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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS GILL ERVING WENDELL

Year 4
No. 29

50¢

The Montague Reporter

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 27, 2006

Contracts for New Offices, Library, Town Center Septic Awarded

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - On April 19th the Wendell selectboard awarded bids to Handford Construction of Springfield for \$2,357,255, to construct the new library and town office buildings, and to Clayton Davenport of Greenfield, for \$238,000, to construct the town center septic system. The bids came none too soon, as the board was holding its first regular meeting in the temporary office trailer parked by the town highway garage. Comments like 'cozy,' and other perhaps less flattering descriptions were heard from the adjacent office where the assessors were meeting, and from the other side of the partition where the tax collectors held their office hours. The selectboard office, which is also serving as a hallway between offices in the trailer was cozy too, especially when the zoning board of appeals and planning board came to meet with the board. Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich had to sit on her desk.

The board voted to accept the lowest bid for the town septic system, to serve town buildings in the center of town, from Clayton Davenport of Greenfield, for \$238,000. The town's accountant, Janet Swem, demonstrated to the board that enough money had been set aside in the septic system account to pay for the

see **CONTRACTS** pg 7



Movie star Jeff Bridges came to Montague last weekend to inaugurate the arts program at the Zen Peacemakers' Maezumi Institute on Ripley Road. Chris Janke was there and provides a complete report.

BY CHRIS JANKE

NORTHAMPTON - The most interesting person in the room is Tim McGee, a postal employee from Holyoke. He's interesting mostly because he doesn't know what he's doing and he has some big ambitions. Plus, his receding chin and vaguely birdlike face atop his pinstriped suit

see **BRIDGES** pg 8

Erving to Seek Town Meeting Approval to Buy 200 Acres on Old State Rd.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

The town of Erving is negotiating with the Ginius family of Old State Road for the purchase of nearly 200 acres of undeveloped land selectboard member Jeff Dubay called, "One of the only large, intact 19th century farms we have left in town." Appraised three years ago at \$381,000, Dubay called the parcel "terribly undervalued." Assistant assessor Jacqui Boyden said the acreage has at least 2000 feet of frontage on both sides of Old State Road, in an area zoned rural residential. According to Erving's recently approved zoning bylaws, building lots in this part of town require 250 feet of frontage, with a minimum of two acres. Dubay estimated a developer could get "ten or twenty building lots out of the land, easy."

According to board member Andrew Tessier, who has been negotiating for the town with the landowners, the Ginius's have a "bona fide" offer in hand from a developer. The town had expressed interest in buying the land three years ago, but the family was not ready to sell at that time. At this juncture, the family is negotiating with the town to see if a deal can be worked out to avoid subdividing and developing the land, which is in two parcels, 175 acres on the north side of the road, (including steeply graded, forested sections and some cliff-sides, and about 16 acres to the south, which

see **ERVING** pg 16

Jumptown Parachutists to Land on Sheffield Pitchers Mound

OPENING DAY FOR NEWT GUILBAULT LEAGUE: MAY 7TH

BY PATRICK RENNICK
TURNERS FALLS - Frank Campbell and Ted Bartak came before the Montague selectboard on Monday, April 24th to request permission to use town property for the 45th annual Newt Guilbault Little League parade on May 7th. In addition, a request was made to allow two parachutists from Jumptown, located in Orange, to land on the pitcher's mound at the Sheffield school field (Crocker Field), carrying the game baseballs for

opening day on May 7th. First games of the day on the two diamonds are scheduled at 11:00 a.m., followed by more senior division play at 1:30 p.m.; traveling teams will take the field at 3:00 p.m. Speaking of Jumptown's opening day stunt, Campbell said, "We have worked with them in the past. A bail out area has been made available in case of an emergency. They will decide when they get in the air if the jump is safe or not. We respect their judgment."

"I'm more excited about this event than my son is," added Bartak. After some careful consideration the selectboard made a motion to allow both events. Referring to an earlier daredevil feat by his selectboard colleague, chair Allen Ross said, "Pat (Allen) signed up for the Taser, but I don't think she'll be jumping out of any planes." (Allen had volunteered to be on the receiving end of a Taser stun gun during police

see **CHUTES** pg 11

THEATER REVIEW

All Our Sons

an ARENA CIVIC THEATRE production at the SHEA

BY FLORE

TURNERS FALLS - There is an old tradition, still existing in France, to call the first night of plays: *Les couturieres* (or 'the seamstresses'). This appellation honors all the doings of the people backstage, stitching the production's last elements together.

The actors, meanwhile, adjust their lines, put a last touch on their appearance, and pace the floor behind the closed curtain, waving off *le trac* (stage fright). It's a very special time, a sendoff, as all the



Castmembers of "All My Sons" take their bow at the Shea: Emily Murphy, Patricia Brown, Phil Hayes, Mary Annarella, Jarice Hanson, Nick Simms (l - r). Not pictured: Shaun Berry, Nick DeRuiter, Joe Chimi, Henry Weis

press and media have official figures filling the hall from the orchestra up to lively balconies! Imagine, it must have been thus, when Arthur

see **SONS** pg 12

PET OF THE WEEK

Early Bloomer



Snowdrop

Snowdrop is a year old short-haired cat in need of a good home. She's white with a pink nose and blue eyes - almost like something you'd find in an Easter basket! Her coat is very rich and thick and this affectionate and loving youngster loves petting. Look at her picture and see how fun and silly she can be - sure to bring much happiness into your life! For more info on adopting Snowdrop, please contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org

Turners Falls Downtown Spring Clean Up Saturday, April 29.
Meet at the Great Falls Discovery Center Great Hall 9 a.m. There will be a short safety discussion and then we will get to work. Tenders of planters along Ave A are also invited and will be given updated planting information. If possible, please bring gloves, rakes, brooms and water. Clean up is part of the Crabapple Blossom Festival. We plan to work until at least noon. For more info call the Brick House, 863-9576 or Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

Writers Wanted

The Montague Reporter is looking for writers to cover news events, arts, features, etc. Please call 863-8666

The Montague Reporter

Published weekly on Thursday
24 3rd Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376
PHONE (413) 863-8666
FAX (413) 863-3050
reporter@montaguema.net
Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Montague Reporter
24 3rd Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376

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CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

What's Blooming?

BY LINDA HICKMAN
TURNERS FALLS- The What's Blooming at the Library? Festival will be held on Saturday, April 29th from 1- 4 p.m. on the library lawn. Activities will include a used book sale, a Bad Art Show, children's arts and crafts and a bilingual family concert with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson at 2 p.m. Entries for the Bad Art Show

will be accepted at the library on Saturday from noon to 1 p.m. or during library hours earlier in the week. The activities will be held in the library if it rains. The festival is run by the Friends of the Montague Public Libraries. The concert is sponsored by the Community Partnerships for Children. For more information, call 863-3214.

Crabapple Blossom Festival IN TURNERS FALLS

Sat. 4/29 - Downtown Spring Cleanup - 9 a.m. - noon. Begins at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

What's Bloomin' at the Carnegie Library - 1 - 4 p.m., includes used book sale and Bad Art Show t

Bilingual Family Concert- 2 p.m. with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson on the library lawn (inside if rain).

Sun. 4/30 - 5K Fun Run/Walk- 11 a.m. Begins at Peskeomskut Park. Whether you plan to run or walk, it doesn't matter. Just feel good about joining us. This is a 3.1 mile trek around scenic Turners Falls. The event will start and finish at Peskeomskut Park on Avenue A in Turners Falls. Participants should meet at the park no later than 10:30 a.m. to register. Light refreshments will be available at the finish line. Call the MPRD Office at 863-3216 for course information. Help us welcome National Physical Fitness & Sports Month (May)!

Tues. 5/2 - Historical Walking Tour - 6 p.m. with Sue San Soucie. Starts at Great Falls Discovery Center.

Wed. 5/3 - Great Falls Farmers Market Opening Day - 3 - 6 p.m. Peskeomskut Park

Downtown Trees Walking Tour-

6 p.m. with Alan Snow, Forest Health Expert for the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Starts at Carnegie Library

Thurs. 5/4 - Important Birding Areas of Massachusetts - 7 p.m. with Wayne Petersen of Mass. Audubon, at Discovery Center

Fri. 5/5 - Cinco de Mayo Children's Festival - 10 a.m. - noon at Peskeomskut Park, includes Bilingual Family Concert with Tom and Laurie - 10 a.m. (Discovery Center if rain).

Sat. 5/6 - Grapevines, Trees and Shrubs: What Do These Things Mean for Birds? 1 - 2 p.m. at Discovery Center.

Sun. 5/7 - Fun Bike Rides - 1 p.m., 12 mile and 6 mile routes, featuring completed sections of the Turners Falls Bike Path. Begins at trail start at Unity Park. Led by Dave Carr of Basically Bicycles.

Community Poetry Reading - 4 p.m. at Brick House. Be there square?

On-going - Historical Walking Tour Booklets available at Discovery Center & Carnegie Library. Maps available featuring participants, restaurants, and crabapple tree locations. For more information: contact the Carnegie Library, 201 Ave. A, 863-3214.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES May 1st - 5th

MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth St., Turners Falls, is open Mon. - Fri. from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Make meal reservations a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on the machine when the center is closed (863-9357). Mealsite manager is Chris Richer. The center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. Transportation to the center can be provided. Special trip coordinator is Jean Chase. Make trip reservations by calling 772-6356. Payment and menu choice is due three weeks prior to trip.

Monday, 1st
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11:30 a.m. PACE Aerobics
Tuesday, 2nd

9:30 a.m. Aerobics
Wednesday, 3rd
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 4th
1 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 5th
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. PACE Aerobics

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving, (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at (413) 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shop-

FACES & PLACES

Over 100 people turned up at the Erving Public Library on Wednesday, April 19th to experience a menagerie of exotic animals provided by the Southwick Zoo's traveling Zoomobile.

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For information call 863-9200

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Wendell Litter Pick-up Planned

BY ANNIE DIEMAND
WENDELL - On Saturday, May 6th, the town truck will be picking up bagged litter along roadways in town. In years past, townspeople would meet in the center of town and decide which roads were to be done, pick up the trash and then a few of us would drive around in a truck, gathering the bags and piles and head for WRATS. Some families with small children stayed at the playground and cleaned

up there. It has been several years since we have organized a litter pickup and playground cleanup. This year, we are asking townspeople to take a section of road ahead of time, leave the bags and piles safely on the side of the road, and call either Ted Lewis at 978-544-3329 or Anne Diemand at 978-544-6111. We will pick them up on May 6th, starting at 9:30 a.m. We ask you to call before that day to let us

know what sections of roadway you are planning on cleaning up. Instead of gathering on the common and deciding what sections to do, we wanted to try something a little different this time. We thought residents might be encouraged to take walks the week before, and bring along a trash bag along to fill. If there are folks interested in working on the playground, or if someone needs trash bags, please call me.

LAKE PLEASANT NOTES

Ice Off the Lake

From the "It's Still News If You Haven't Read It Yet" department, post-mistress Joyce Cote reports that Mark Bordeaux and Darlene Valeri both won the *Ice Off the Lake Contest* this year. The annual village lottery has grown so popular, they had to hold two separate drawings; too many contestants entered for the number of possible date.



