast ball and a mean spit ball, juiced up with a chaw of old Slippery Elm, but also he was known to

"dust off" a batter or two just to loosen him up!

Conversation in the Moore kitchen led to reminiscing about the old days on the Flat and past games on that sandy ballfield across from the house where Red was born 93 years ago.

The talk came round to all of us sadly admitting how baseball has gone from the neighborhood nowadays.

The ball field on the edge of the Millers Falls Tool company land where Doug and his brothers got their start, and where generations of neighborhood kids played, is now the backyard of the Lane house up the street. The Smith family barn where Doug was allowed to practice even of a Calvinist Sabbath Sunday has vanished. And a quick tour of local parks has no neighborhood pick-up game going on, just a few kids shooting baskets, or skateboarding.

To be sure, there's the Sox on TV and soon there will be Little League, and softball. But although my own baseball career ended when I was 12, the yearning for those spring sounds comes aching back again when early April comes around. Though it's great fun to watch the games at Fenway, and there are plenty of other choices at that,

"But the thing that's not HERE
At this time of year,
Is the sound of the crack of a bat."

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