Lake Pleasant

The winning date? This year it was March 14th. How is the winning date determined? By tradition, the ice is officially declared to be 'off the lake' when the post-mistress, crossing the Bridge of Names on her way home from work at 5 p.m., can see no ice on the lake from the middle of the bridge.

Easter Egg Hunt Canceled

The Lake Pleasant Women's Club annual Easter Egg hunt was canceled this year on account of rain. However, rumor has it the Easter bunny left a large number of Easter eggs hidden in one of the member's homes, and the

club has not yet decided what to do with them. Stay tuned.

Norma's Park to be Discussed

The Montague Parks and Recreation will hold a public meeting to discuss the future of Norma's Park, a children's playground on the west side of the village, across Lake Pleasant Road, near Walcott Street. The park was named after Norma Kennedy, who organized and cleared the land for the park with Beatrice Gagne and Lillian Ford. Norma died young, and the village decided to name the park in her honor.

Montague Parks and Recreation department director Jon Dobosz said, "the playground equipment in that park is older

than I am." Safety concerns will force the town to remove the old equipment soon. Before that happens, Dobosz would like to have input from the village on the future use of Norma's Park.

Dobosz said children's playground equipment is available on the post office side of the village in Rutter's Park, on the village common. On that side, there is also a basketball court. But Joyce Cote pointed out children from the west side of the village are more likely to play in the park near their homes.

Reflecting on changing village demographics, Cote said, "We used to have 80 kids come out for the Christmas party each year. Now we get about 40." Still, Cote said she would be sad to see the playground equipment at Norma's Park removed and not replaced.

The public meeting will be held Thursday, May 11th at 7 p.m. in the Thompson Temple, across from the post office, on Montague Avenue in Lake Pleasant.

Public Meeting on Lake Pleasant Park

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the inhabitants of the town of Montague are hereby notified that the Montague Parks & Recreation Department will be sponsoring a meeting regarding Norma's Park in the village of Lake Pleasant. The meeting will be held on Thursday, May 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the Thompson Temple, across from the post office, on Montague Avenue in Lake Pleasant. Public participation is welcomed.

EAGLE WATCH

Second Chick Stronger

BY PAT CARLISLE
GREAT FALLS - Good news! Our second little eaglet is doing much better this week. We have watched closely and are happy to observe the frequent feedings followed by defecation, which proves the food is being consumed.



PHOTO COURTESY OF www.nu.com/eagles/default.asp

This second baby is still very small, but now appears much stronger. We will now watch with joy and relief, looking forward to another successful year of raising young on the Eagle nest.

Those who do not have local access television are welcome to the Great Falls Discovery Center for TV viewing, live from the nest. The Discovery Center is open Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Images from the nest are also available on the web at www.nu.com/eagles/default.asp.

Unexpected Guests



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE DEPARTMENT

This classic shot from the photo file of the Montague Police Department shows a 53 Dodge truck making an unexpected appearance in the kitchen of a house on G Street, years ago. The firefighter in the new doorway is Francis Sulda; a note on the back of the photo reads: 'Traceski House.'

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Assistant Editor Kathleen Litchfield	"The Voice of the Villages"	
Editorial Assistants Nina Bander Hugh Corr	Founded by Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold August, 2002	Technical Administrators Michael Muller Michael Farnick
Circulation Jean Hebdon Julia Bowden Smith Philippe Deguise		



Remembering Norm Fuller

CHRIS SAWYER-LAUCANNO MONTAGUE - I did not know Norm Fuller well. Our relationship was built around chats about my neighbor Alice Abercrombie, for whom Norm had 'worked' since he was 14 or 15. 'Worked' is in quotation marks because Norm did far more than work for Alice, who in her later years rarely stirred from the house. Norm, literally, took care of everything for her. He visited almost daily, bought her groceries, took her to the doctor, took her pets to the vet, repaired this and that in the house, made sure her yard



Norm Fuller

voted for a Democrat, then added that, nonetheless, she was proud to do so.

It was Norm, naturally, who was the first on the scene when Alice died. He would drive by every morning; if Alice's drapes were open he knew everything was all right. On the morning of her death in March of 2003 the drapes were closed, a signal that things were not right. He went in and found Alice slumped over her kitchen table, victim of a heart attack. It was Norm who attended to the funeral arrangements, placed her dog in a home, and settled the estate. Little did I or anyone know at the time that

was in tip-top shape. He also brought her the news of what was going on in Montague, and listened to her stories, often sharing in her memories of earlier times in our town. He was ever attentive, never intrusive. When Alice, who was a devoted Red Sox fan, expressed a desire to see her team play, Norm bought tickets to Fenway and whisked the reclusive lady into Boston for a game against the Yankees.

I'm not sure who enjoyed the event more, Norm or Alice, but it was a subject of conversation for a good while. The Sox won, incidentally.

Alice had a mind of her own, as did Norm, and they often agreed to disagree. Alice was a lifelong Republican but when Norm ran for the board of assessors as a Democrat, Alice crossed party lines and voted for him. She told me later that it was the only time she'd ever

just a few years later, it would be Norm who would no longer be among us. But like Alice, he will not be forgotten in Montague.

Betty Waidlich, who served on the board of assessors with Norm, had this to say about him. "I will miss Norm terribly. I rode horseback with his uncle Frank, from Northfield, and knew his mother and father quite well. I knew Norm and his brother growing up.

"He had a great sense of humor. He was a very astute, intelligent guy. His main thrust on the board of assessors, as in life, was to be fair. He was a real family man. He loved his family, and did everything he could for them."

Norm Fuller passed away Monday, April 17th, at the Franklin Medical Center, after a brief illness. He was 62.

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May Day in Montague

Welcome in the spring at the Montague May Celebration! The celebration will take place on Sunday, May 7th at the Montague Center town common from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Festivities will include May pole dancing, singing of May

carols, and Morris dancing. The Juggler Meadow Morris Team, Wake Robbin Morris Team, Hartsbrook Garland Dancers, Guiding Star Clog Morris Team and Johnny Jumpups will all be performing. The celebration commences with a procession (in

which all are invited) beginning at the Montague Center post office at 10:30 a.m. and arriving at the town green.

The event is free, and all participants are encouraged to bring a blanket and picnic lunch. Call 367-9923 for additional information.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Towards Solartopia

On May 6th and May 7th Harvey Wasserman, Free Press senior editor and former denizen of Montague will speak in Brattleboro, VT and Northampton, MA. Wasserman is a senior advisor to Greenpeace USA and the Nuclear Information & Resource Service. He is co-author of six books, including four on nuclear power and renewable energy, and two histories of the United States. Wasserman's journalistic writings and columns appear in major newspapers and magazines worldwide. He worked as a radio talk show host and appeared on several hundred radio and TV programs over the years.

In 1973 Montague became a launching pad for the grassroots anti-nuclear movement. Wasserman helped coin the phrase 'No Nukes' in the successful fight against twin reactors targeted for his community. In 1976 he helped organize the Clamshell Alliance, which staged the first mass demonstrations against the Seabrook nuclear plant.

Wasserman taught history and journalism at Hampshire

College and traveled around the world, speaking and writing against nuclear power. Most recently he has focused on the rising renewable energy industry. In 2002 he co-authored, with legendary windpower pioneer Dan Juhl of Pipestone, Minnesota, *Harvesting Wind Energy as a Cash Crop: A Guide to Locally Owned Wind Farming* (www.danmar.us).

Wasserman lives in Ohio, ground zero of 2004's vote fraud debacle that returned George W. Bush to the White House. Read all about it in Wasserman's most recent book, *How the GOP Stole America's 2004 Election and Is Rigging 2008* (with Bob Fritakis). Journey to a greener future in Wasserman's forthcoming *Solartopia, our Green Powered Earth A.D. 2030*. Speakers will also address license termination

at Vermont Yankee as an opportunity to transform energy production in the tri-state area, and how people power can make it happen.

For more information: <http://www.nukebusters.org>

Wasserman will speak May 6th, at 8 p.m. in the River Garden, Brattleboro, VT and on May 7th, 7 p.m. at the First Churches, Northampton, MA

- Deb Katz, Citizens Awareness Network

We welcome your letters.

The Montague Reporter

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American Dead in Iraq

as of 4/26/06

US FORCES Casualties in Iraq as of this date	2,390
Afghanistan	281
Wounded in Action	18,369

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GUEST EDITORIALS

Navigating a Difficult Budget Year

BY SUE GEE

In the recent few years, the Gill-Montague Regional School District has consciously engaged in a conservative approach to budget planning in recognition of the reductions in state and federal aid and the limitations of local resources. This has led to the following major steps:

- Three years ago, twenty-four teaching positions were cut in response to a 20% rollback in state funding. Since then, less than a third of these positions have been restored.

- Two years ago, our budget was a 'level services' budget, with a commitment to make no more cuts. Because of the mismatch of timing between the development of budgets for cities and towns, and the legislature's laborious budget-setting process, we had to return to the towns of Montague and Gill state funds allocated too late to be used that year. In Montague, these funds were set aside in a special 'education stabilization' fund, earmarked for future educational programs.

- Last year, the FY2005-2006 school budget was again a 'level services' budget. Although we were successful in maintaining programs, the budget continues to grow due to unavoidable fixed costs and mandates. One thing that helped us a great deal in our budget planning was a continuation of the town meetings in Gill and Montague. This extension postponed final budget approval until June, allowing for the legislative process to be completed. This worked very well, and the school district was

able to realize additional revenue to lower assessments, keeping the increase to an amount the towns could afford.

- Now, in preparation for FY2006-2007, we have already combined two top administrative positions into one - a principal of secondary education - to avoid increasing the administrative side of our budget. This must be considered merely a temporary measure because the supervision for both the high school and middle school programs will be severely stretched.

To a considerable extent, the above reflects well on the fiscal collaboration process with the towns that has been in effect for three years now. The school committee has hosted an annual series of public meetings, with the purpose of establishing transparency - no hidden agendas in the budgets for the school district and the towns. These meetings serve to build rapport between the school and the towns. Even though we continue to present a level services budget, demonstrating our commitment to fiscally prudent management, without more Chapter 70 state funds, we struggle to meet the gap.

Whether we will know by the time of our town meetings what the end result of state funding levels will be for the coming year is questionable. Without such clarity, we will be asking for the towns to approve our budget based on our best guess. Not only do we have to keep an eye on the overall state appropriation for schools, but we also have to watch for the details in the formula for distributions



Sue Gee

among school districts.

The reality at GMRSD is that the year ahead presents many budget challenges not faced in recent years. The rising costs of oil, gas and utilities pushes all of our budgets - cities, towns, schools, businesses, and households - above the limits we projected a year ago. Health care insurance costs are at an all-time high.

Where does this leave us at this important juncture? Without either an increase in state funding, which we will not know in time for the town meetings, or an override of Proposition 2-1/2, which must be approved by the voters, the additional cuts that would be necessary are difficult to contemplate.

We may have to cut more teachers, even though every one of them is absolutely essential to our mission - and cutting teaching positions would automatically increase class sizes. We may have to cut into extra-curricular programs. We may have to increase user fees for athlet-

ics, and parking. We may even have to close a school.

To try to avoid the most drastic changes, here are some suggestions that can help us navigate through the current dilemma:

- The collaboration between school districts and towns must continue to place emphasis on the timing of the process. Early May town meetings are out of synch with the legislature's budget process. Stretching out the scheduling for town meetings to accommodate this discrepancy can mean the difference between a school budget that supports a viable, vital educational program, fostering productive citizens and employees for the future, and a school budget that is pared so sharply as to drive students away to other districts, leaving the towns with a shrunken school population.

- Consideration should be given to using the funds that were set aside in the special educational stabilization fund two years ago, resulting from a 'windfall' in state funding received after the budget had been approved. The commitment of these stabilization funds to close the budget gap could be made contingent upon the final outcome of the state budget.

- More citizens should get involved right now in the debate at the state level to help address the inadequacy of funding for public education, especially in small regional districts such as ours. This is not just for people with school-age children. It involves all people who have a vested interest in their commu-

nity. A community thrives when its schools have an excellent reputation and provide a high quality educational experience for all students. The present funding is grossly inadequate, based on an outdated formula that does not address the needs of students and teachers in the 21st century.

- Parents and other community members should visit schools. These are your schools. Attend events that students present - plays, concerts, team sports, art exhibits, potluck dinners, talent shows, community nights. Each school has a school-community council that represents all of the constituents, and each has an active PTO. Please get involved. The more first-hand knowledge you have about the school, the better you can assist in addressing the issues of improving the programs for the good of all.

And, please be aware that my door is always open - and my coffee pot is always on - for those who have questions about the budget, our educational programs, No Child Left Behind mandates, or any other concerns about our schools. I encourage emails at the address on our website - www.gmrdsd.org.

In spite of these trying fiscal times, our school district's achievements continue to grow, and we take great pride in celebrating the accomplishments of our teachers, staff, and students, knowing that the Gill-Montague Regional School District is contributing to the success of the community.

Sue Gee is the superintendent of the Gill-Montague schools.

THE VIEW FROM EAST MINERAL ROAD

Airport Expansion Vital to the Future of Montague

BY BETTY WAIDLICH

MILLERS FALLS - The airport expansion is looming large on the town meeting agenda, May 6th. My opinion on the subject is that while we have funding available, (97.5% of the \$7 million expansion will be paid by state and federal funds, leaving the town to pick up the tab for only \$175,000) we should act. I firmly believe the airport is important and vital to the future of the town of Montague. I realize this is a

somewhat touchy subject, made more so by the large chip carried around on the shoulders of our airport commission members. The commission has been beleaguered by just about everyone, and, while some of this may be fueled by the somewhat less than warm and fuzzy personalities of commission members past and present, more rancor is caused by a lack of information on the part of Montague's residents. This poor commission has been hounded

by lawsuits, misunderstandings of how things work and so forth.

I see a need for an extended runway and I believe in time an expanded runway will prove to be an invaluable asset to the town. There are many of the new class of small jets being built, and they, in turn, will attract the sort of wealthy businesses we need to keep the towns coffers overflowing. As far as the impact on the town, the smaller jets will actually not

be any noisier or more obvious than the planes using the airport now, because they will take off and land quickly, thereby keeping the nuisance level down.

We need to send out signals that our town is forward thinking, and that our industrial park is ready to do business, and awaiting new and vibrant industrial development. Ease of access to an airport may be a little slow in gaining popularity, but I know the public will be glad it is there when we can use

it to its fullest extent.

On another topic, I realize many of our tax laws are mandated by the state, but there are a few improvements I would like to see given some thought. I intend to ask our congresspeople about the feasibility of changing some of the laws to make things somewhat easier on certain taxpayers. The so-called 'river view' tax, is not imposed because some residents get to gaze at a lovely

see AIRPORT pg 6

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MCTV Schedule

Channel 17
Friday, April 28 through Thursday, May 4

Friday, April 28
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM GMEF GALA Interview
 7:30 PM Montague Update
 8:30 PM Hopeton Jervis: The Jamaican Troubador
 9:00 PM From the MCTV Archives

Saturday, April 29
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM GMRSD School Committee Meeting 4/25/06
 9:30 PM It's Dan Seiden's Show
 10:30 PM From the MCTV Archives

Sunday, April 30
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM Montague Selectboard Meeting 4/24/06
 9:00 PM Montague Update
 10:00 PM From the Discovery Center

Monday, May 1
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM Montague Selectboard LIVE
 9:30 PM It's Dan Seiden's Show
 10:30 PM From the MCTV Archives

Tuesday, May 2
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM Montague Update
 8:00 PM Hopeton Jervis: the Jamaican Troubador
 8:30 PM GaiaVision
 9:30 PM Montague Special Town Meeting 3/23/06

Wednesday, May 3
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM GMRSD School Committee Meeting 4/25/06
 9:30 PM Montague Update
 10:30 PM From the MCTV Archives

Thursday, May 4
 Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
 7:00 PM GMRSD School Committee Meeting 4/25/06
 9:30 PM GaiaVision
 10:30 PM It's Dan Seiden's Show

AIRPORT

continued from pg 5

water scene. Rather higher assessments in these districts are mandated by the prices received when other homeowners in the same area sell their houses. If neighbors on both sides of your spot in the sun get half a million bucks for their houses, what do you suppose that makes your house worth?

I'd like to see some way for the elderly, and the financially suffering taxpayer get some sort of help with this situation.

The other tax problem that upsets me is the fact that even very small farmers, hiring no one but family to work with them on harvesting crops, have to pay a commercial rate for their property tax because they do raise a 'product' for sale. I read that in one of the towns east of here, this problem is addressed by imposing a com-

mercial tax rate only those businesses with ten or more employees. I do intend to get to my congresspeople on this one, also.

Then we get to the Elks Club. After the Elks refine their plans for a new Lodge on Millers Falls Road, perhaps they could sweeten the pot a little by offering some local community service, such as helping to police and clean up the Montague Plains, or offering public paces to play tennis, or whatever else was deemed appropriate. The Elks club members need to realize that in spite of paying their own way to the sewer line at Winthrop Street, once they arrive at that point, then all taxpayers will help to defray the addition of the sewer and wastewater coming from this establishment, which, by the sound of things, is proposed to be huge (20,000 square feet, with parking for 300 cars)! Maybe the club members can

cut back a little on their ambitious plans, and make things a little more realistic, and cost effective.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Damn Hoovers on the Millers River

Wednesday 4-19

9:12 a.m. Report of illegal dumping on Dorsey Road. Nearly 30 vacuum cleaners were dumped near the Millers River.

Thursday 4-20

10:15 a.m. Report of an erratic operator on Warner Street.

Friday 4-21

3:55 p.m. Report of subject throwing rocks at passing vehicles on Old State Road. Advised to stop.

Saturday 4-22

8:00 p.m. Responded to a medical emergency at an Old State Road address. Subject transported to hospital.

Monday 4-24

1:05 p.m. Assisted American Modular with

two wide load tractor trailer units.

3:42 p.m. Assisted Montague police with traffic on Millers bridge for report of a possible school bus fire that turned out to be defective brakes.

Tuesday 4-25

10:00 p.m. Report of a two-car motor vehicle accident on Route 2, west of the village. Found tractor trailer unit struck by another tractor trailer unit that had fled the scene.

12:05 p.m. Arrested

[REDACTED] for speeding, failure to stop for a police officer, operating motor vehicle to endanger, and operating under the influence of liquor (4th offence).

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NOTES FROM THE APRIL 20TH WENDELL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Enough Money for Town Center Septic

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - On Thursday, April 20th, twenty Wendell citizens took nine minutes to complete a special town meeting, with five articles on the warrant. Article One, to authorize an additional \$26,208 for the town center septic system was passed over at the request of the selectboard. Janet Swem, the town accountant, had discovered there already was enough money authorized for the septic system.

Articles Two and Three passed unanimously. The former authorized payment of \$2500 to attorney William Solomon for work he did for the Zoning Board of Appeals in relation to the cell tower hearings. That bill will be paid with money remaining in the Meltzer demolition account. Article Three rescinded an article from the June 8th special town meeting, which appropriated \$5630.25 for legal

expenses for closing on Fiske Pond. That money was paid from a different account, because the account authorized at the June 8th meeting held insufficient funds.

Article Four amended an article from the annual town meeting which read, "Assistants to the Assessors," rather than "Assistant to the Assessors," and passed with a majority. Article Five was to adjourn.

CONTRACTS
continued from pg 1

system, eliminating the need to raise and appropriate an additional \$21,000 at last week's special town meeting (see page 7).

On the town office and library bid, selectboard member Dan Keller reported the building committee had met with architect Margo Jones, project manager Mark Sullivan, and a representative of Handford Construction, the general contractor that gave the lowest bid. Instead of allowing only a percentage, as was suggested at the last selectboard meeting, Handford Construction is willing to pass on to the town 100% of any savings made by cost cutting measures. Together, the architect, project manager, building committee and Handford were able to trim the budget by \$197,000, without compromising the architecture or the feel of the buildings. Using simpler but still good solid interior doors in the library will save \$18,000. The rear skylight would not be installed in the office building, but framing will allow a future opening for should funds materialize.

The meeting, in Greenfield ran overtime, and Keller, selectboard chair Ted Lewis, and Sullivan all got parking tickets while they were saving construction costs.

Librarian Rosie Heidkamp has located used shelving, and possibly office furniture, from Suffolk University in Boston. A

U-Haul will be rented, and a crew of volunteers assembled on Sunday, May 7th, to drive out and pick up the shelving, saving the town more than \$18,000. New Salem will team up with the Wendell crew that day (more volunteers still needed: call 978-544-3559) to pick up shelving for their town, saving a similar sum for their new library, planned to open in July.

Additionally, a donor, Dilman Dolan of Easthampton, a former student of Wendell library's Trustee Emerita Marion Herrick is offering up to \$25,000 in matching funds for donations to the Wendell library construction. To take advantage of this opportunity, donations are encouraged to be sent to Friends of the Wendell Library, marked 'Herrick Fund,' at P.O. Box 133, Wendell, MA 01379.

Keller said the town has until Wednesday, April 26th to award the general contract for the town office and new library construction. Some funding details still need work, but he thought the selectboard should vote to accept the bid. Lewis said, "We can start before the USDA loan is completely finalized, because the first money the town is paying out will come from stabilization." The board voted to award the contract to Handford Construction for \$2,357,255.

Lewis said the move from the old town office building went well, with work being done by volunteers and town officials. Tim Aldrich of New Salem will tow the temporary storage trail-

er to the recycling station, instead of to the front of the fire station and highway garage, to ease the crowding at the highway garage. Back at the old office building, removal of asbestos floor tile is complete and the original local yellow pine floor is exposed. It has holes from carpet tacks, but it looks good, and selectboard member Dan Keller suggested the building committee keep in place if possible.

Keller reported the town's new well off Cooleyville Road stabilized at 80 feet down, after 48 hours of pumping two gallons a minute. The water was clear and tasted good; it is being tested now.

In Other Business

The Class III license hearing for John Germaine's possible purchase of property from Robin Pierce was continued for a month.

ZBA members Myron Becker, Lisa Winter, Steve Gross and clerk, Zenia Wild, and the planning board, Deirdre Cabral, Christine Texiera, and Jenny Gross, jammed into the small office to discuss concerns about their workloads, and which board should have responsibility for granting special permits. Discussion was long and inconclusive, and at the end selectboard member Christine Heard said peoples' views had been aired, but she did not feel a consensus for shifting the workload had been reached.

Cabral said the ZBA has

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL PLANNING BOARD

Planning Board Plans to add Part-time Clerk

BY DAVID DETMOLD

WENDELL - Meeting in tight quarters on April 25th, in the temporary office trailers at the Highway Garage, the Wendell planning board reviewed their '07 budget, which will include up to \$1000 for hiring a part-time clerk. "The selectboard supported a move to add a clerk," to ease the planning board's workload, said planning board chair Dede Cabral, who also reported a positive response from finance committee chair Michael Idoine on the topic of adding a clerk.

The planning board has held to a budget of around \$750 a year for some time, said Cabral, though she noted the board used to have a clerk in years past. She proposed to pay a clerk \$10 an hour to keep minutes and handle notices for two, two-and-a-half to three hour meetings a month, with occasional extra duties.

Due to confusion in billing procedures for legal notices the board is required to place in a local newspaper, some bills have not been paid, and the town clerk has forwarded those bills for payment to the town coordinator, Cabral said. This year's back due bills will be covered from a reserve account, she said, but she proposed adding \$500 to the

planning board's budget to streamline the process for paying for legal notices in the future. This will bump the planning board's '07 request up above the \$2000 mark, but planning board member Christine Texiera defended the amount as necessary. "We have been good stewards of public money," she said.

The planning board has asked the selectboard to help place a measure before town meeting to reduce the number of places the planning board needs to use to post public notices of hearings in town. Currently, the board has to post notices at seven locations in Wendell, including some that keep limited hours of business. Reducing that number would "eliminate some tedious driving around town," Texiera said.

The board worked late into the night on Tuesday, going over minutes from the numerous hearing continuations for the site plan review of the Lake Grove at Maple Valley School's proposed new barn and therapeutic farm animal program. At the outset of the meeting, Cabral told local residents concerned with the proposed Lake Grove expansion she hoped the planning board would come to a decision on the matter within a month.

responsibility for residential and agricultural permits. She and Gross said the planning board is barely able to keep up with their workload, with bylaw changes, wind power concerns, and cluster development; they have not been able to look to the future, or follow through with initiatives like the Community Development Plan. Gross said that Wendell still does not have 10% deed restricted affordable housing, and was still vulnerable to ANR (Approval Not Required) development. She said that clerical work, including posting meetings is a real time consumer. Cabral suggested the threshold that triggers a

site plan review could be raised.

Steve Gross and Myron Becker both said they had overextended themselves during the cell tower hearings, and if any more work were given to the ZBA, they would be unable to do it. Becker said that state law clearly defines the role of the ZBA as a board that deals with appeals of zoning laws. Their role is to override (or not) decisions of the zoning officer, the building inspector. Steve Gross suggested that the planning board should also have a clerk, and Keller encouraged the planning board to put in a budget request for a clerk at annual town meeting.

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BRIDGES

continued from pg 1

- the only suit I saw that afternoon (the better-heeled were in blazers or taking the whole affair much more casually) - combined with his thin straight hair and darting eyes make me think of him as a starling, except maybe a little more scared. He does a decent job of fitting in, though, which is remarkable and due largely to the casual atmosphere created somehow by the food and music. Somehow someone has made a room that can hold upwards of 1000 people feel strangely cozy and roomy but intimate.

Maybe it's that we're all standing on the stage, instead of watching it. We're in the area that's normally behind the screen, at the Academy of Music in Northampton. Houdini disappeared (through the door in the floor) here - appeared, too - as did Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, and Ruth Gordon, among others. On Sunday, April 23rd, though, it's Jeff Bridges' turn to be on the stage and to be playing the part of himself, more or less, while a crowd of the concerned, the spiritual, well-heeled, movie buffs or some combination of all of these snack on herbed chevre, oil cured black olives, Bourgogne, pinot grigio, olive oils, and lemony seltzer. It's a wine and cheese reception. Tomorrow Bridges will lead a workshop on acting called Zen Mind, Artist's Mind.

Emily (my closest town meeting representative and my wife) and I, have spent the previous week watching Jeff Bridges films: *Fearless*, *Arlington Road*, *Starman*, *The Last Picture Show*, and *The Door in the Floor*. We've also reprised some select parts of *The Big Lebowski* - in an attempt to prepare for this assignment. All those movies, and I'm still not sure I feel like we're finally up to the strikingly strange and rather formless task of meeting a movie star, talking with him, taking pictures of him, and writing about it. I can't even quite figure out why meeting a star is a big deal. Although I'm sure there's something philosophically problematic about saying it, I think all of life is surreal. It's problematic because if everything is surreal then the word really just means real. Nevertheless, if questioned, I'll cite my experience this afternoon as key evidence.

Ready? Tell me if you think this is weird: I'm at a Zen event

watching a movie where the term "fruit cup" is just one of the many, um "colorful" terms being used for the female genitalia. The Zen Peacemakers are today's sponsors, and they're a group dedicated to engaged Buddhism in the form of social action and to serious Zen study. It's a strange fit. *The Amateurs*

*This is your
life without
much in the
cupboard.
Make the best
you can with
what you have.
Any questions?*

is a movie about a hapless group of citizens, mostly disaffected working-class guys, who gather together to improve their collective luck by making a very dirty movie. And these guys do a lot of research and discussion about who and what should be in a good dirty flick to make sure it sells - and after the graphic discussion, then they start to shoot it. (I'd like to add that I never quite realized how many terms there were for the regions of our bodies we use for sex nor that there were so many terms for the things we do or sometimes think we might want to do or sometimes think we might want to see someone do or sometimes just think we might want to think about others doing with those regions - but there sure is a lot of talk about these various permutations in *The Amateurs*.) But the really strange thing is that it's a feel-good movie - *The Full Monty* meets *The Big Lebowski* - or as the director, Michael Traeger, reportedly said - it's as if Frank Capra made a porno.

While I'm watching Tim McGee, though, it's safe to say none of this is on my mind. He's here with his friend Scott, who also works at the post office, and Scott and I are watching as Tim queues up to try to get in a word with Jeff Bridges, who's not signing autographs or hobnobbing so much as he is just chatting amicably with anyone who approaches. After first meeting Tim and Scott, who were huddled between the cheese and beverage tables as I gathered some cheese and beverage, I'd encouraged Tim to go

up and talk to Bridges, who by all accounts is a genuinely warm... genuinely warm, um, 'guy'? Hmm - no 'guy' isn't right - should I say 'dude'? - hmmm, no, actually, I think I should say 'star' - yes. He's a genuinely warm star with whom the press, including me, has just finished conducting a fun and rambling interview. The interview is full of Bridges' tangential stories, and it contains two occasions during which Bridges' right hand is on my left knee. I never know what to do when someone touches my knee - unless it's in one of those situations where the knee is really just the beginning of the contact - and this wasn't a beginning, just a friendly gesture, so I grinned, listened to the story and kept taking notes.

Tim is an amateur. I think I heard him say he studied animation in college. He has some kind of movie concept he wants to pitch in short form to Bridges, and Scott tells me Tim's been practicing his pitch-script all morning. From across the room, we're trying to watch Tim approach Jeff without looking like we're looking. But it's clear even from across the stage that once Tim starts talking, things are visibly tense around the star for the first time all day. Instead of fluid conversation and a friendly distance among those in Bridges' mini-'court,' there's a bit of a gap around Bridges, as if his aura has bumped up a notch and kicked everyone back an extra half a foot. Uh-oh; poor Tim. We turn away. But we turn back after not very long, and this time Tim's got a piece of paper out and seems to be taking notes. Bridges is fielding the awkward moment brilliantly - giving Tim some kind of hot tip - and even if it's just the phone number of his driver or personal hair stylist (both credited in the movie we see later), he's been able to put the situation at ease. (By the way, today Jeff's hair and appearance are more Sunday morning than Saturday afternoon - though he's got on a nice gray blazer and a silk cerulean button up with black pants and brown loafers, he also has about half a day's growth on his chin and long casually slicked-back hair. It all looks good on him and exudes the kind of casual that I think we'd all hoped for from a star whose reputation is for being genuine and down-to-earth.)

Our time with Bridges comes earlier in the afternoon but is quite similar to Tim's. It's clear

we're amateurs. First of all, we arrive way too early. Second of all, let me say that I knew he was a star, but I had no idea how much of a star he was until I began preparing for the interview and this article, and I am still feeling woefully behind on necessary research.

I found out by watching the slew of Jeff Bridges movies, movies I probably should have seen a long time ago, that Bridges is sometimes like Harrison Ford - except that Bridges does a much better job at actually acting his roles - and sometimes sort of a Kurt Russell with a far greater depth. He's a Tom Hanks without being annoying. He's a Donald Sutherland who doesn't seem to hog the screen. With my research it becomes clear that any labeling I am going to do of Bridges is wrong. He's been in something like 60 movies, and each new role I watch breaks the previous pattern I thought I'd found. Some of this isn't pointed out to me until during the interview, when I ask Bridges why he thinks he gets cast into roles where his character has some hidden wisdom, has something to teach. Another interviewer asked me if I'd seen

"Lebowski festivals," during which fans dress as the movie's characters and play out their favorite scenes. For a guy who's here to talk about Zen, he begins to seem very non-nothing, non-simple - complex, really. Plus: he plays guitar (some of his music is featured in *The Amateurs*), he's a photographer (he's released a book of on-the-scene panoramic shots taken with a widelux camera - a camera that actually pans as it's taking the picture, allowing a careful subject to be in a picture twice if he or she wishes and is quick... all this according to Bridges who began using the camera when he was in high school), and he's a sketch artist (his sketches were featured in the movie *The Door in the Floor*).

Bridges is in our region to help kick off the arts programs at the new Maezumi Institute in Montague, the educational center of the Zen Peacemakers, on Ripley Road. The Zen Peacemakers is an international organization, started by Bernie Glassman in the 1980s in New York. Glassman received Dharma transmission (the authority to teach Zen) not long before and has since become



PHOTO: EMILY BREWSTER

Bernie Glassman, founder of the Zen Peacemakers

Jagged Edge. I hadn't. (I have now, and suffice it to say that the pattern I'd established has now been sufficiently shattered.)

And as if the changeling of him weren't enough, some of Bridges' personal favorites of the movies he's made are some of his most obscure: *American Heart*, and *Fearless*. He made his first film in 1951 (*The Company She Keeps*), in which he plays an infant at a train station. He's been nominated for four Academy Awards, and his character "The Dude" in *The Big Lebowski* (1998) has helped to spawn underground

one of the foremost practitioners of engaged Buddhism, a western take on the spiritual tradition that for 2500 years has more revered the monk and his detachment from society than the activist and her aim to relieve suffering not through detachment solely but also through active compassion. Whew. Got all that?

Ready for more? If one of your hands is bleeding, it is not a sacrifice for the other hand to come to its aid. This paraphrase of one of Glassman's contributions to contemporary Buddhism came from Chris see BRIDGES pg 9

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BRIDGES

continued from pg 8

Queen, a lecturer on the study of world religions at Harvard (and a part-time resident of Wendell). Queen is the author of a number of books on contemporary Buddhism, and he credits Glassman with being one of the first to popularize Buddhism in the US. Glassman's teaching has been of a remarkably diverse nature; he's establishing companies to assist with poverty, developed a path of Zen study, and received a PhD in Applied Mathematics. But back to the hands: just as one hand should come to the aid of the other, we must recognize our connection and come to the aid of our fellow humans; they're part of us.

If the first analogy Glassman is known for is the one of the hands, the second is the one of the cook. According to Queen, the second most enlightened person in traditional Buddhism, after the monk, is the cook. Glassman made the act of cooking the metaphorical and literal centers of his work and teaching. Glassman posits the following situation. It is the end of a long day, a long week. You have not been food shopping for a long time, and an old friend calls and asks to stop by for dinner. You, of course, say yes, and you make the best meal you can out of what you have. This is your life. This is your life without much in the cupboard. Any questions?

Make the best you can with what you have.

What Glassman makes with what he finds in his cupboard is quite unique. The Maezumi Institute is the latest concoction, the Greyston Bakery in Yonkers one of the first. It's a bakery dedicated to training and providing employment for the poor. Talk about cooking. Glassman sees and makes connections everywhere.

Both during the interview and during the reception that followed, it turns out to be much more difficult to talk with Glassman than it is to speak with Bridges. Bridges keeps an open stance: tall, eyes engaged, and clearly ready to talk. Glassman tends to be more guarded. I hesitate to say a little like Yoda might be at a wine and cheese event: slightly hunched and near-whispering to those near him. Even during the interview with Bridges and Glassman, Glassman is content to sit and listen while Bridges

gave stories as answers to our questions.

Glassman and Bridges met about five years ago in Santa Barbara, where Bridges lives, at a dinner for Ram Dass - the spiritual leader who toyed with LSD, Timothy Leary, and India, among other perhaps-more-important things. Glassman and Bridges sat next to one another, and they've been friends since. They smoke cigars together, evidently, yet another one of the unexpected revelations Glassman offers during the day.

*Maybe it's
that we're all
standing on
the stage,
instead of
watching it.*

The three tenets of the Zen Peacemakers are Not-Knowing, Bearing Witness, and Loving Action. The arts program at the Maezumi Institute is connected to the education program, which is somehow related to the three tenets. It's all connected; I'm not exactly sure how, but Glassman is. He's planning to have Bridges back next year for another set of workshops. And, there seems to be something else exciting in the works. Glassman referred to it, but refused to explain further, as "The Reunion of Heads." Have questions? Me too. Ask them.

Although this is Bridges' first trip to the Maezumi Institute, it's not the first time by any means that Bridges has worked with a group concerned with social causes. Bridges helped found the End Hunger Network in 1983. Originally dedicated to addressing world hunger, the Network's focus has shifted to hunger within the US, and Bridges' website (www.jeffbridges.com) includes a press release written by representatives from Tufts University's Center on Hunger and Poverty about the paradox of increasing poverty and hunger in the US during a strong economy. It was written in 1996, around the time the End Hunger Network produced a made-for-TV movie about hunger in America called *Hidden in America* (1996).

Glassman was intent to tell another part of Bridges' history which Glassman takes as an insight into Bridges' approach

to life. Bridges' father, Lloyd (of "Sea Hunt"), and his mother Dorothy (whose first book *You Caught Me Kissing* was published when she was 89), and his big brother Beau (whom Jeff refers to as his mentor) were driving in Manhattan when they passed a man standing atop a pile of bricks, throwing bricks at cars, including the one they were in. Lloyd Bridges asked the cabbie to stop, and jumped out of the car, dodged bricks, and made his way up to the top of the brick pile. Then he hugged his assailant and held him. No more bricks were thrown.

Although it's clear that more than acting was passed down to him, Bridges calls himself the product of nepotism, and he acknowledges more than once that the hardest part in showbiz is getting that first break. One of the ironies of his story is that his first break came so early and so easily that he didn't know he really wanted to be an actor until the filming of his 10th movie, years after he'd been nominated for an Academy Award for the first time for his role of Duane Jackson in *The Last Picture Show* (1971).

The turn from happenstance post-teen actor to serious artist happened years later. Bridges had just finished filming *The Last American Hero* (1973), based on Tom Wolfe's short story about racecar driver Junior Johnson, and he was feeling that maybe he never wanted to do another movie again. "I get tired of pretending to be somebody else, and I want to be myself." He told us it was a feeling he often has after completing a film. He was only 20.

During his post-filming malaise, Bridges got a call from John Frankenheimer asking him to play Don Parritt in the 1973 adaptation of Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*. Bridges was preparing to turn down the role when Lamont Johnson, director of *The Last American Hero* called Bridges up. Bridges says Johnson "read me the riot act" for even considering turning down the part. And Bridges realized he was being adolescent, that he needed to consider what it would be like to be a professional. It means doing your job even when you don't feel like doing it.

Normally in Hollywood, movie production works with a two-week rehearsal schedule followed by an eight-week shooting schedule. However, Frankenheimer reversed the

scheme of things. The cast spent eight weeks rehearsing, and during that time, Bridges was able to delve into the artistry of acting in a way he never had. He was surrounded by practiced actors working their craft, and for the first time he left a movie thinking "this is something I could do for the rest of my life." Frankly, I would have thought the decision, for a guy who got C's and D's in high school, had no interest in college, and whose other interests include the artistically fulfilling but financially difficult areas of music and photography, might've come easier.

Bridges recalls watching one of his first roles with his brother and father flanking him in the screening room seats. Bridges had felt quite proud of his work and had told his family about it. But when it came on the screen, the director had shot the scene focusing on another character, and when Bridges' face was finally on screen, it was as comic relief, and to great effect. The room burst into laughter, and the young Bridges was devastated. As he tells the story now, he's philosophical about it.

On a movie set, a wide array of characters comes together to make one whole. It requires coordination and sacrifice. Bridges likened the role of acting in a movie to the experience of working as an individual in the wider world. If you want to get anything done in the world, "you must give up and be willing to be the fool, to take the risk to be totally misinterpreted and fall on your ass."

Glassman then adds a point that seems out of context. He says that the problem with political solutions to social problems is that the political solutions - whether from the left or from the right - always want to leave something out. I admit I have no idea where he is coming from or how it relates to what we are talking about - until Glassman adds: It's like trying to film a movie without half of the characters. I didn't mention the difficulty of finding a director to direct the enormous cast, let alone the trouble in finding a

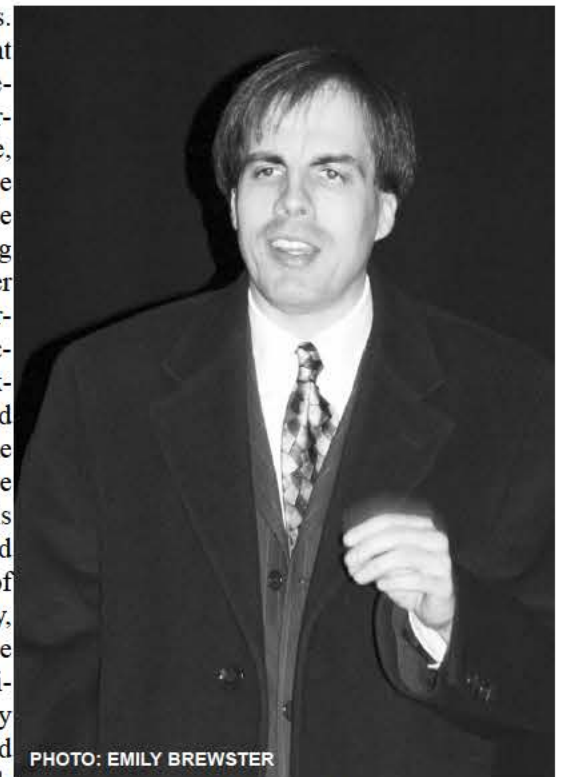


PHOTO: EMILY BREWSTER


Tim McGee of *Holyoke*

writer up to the task of the screenplay... But it is clear that Glassman and Bridges are on the same track.

Glassman discusses the need to be philosophically inclusive when acting - acting within the social sphere on social issues. And Bridges begins to talk about emptiness - about how you must give up on your expectations, because the director is going to do something different with your work than you thought you were doing. He talks about the need to be sure each new take comes out of emptiness, out of knowing nothing. Even if you're repeating the same lines over and over, you must somehow make them fresh. He says that when he must do more than one take, he does his best to shake himself up - he'll fart, do a headstand, or talk to a fly and ask it what he should do. He says the flies always say the same thing: Do Nothing.

And Bridges' character, Andy Sargeente, in *The Amateurs*, is all about Doing Nothing. Well, not really - he tries to hold down jobs (if you call walking into the boss' office and standing on his desk and urinating on the boss trying) - and he's actually obsessed with doing something. And in the process, he builds something out of nothing. He makes himself a producer working out of inexperience - and with fools. And somehow he's able to get his band of hapless friends together to make a movie. "Friends don't let friends think" (how Zen!) is one of the first good lines of the film, and it's a phrase the town uses largely see BRIDGES pg 10

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BRIDGES
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because of Andy's previous attempts to help the folks of Butterfall Fields make some money. The most notorious of his prior attempts at genius is the scheme that convinced them all to become vitamin salespeople, leaving them with plenty of vitamins to sell and not one customer to buy them.

Seeing the phrase "heart-warming" in a review or hearing it in a trailer for a movie is always a tip I appreciate. A savvy advertising exec or critic is speaking to me, saying, "Janke: don't bother with this one" - not because the movie is bad, but because it was made for somebody else. With *The Amateurs*, it was clear that the

audience at the Academy of Music was the audience for which this film had been made. Yes, think Frank Capra. Think Capra does a movie where the words "donut" and "rug" have nothing to do with a baked goods, car maneuvers, floor coverings, or toupees.

But with all of the movie's flaws, it is not difficult to forgive them. The characters themselves are charming and flawed, both as people and as portraits, and they were portrayed with turns of sarcasm and warmth. And they tried hard. They tried girl-on-girl, girl-with-toy, and, well, I won't say any more. At one point Sargentee says, "People who *do* ave time - but us people who *try*, we have no time because we're too busy trying." Sargentee is trying to

find a way to be successful to help him deal with his son, who is living with Sargentee's ex-wife and new husband in a house the size of Rhode Island. The boy has a basketball court in his room, and in the face of that, Sargentee wants to feel proud. It's a movie about trying, and how can you not root for that?

The film also has a crafty way of dealing with racism and homophobia. For comedy to be successful it must ride a thin line, and here it's artfully, if not perfectly, done. Ted Danson's closeted gay man tries so hard to be one of the guys that he brags about his non-existent exploits with women. All of his buddies know he's gay, and the portrayal comes across as caricature about two-thirds of the time. The other third, though, mixes comedy and pathos so strangely that it's a moving portrait of a man very afraid to admit to himself who he really is. The way the film plays with black stereotypes is similarly flawed and transcendent, but it's a lot harder to discuss in this almost-family-friendly piece, so I'll leave it for you to argue about over wine with friends after the kids are in bed and after you've seen the film for yourself.

But the great triumph of the movie for me is its ability to get even an ol' sourpuss like me to feel moved. The scenes when Sargentee is struggling with his relationship with his son, when the son's stepfather approaches Sargentee to ask if it's OK with him if the stepdad spends money on his son, it's heart-breaking. Here, the hardworking, luckless Sargentee says, in effect, "Yes - spend it on him. He's a great kid." And then promptly excuses himself, in a hurry to find a place where his inadequacies aren't so brazenly displayed.

After the movie, during the Q&A, we knew it was only a matter of time before someone asked Bridges a question about breaking into the film industry. Even before the question comes, Bridges talks about his positive experiences with first-time

directors, including Traeger. One man in the audience says he'd been given free tickets to the day's event at the last minute, and he found himself laughing and crying and being inspired. He stands up just to thank Bridges for coming to town. He's been a struggling musician for more than 20 years, who just signed a small record deal, and the film moved him.

And another struggling artist in the audience asks Bridges how he finds the scripts of the first time directors - and how might a first-time director get Bridges to consider a project. And Bridges says that he doesn't deal very well with scripts - they pile up along with his guilt. It takes him one or two days to just go through a script because he works at imagining himself acting it. And then we find out what he'd been telling Tim McGee.

Bridges refers to his earlier conversation with McGee, saying that he'd told a young man earlier in the day on a whim that the best way to get Bridges' attention is to send him a DVD with a pitch, and it occurs to him now that this is still the best way. He seems very open: send me a DVD and I'll watch it. "Let's see what you've got."

The other question that was inevitable comes from one of the representatives from the Maezumi Institute. And this gentleman describes his experience of watching the movie feeling like the Institute had made a grave mistake in showing this film as its kick-off event for its arts program, but that somehow the movie had taken a turn and revealed itself to be very different than he had at first thought it was going to be.

Glassman fields this one. The reason, he says, that he's happy to screen this film as a way to kick off the Maezumi Institute's arts programs was that one of his themes is "bringing all the pieces together - not leaving any pieces out.

"Whenever we leave something out, then we're in trouble." He seems to be saying that

to leave something out is to be somehow dishonest in a way that inevitably leads one down the wrong path - and to the wrong destination. How strange that this teacher would defend a movie so audaciously sexual. Instead, Glassman seems to enjoy the alliance created by screening a movie about porn for the sake of a Zen foundation known for its spiritual practice, peacemaking, and social enterprise. Glassman adds that keeping things in - that not leaving things out - "can get you into trouble, but life's about trouble." More reveling - this time in controversy.

But Glassman's been through all that - engaged Buddhism itself is seen as a pariah to some traditional Buddhists - but even knowing that part of Glassman's history, it's a surprise to see a Zen master sponsor the titillation that comes from watching some beautiful people on a large screen engage in the playful light spanking of bare buttocks. And to realize that all of this went on while those in attendance had come for a host of reasons. Socialites, fans, movie buffs, the poor struggling artist given a ticket at the coffee shop. And Tim McGee trying to get in his pitch, and it turns out that Scott is a celebrity nut. He regularly attends events like this to add to his collection of autographs.

Weird? I think so. Spiritual? Maybe. But what a stew the cook had made: the well monied, the well educated, the underemployed, sex, spirituality, struggle, and nothingness. By the end it was clear that Glassman is a master chef, making something surprising out of whatever he had, which is a lot: a connection with Bridges, a Zen institute, and an expansive take on the world. In discussing his institute he said he is here to help us do whatever it is we are trying to do, inviting us to approach him with our ideas. Clearly the rest of us are amateurs. The chef was fiercely and calmly cooking all along, only he knew what. Was he leaving anything out? Probably not.

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PARACHUTES

continued from pg 1

department trials of that device last winter.)

The parade is set to take place Sunday morning at 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., leaving from the high school, continuing past the fire station, down Montague Street to the Sheffield field, on the 7th.

The conversation switched to the Sheffield baseball field parking lot. Bartak spoke of an idea he had to seek out a donation of highway grind that could be spread out, transforming the lot into something more closely resembling blacktop.

"Everyone loves the field," said Bartak. The biggest problem is the parking lot because it is used by the Sheffield school, the league, and as a shortcut.

"We go over there and fix up the potholes in that lot every year," said Campbell. "The regrind could greatly reduce the number of potholes." In an interview after the meeting Bartak and Campbell said this could potentially save the town a lot of money, while making the lot safer for the community.

On the subject of spring doings, the selectboard approved plans for the third annual Turners

Falls Crabapple Blossom Festival to kick off Saturday, April 29th with a "Downtown Spring Cleanup" starting at the Great Falls Discovery Center. The festival will run through Sunday, May 7th, ending with a community bike ride over sections of the Turners Falls bike trail, and an afternoon poetry reading at the Brick House Community Center.

"I started the program as an offshoot of a grant I received to do tree and forestry education from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation," said event organizer

Linda Hickman, the Montague children's librarian. "Turners has a lot of crabapple trees that can be seen lining the east side of Avenue A, 7th Street, 3rd Street, and L Street. Most of them were planted 20 years ago as part of a downtown streetscape project." When they burst into bloom, the town is transformed into perfumed boulevards of pink and white blossoms.

Events scheduled for the week include "What's Bloomin' at the Carnegie Library?" taking place on the library lawn. This event will include a used book sale and a "Bad Art Show" as

well as a bilingual Family Concert at 2:00 p.m. featuring contemporary folk singers and songwriters Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson. There will also be a "Cinco de Mayo Children's Festival" taking place on May 5th from 10:00 a.m. to noon at Peskeomskut Park.

The selectboard also granted permission for use of public property on the Montague town common for annual May Day festivities, taking place this year on Sunday, May 6th, with a parade at 10:30, followed by Morris Dancing and Maypole Dances.



Notes from the Gill Montague School Committee

Budget Talks Dominate GMRSD Committee Meeting

BY PATRICK RENNICK - Superintendent Sue Gee offered her thoughts on the status of the \$16.8 million school budget request to the towns of Gill and Erving at the school committee meeting on Tuesday, April 25th. She warned of a loss of student enrollment or the possible closing of a district school in a prepared statement (see page 5), should the GMRSD be forced to pare back its third consecutive 'level service' budget any further.

"Every teacher we have is now absolutely essential to our programs," said Gee. "Class sizes will automatically go up if teachers are cut." Additional cuts may also be made in extra-curricular programs.

"We are standing our ground on these numbers," said school committee chair Mary Kociela. It will be a challenge but we are prepared for it."

This Saturday, April 29th, the long awaited Gill-Montague Education Foundation Gala featuring the renowned Elisabeth

Von Trapp, will take place at the Turners Falls High School Theater. The Gala will also feature performances by the Gill-Montague Elementary Chorus and the Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School Singers.

Von Trapp's appearance at the GMEF Gala last year helped raise a total of \$20,800, which was distributed for curriculum enhancement projects throughout the schools. Some of the programs made possible by GMEF funds during this academic year include: the Watershed Project at Gill, Understanding Habitats in our Community at Hillcrest, a video production program at Great Falls Middle School, and boy's uniforms for the varsity soccer program at Turners Falls High School, among many others.

"These mini-grants have done a lot to motivate the kids," said committee member Joyce Phillips. "Every dollar raised for this concert goes back to the

kids." Phillips added the concert was close to being sold-out.

Gee presented an update on the hiring process of the new principal of secondary education and the assistant principal of secondary education.

"We have had many applicants, calls, and comments," said Gee. "We have decided on the current dean of students for the position of assistant principal. He is truly the best qualified candidate." Earl McGraw will begin his new term on July 1st 2006. "We are currently creating a list of questions for the first round of interviews for the principal of secondary education," said Gee. There are currently four candidates. The interviews will begin on May 5th.

A number of teachers and administrators, have retired from their positions. They include: Sherry Burnham, Steve Ciechomski, Carol Gloski, Susan Hastings, Mary Lou Heselton, Carol Holubecki, and Robert Morrill.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Moose Fatality in Montague Center

Friday 4-21

10:31 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop near Equi's on Avenue A, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating with a suspended license and failure to submit motor vehicle for inspection.

Saturday 4-22

4:54 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

Sunday 4-23

5:13 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Montague City Road, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating with a suspended

license.

Monday 4-24

2:39 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop at the corner of 3rd Street and Avenue A, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor and speeding.

9:07 p.m.

[redacted] was arrested on two default warrants and a straight warrant.

Wednesday 4-26

7:31 a.m. Caller reported a car versus moose accident on Center Street in Montague Center. Moose was DOA.

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SONS

continued from pg 1

Miller's play *All My Sons* had its brilliant European debut in Paris back in 1948, and later that same year in Stockholm.

However, the play was first performed on Broadway at the Coronet Theatre, in January, 1947, a year and a half after WWII came to a close. *All My Sons* ran on Broadway for a year (exactly 328 performances) and won the Drama Critics Circle Award for best play.

Homage is given in this column to the Arena Civic Theater,

cast and crew, whose performance touched a fervent public on opening night, Friday April 21st, presenting this powerful play at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls.

The story unfolds in a Midwestern town, where the Keller family is still recovering from the war. It is 1947, and their oldest son, Larry, an air force pilot, has been listed as missing in action for three years.

It is interesting to learn, as background to the play, two years earlier, Arthur Miller had been told the true story of a girl reporting the criminal doings of

her father, selling defective parts to the army.

Quietly the Keller's backyard becomes the stage for the entire country as the drama unfolds. Exchanges take place with the neighbors. Life seems to run in a leisurely, almost normal fashion, until the truth unfolds, tragically.

The genius of Miller is to artfully juggle his characters, presenting them as if we were encountering them in day to day life.

There is more to it than just glancing at a newspaper, early morning. Or putting a flag with a blue star in the bedroom win-

dow, hoping for a son to return alive from the war.

This is the time when conscience bangs at one's door.

When each character is confronted in the arena.

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Don't miss the weekend's final performances of this audacious play - for its time - framing issues that are equally compelling today.

Set aside: April 28th or 29th at 8 p.m. Matinee on the 30th at 2 p.m.

The cast: Nick Simms, doing a superlative job in the complex

role of the father, Joe Keller; Jarice Hanson, powerfully emotive as the stricken mother and protective wife, Kate; Shaun Berry (standing in for David Healey), stepping into a powder keg role as the surviving son, Chris; Mary Annarella, in a flawless portrayal of Ann, the girl next door; Nick de Ruiter, in a crisp, conflicted portrayal as George, Ann's brother, come back to settle the score, and fine support from Phil Hayes, Patricia Brown, Joe Chimi, Emily Murphy and Henry Weiss.



Veterans Talk Back at "All My Sons"

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - Arena Civic Theatre's performance on Sunday, April 23rd of Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* at the Shea Theater featured an opportunity for the audience to discuss the play afterwards with cast members and veterans from WWII and the Iraq War. The play, written in 1947, touched on themes of survivor guilt and responsibility to a larger community, the loss of truth during wartime. As the lights came up and audience members dried their cheeks, the performance had clearly touched nerves laid open by America's present conflict.

Rich Trenholm, a Navy veteran of the Pacific Theater in WWII, said Sunday afternoon was the first time he had seen Miller's play, and he found the experience "powerful." Recalling his life during wartime, Trenholm recounted, "I quit high school in my senior year. I wanted to be in the Navy. They took me from San Francisco to Okinawa, and I went in on the invasion of Okinawa." That was a formative experience for Trenholm, who said his life changed entirely at 8:45 a.m. on August 6th with the destruction of the Japanese city of Hiroshima, when America dropped the first atomic bomb.

"I came home with the motivation - and the G-I Bill - to become a teacher, and I taught peace until the day I retired."

Trenholm, 80, lives in Greenfield. He taught American history throughout a long career.

He recalled, "Before we invaded Okinawa, I was on deck, and they announced on the PA system we would have a kamikaze attack. Every ship in the harbor fired on that one plane." Many years later, Trenholm met the son of the man who may have been the pilot of that plane, or one on an identical mission, at an art show at Smith College. The young man asked him, "Did you visualize the man you were clapping for," when his plane was shot down?

Trenholm said the memory of that day was brought home by Miller's play, which began in darkness, with the drone of jet airplanes buzzing the stage.

Captain Jill Caliri served in the Army in Baghdad during the present conflict; her boyfriend is a helicopter pilot there. She said, "Iraq is a different experience than WWII. I lived in Baghdad, in Saddam Hussein's palaces, in four-square miles of palm trees and palaces. Most of the time it was a positive experience," said Caliri, an ROTC officer at UMass, "because we were there to help people, rebuilding, and giving back to the people."

Commenting on the play, Caliri said, "Survivor guilt is very, very real." She said one of her responsibilities was to command a convoy that drove to the airport twice a week to pick up payroll for contractors rebuilding the Iraqi infrastructure. She said she never lost a man on that notorious highway, but every time she returned to the Green Zone with her command alive and intact she thought, "Today is my lucky day. Why did the stars fall in my favor? Why did I come back?" Like Trenholm, and like the character Chris Keller in Miller's play, she said, "I must be meant to do something good with that."

Stateside, Caliri said, "Things like waiting in line don't bother you as much anymore, after the mortars didn't fall on you. If you slow down on Airport Road, your knuckles go white, because that's the enemy's chance to get you." Recalling her return home, when her father picked her up in Boston and they got caught in traffic under the overpass out of Logan, "you get tense, thinking of that."

But Carili said, "You learn to appreciate normal life: your time with your family, your time with your loved ones."

One woman in the audience took Carili up on another aspect of Miller's play. "After WWII, it was pretty clear Arthur Miller approved

of the war - most everybody did," the woman said. "His focus was on people who profited," from the war. She continued, "The reason for the war in Iraq is much less certain. We read in the papers about Halliburton making so much money.... I wonder how you feel about the guilt or dishonor of making money on the war."

Carili admitted civilian contractors make a lot of money, but she said it could not be any other way. No civilian would risk their life for \$28,000 a year, the kind of money a soldier makes, to drive materiel into the Iraqi countryside, unprotected. The \$100,000 plus a year civilians are paid is just compensation for the danger contractors face in Iraq.

Carili said it would take too many soldiers on the ground in Iraq to accomplish the same tasks given to civilians to perform. "We don't have the resources. It's more effective to pay contractors to supply the

soldiers."

The woman replied, "It seems obscene to me. It really does."

"You'd have to have 300,000 soldiers over there just to keep everyone supplied," said Carili.

"It seems un-American to me," insisted the woman.

"It seems very American," rejoined Carili. "We are all very enterprising." But she said, "As a soldier, you can't think about the politics or you go crazy. You focus on the task at hand. We put running water in neighborhoods that had none; we put in sewage systems. My significant other picks up wounded, and dead soldiers, by helicopter. He picks up Iraqi civilians; we treat them just the same."

Jerry Marciano, president of the Arena Civic Theatre board of directors, said *All My Sons* is being revived all across the country now. The play's plotline turns on the delivery of defective war materiel to WWII pilots. Marciano men-

tioned one production in L.A. where the poster sought to draw a modern parallel by posing the question, "Would you send defective body armor to Iraq?"

Trenholm quoted a speech from Chris, the surviving son in Miller's play, "There is a universe of people outside, and you are responsible to it. And unless you know that, you threw away your son for nothing, because that's why he died."

At that, a man in the crowd spoke up. "I am a Vietnam veteran. Each war is different. The country was so terribly split by that war, we didn't get a lot of respect." He said, "Different wars affect people differently, but there are a lot of constant themes, and one of them is people making money off the war."

"I think it is a necessary evil," said Carili. "Armies are made to fight war. It is easier to have companies supply the troops. The military has been in Iraq three years now, and it could take another ten,"

Turners Falls Remains Undefeated

BY LEE CARIGNAN

TURNERS FALLS - The Turners Falls Girls Softball team defeated Pioneer Valley Regional High School 7-1 last Friday, staying undefeated on the season.

Turners' offensive attack was led by Ashleigh St. Peter, who had four hits, with a double and triple. Pitching ace Julie Girard also helped her cause with a double and 2 RBIs. Katelyn Mailoux and Rebecca Bonnette both had base hits for Turners. Girard got the win with a 2-hit, 6-strikeout performance, going the distance.

Sarah Payant and Shelby Wheelock both singled for Pioneer. Payant had 6 strikeouts for Pioneer in the losing effort.

The two-time defending

state champion Turners squad haven't missed a beat so far



last year Pioneer won the Division 3 championship, and was considered one of Turners' biggest challenges going into this season. But Girard and the rest of the Turners team were too much for them last week. The win leaves the Indians in good position atop their division, two and a half games ahead of Pioneer (4-2) and Mahar.

On Monday the Indians continued their dominance, defeating Mahar Regional High School 7-0. Girard picked up the win for Turners with six strikeouts, allowing only four

hits. The Indians had good balance in their lineup, hammering 10 hits from 8 different batters. Girard and Kim Lastowski both had two hits in the game. Danielle Sullivan drove in two runs. The loss dropped Mahar to 5-3 on the season.

Despite Turners' great start, they need to keep working on improving team defense. The Indians committed four errors in the Pioneer game. On Monday, they rebounded defensively against Mahar, committing no errors.


On Tuesday, Turners won their 38th consecutive game over two years by defeating Smith Academy 12-3. The Indians are now 7-0 on the season. The Indians next game is at home on Friday night, April 28th, against Athol.

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FINDING BALANCE: HEALTH TIPS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

Speaking in Tongues

BY JENNY CHAPIN

MONTAGUE CENTER - If you ever got in trouble for sticking your tongue out at your sibling, it might surprise you to have someone say, "Please stick your tongue out at me" - but you'll hear just that from your acupuncturist.

What use is your tongue to diagnosis and treatment? The tongue gives information about what's going on in your body. It's a reflection of the working state of your organ systems, the length of time your body has been dealing with imbalance or ailment, and your body's capacity to effectively respond to the challenges of illness.

Diagnosis in Oriental medicine can be made in a number of different ways. Some of these include: feeling the pulses; observing the tongue; palpating the abdomen; and observing facial color, the prevailing smell

of the body, and the vitality of the voice and its underlying sound (for example, a shouting or laughing tone). Of all the various methods of understanding the patterns of disharmony in the body, pulse and tongue are the two "pillars."

Texts of Chinese medicine say that observation of the tongue is usually the clearest indication of a person's disharmony. When there are vague or conflicting signs, as within a complicated condition, the tongue reflects the most basic and underlying pattern. It is the most reliable gauge of what is going on at the most fundamental level, and thus an indicator of the core treatment.

Four main items are involved in this observation: the tongue body color, the coating on the tongue (translated from the Chinese as "moss" or "fur"), the amount of moisture on the



tongue body, and the shape and movement of the tongue.

The color and shape of the tongue reflect the inherent strength and functional capacity of the person. The body of the tongue generally reflects long-term dysfunction, while the coating reflects primarily the state of the digestive system, as well as short-term disturbance and the relative intensity of the problem. The progression of illness is also revealed by the tongue: as illness improves, the quality of the tongue body and coat becomes more normal, whereas a worsening of the tongue indicates degeneration of the illness.

External factors that affect the appearance of the tongue include medications, smoking, and coffee. If any of these are part of a person's regular use, the practitioner must use other forms of diagnosis as well to get a truer picture of the person's internal health.

Each part of the tongue is said to correspond with particular organ systems. For example, the tip of tongue indicates the heart, the sides relate to the liver and gall bladder, the center to the stomach, and the back to the kidneys. These correspondences are not absolute, but help narrow down the major areas of concern.

A normal healthy tongue is pale red and slightly moist, with a thin white coat. (There are varying shades of red and degrees of moisture that fit into "normal".) It should "fit comfortably in the mouth" - not too

big, too small, swollen or shriveled. The movement of the tongue should be flexible, not stiff. Cracks are common, normal unless they develop during an illness, and signify a chronic condition.

Outside of normal, one might see colors of pale, red, bright red, or purple. The coating could be thick, thin, or absent; white, yellow, or gray; wet, dry, sticky, or greasy. The shape may be thin, swollen, quivering, or slanted to one side.

The tongue's bounty of information helps a practitioner understand how to best treat each individual. So the next time you see your acupuncturist, go ahead, stick your tongue out!

Jenny Chapin is a certified acupuncturist, bodyworker, and yoga teacher. Suggest a topic or question for her column at jgchapin@crocker.com

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Tippling Seniors

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - *Q. My wife and I moved into a retirement community recently. I've noticed a lot of people I'd call alcoholics in this community. Do seniors drink more in these places?*

I could find no information that demonstrated residents of retirement communities drink more. However, these developments are, by nature, more social. So, perhaps you're just seeing more drinking. With more drinking, you'll find more people who don't handle it well.

Alcoholism is a serious problem among seniors. Here are just a few statistics that tell the story:

About 70 percent of hospital admissions for older adults are for illness and accidents related to alcohol. About half of older adults in nursing homes have an alcohol problem.

Older adults lose an average of 10 years off their lives because of alcohol abuse.

About 80 percent of doctors misdiagnose alcoholism as depression in older women.

The highest growing number of alcoholics is among 75-year-old widowers.

About 10 percent of patients over age 60 who are diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease are actually suffering from brain damage caused by alcoholism.

"Alcohol abuse among older adults is something few want to talk about or deal with," said Charles Curie, administrator of the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "Too often family members are ashamed of the problem and choose not to address it. Health care providers tend not to ask older patients about alcohol abuse if it wasn't a problem in their lives in earli-

er years. Sometimes the symptoms are mistaken for those of dementia, depression, or other problems common to older adults. Unfortunately, too many older persons turn to alcohol as a comfort, following the death of a spouse, a divorce, retirement, or some other major life change, unaware that they are markedly affecting the quality of their lives."

A few definitions: Alcoholism is a disease with four symptoms: craving or compulsion to drink, the inability to limit drinking, high alcohol tolerance, and physical dependence.

Alcohol abuse does not include strong craving, loss of control or physical dependence. Alcohol abuse is defined as drinking that causes problems in your life such as failing at work, getting arrested for drunk driving, hurting someone physical-

ly or emotionally because of drinking.

Moderate drinking is defined as consuming up to two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women and older people. A standard drink is 12 ounces beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

The American Medical Association publishes the following list of physical symptoms to diagnose alcoholism. If an older person shows several symptoms, there is a high probability of alcoholism.

- Bruises, abrasions, and scars in locations that might suggest frequent falls, bumping into objects, physical altercations, or other violent behavior.
- Cigarette burns on the fingers.
- Flushed or florid faces.
- Jerky eye movement or loss



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

- of central vision.
- Damage to nerves causing numbness and tingling.
 - Hypertension, particularly systolic (the first number).
 - Gastrointestinal or other bleeding.
 - Cirrhosis or other evidence of liver impairment, such as swelling in the lower extremities, and other signs of fluid retention.
 - Psoriasis.

If you have a question, please write to fredcicetti@gmail.com

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The Montague Parks and Recreation Department is currently seeking reliable, responsible, and enthusiastic individuals for their Summer Playground Staff. We are accepting applications for Playground Director and Counselor positions. The seven-week Summer Playground Program serves children from the ages of 5 - 12, and is held Mondays through Fridays from July 3 through August 18, 2006. Application Deadline extended to Friday, May 12. Certification in First Aid and CPR preferred, but not required. Individuals must provide proof of legal working age. For more information, please contact the MPRD Office at 863-3216. The Town of Montague is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Who is Elisabeth von Trapp?

SOUND OF MUSIC SCION APPEARING AT 2ND ANNUAL GALA TO BENEFIT GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOLS

BY JOYCE PHILLIPS

All the world knows her grandmother Baroness Maria von Trapp, who led her family through the mountains and out of Nazi-occupied Austria, eventually settling in the scenic beauty of Stowe, Vermont, because it reminded her of her homeland. Her father, Werner, was one of the legendary Trapp Family Singers. Today, the world has discovered Elisabeth, who continues the landmark legacy with her own 'sound of music'.

As a singer-songwriter Elisabeth Von Trapp's performances are not only tributes to the strong heritage of her renowned family name, but also a testament to the rebirth of heart and soul in music. Her style is a rare combination of the eras of her life, from the folk of the Austrian hills to the classical, in which she trained, to the music of the Beatles, Rolling Stones, and Pete Seeger that dominated her adolescent years.

Not long after recording Psalm 121 on her first album "Wishful Thinking" in 1994, von Trapp saw her career begin to bloom. Her husband decided to give up a career as a prosecutor to become her full time manager and producer. She gave up a clothing design



Elisabeth von Trapp

You can hear the joy she feels through the arrangements of this sacred music.

Elisabeth has appeared with orchestras and choirs, taking her music to small opera houses and major performance centers; from the Washington National Cathedral, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Fleet Center and the Kennedy Center to the Great Hall of New York City's Grand Central Station.

At Elisabeth's performance at last year's Gala, no one left unchanged. Audiences of all ages are drawn by the promise of her famous name, awed by the haunting beauty of her voice and musical arrangements, and their hearts are touched forever by the astonishing sound of her unique new music.

Don't miss the opportunity on Saturday, April 29th, to discover and meet this extraordinary woman from an extra-ordinary family. Elisabeth von Trapp appears in concert at the Turners Falls High School Theater at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 - \$15 - \$10. Tickets are available at Equi's Store, Scotty's Convenience Store, World Eye Bookshop, Webs of Northampton, all Gill-Montague Elementary Schools or by calling Turners Falls High School at 863-9341

business she had run for 25 years and devoted herself to her music.

In the spring of 2001 Elisabeth scored a nearly unprecedented coup: winning permission from Robert Frost's famously reticent publisher, Henry Holt & Co., to sing parts of the poet's oeuvre. "Poetic License", released in June 2004, incorporates the sounds of jazz, contemporary and classical influences in the musical settings of poems by Frost and Shakespeare, a Japanese haiku and interpretations of Over the Rainbow / What a Wonderful World, Sting's Fragile and A Whiter Shade of Pale.

In her most recent album, "Love Never Ends: Sacred Sounds", von Trapp gives new interpretations of some familiar and beloved hymns and songs.

Elks Donation Provides New Uniforms for Girls Softball Team

BY PAM LESTER

TURNERS FALLS - Montague Elks Lodge #2521 in Turners Falls held a lodge meeting on Thursday, April 6th in which the lodge donated \$1,230 to the Turners Falls High School Softball team for the purchase of new uniforms. The check was presented on Monday, April



Left to right; Gary Mullins, Athletic Director at Turners Falls High School; Captains: Allsion Murphy, Julie Girard, Kim Lastowski and Michael Blanchard, Exalted Ruler of the Montague Elks.

10th to Gary Mullins, Athletic Director at Turners Falls High School by Michael Blanchard, Exalted Ruler of the Montague Elks.

Upcoming Events at the Discovery Center

FRIDAY, APRIL 28TH
Frogs and Friends, Dawn Marvin Ward of "Growing up with Nature" presents: "Spring Friends" series for preschoolers and their caregivers. Each hour-long program includes stories, songs, games, and hands-on activities. Take a close-up look at a 'pond' and learn about many. Spring creatures

that have 'two lives'! 11-12 a.m. Programs are free.

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH
Grapevines, Trees & Shrubs: What Do These Things Mean to Birds? Come learn how different birds make their nests and the habitat they depend on to nest successfully. We will take a special look at Crabapple Trees and the birds

they attract. 1 - 2 p.m. This program will include a hands-on activity geared towards the child in all of us. Free, accessible, and open to the public. Donations accepted.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 28TH - SUNDAY 30TH

The Arena Civic Theater presents *All My Sons* at Shea Theater, Turners Falls, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls, 413-863-2281, theshea.org, 8 p.m. show .Sunday at 2 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 28TH

Tracy & Company at Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls, 9:30 p.m. Phone: 659-3384 www.rt63roadhouse.com

Pothole Pictures Film -October sky. Shown at Memorial Hall Theater located at 51 Bridge Street (over Town Hall) in Shelburne Falls. Music before the movie - Davis Sand, finger-style guitar begins at 7:00 p.m. Movie at 7:30 p.m. (413) 625-2896

SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH

Turners Falls Downtown Spring Cleanup 9:00 a.m. - noon. The Streetscape Revitalization Committee organized the clean up. For more information, please contact the Brick House, 863-9576 or the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

A Road Trip Through Time. (rain date Sun, 4/30). 10:30 to 3:30. Join the Pioneer Valley Institute and geologist Richard Little on a field trip and explore the exciting geologic history of our valley. This trip will lead us through a journey through deep time as we travel through 500 million years of geologic history visiting sites where continents collided and split, where dinosaurs walked along mesozoic lakeshores, where lava oozed into lakes, where armored mud balls were born, and where glaciers, Lake Hitchcock and old waterfalls shaped our landscape. Abundant opportunity to collect rocks and take great photos! Park in lot E. Meet at the Geology Lab

(N301) at 10:30 for fast-paced intro, followed by lunch and tour of Rock Park and end with a field trip along Route 2 from Greenfield to Erving. PVI & Naturalist Club members \$5, others \$10, child w/ adult free. Bring a bagged lunch. Pre-registration required by calling 413.527.8536, or email rdlittle2000@aol.com.

National Spiritual Alliance Psychic Fair at Thompson Temple, across from the Post Office in Lake Pleasant. Readers use different methods to obtain information for those who consult them, including astrology, I-Ching, hand reading, psychometry, vibration connection, and tarot cards. Consultation is with a medium of choice and the cost is \$20 for 20 minutes. 11:00 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Spaghetti Supper sponsored by the Wendell Womens Club. Homemade Vegetarian or Meat Sauce, beverage, salad, brownie with ice cream. Relay For Life Team #73, Schneiders Helpers, will assist womens club members with this event. 50% of the proceeds benefit the American Cancer Society. 5 - 7 p.m. at Wendell Town Hall. Adults \$6, Children/ Seniors \$4. Info and tickets call (978) 544-2928.

Elisabeth von Trapp will perform at the Second Annual Gala fundraiser for the Gill-Montague Education Fund. Elisabeth has five self-produced albums, and composes her own music set to Robert Frost poems and Shakespeare sonnets.

The concert will be held in the Great Falls Middle School/ Turners Falls High School theater. Performing with von Trapp will be "The Gill-Montague Elementary Chorus" and "The Great Falls Middle

School/Turners Falls High School Singers" 7:30 p.m. Tickets - \$20/\$15/\$10 available at Equi's, Scotty's, World Eye Bookshop, all Gill-Montague Elementary Schools. Call: 863-9341

John Sheldon at the Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls, 9:30 p.m. Phone: 659-3384 www.rt63roadhouse.com

Fifth Saturday Contra Dance with Tophill Music Held at the Guiding Star Grange Hall located at 401 Chapman Street in Greenfield. 8:00 p.m. to midnight. (413) 367-9380

SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH - SUNDAY 30TH

Family Activities: Fun with Fiber Learn to transform raw wool into finished cloth through various carding, spinning, and weaving activities. Held at Historic Deerfield located in Deerfield. Noon to 4:00 p.m. 413-775-7214

SUNDAY, APRIL 30

Amandla Community Chorus annual spring concert at Temple Israel in Greenfield. Songs of peace, freedom, and life's sorrows and joys. Special guests "The Guyz," a six-member *a cappella* group from Pioneer Valley Performing Arts high school. Tickets at the door, sliding scale, \$5-\$20. For more information, call (413) 773-8655. 7 p.m.

Family Dance at the Montague Grange, with caller Jim Fownes Family-style Contra Dancing for all ages. Lots of fun, humor and some singing games too. Great for 3-10 yr olds, and their parents. Last dance of the season \$5-10 per family, includes a snack, 4-5:30 p.m.

APRIL 22 - JUNE 18TH

Botanic Garden of Smith College Church Exhibition Gallery, Lyman Plant House College Lane, Northampton. This exhibition takes the visitor on an exploration of the visual appeal of vegetable gardens across centuries, continents, and cultures, from the floating gardens of the Aztecs and the highly manicured potager of Louis

XIV's Versailles to the emergence of World War II victory gardens in America. More information: <http://www.smith.edu/garden/exhibits/upcoming-exhibitions.html>

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3RD Mid-Week Music presents violinist Irina Condon and pianist Robin Stone at All Souls Church Greenfield, from 12:15 -12:45 p.m. Mid-Week Music is free but donations in support of the program are greatly appreciated.

Slate Roof Poets: Jim Bell, Trish Crapo and Art Stein reading poems from their recently published books at the Greenfield Public at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments, free, sponsored in part by a grant from the Greenfield Cultural Council. For more information call: (413) 498-4451

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH

Co-op Power Sustainable Energy Summit at Smith College Campus Center in Northampton. Workshops include: Solar Hot Water, Solar Electric Systems, Geothermal, Biodiesel for Home Heating, Biodiesel for your Car, Wind & Small Hydro Power, Grease Cars & Biomass, Farm Wind & Biodiesel Machinery, Municipal Wind & Biodiesel, Recycled Oil Collection, Biomass, Conservation & Efficiency. RSVP (413) 425-6795 or email info@cooppower.coop; www.cooppower.coop. Walk-ins welcome! \$25 donation, 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Spring Pottery Sale- Frank Edge, Joy Friedman, Leverett Potters will present "Get Mugged and Bowled Over!" pottery sale at Leverett Crafts & Arts at 13 Montague Road in Leverett. 10am-5pm. This is a great chance to do some pottery shopping for Mother's Day and to see beautiful craftsmanship that you can use everyday. Chip & dip plates, platters, bowls, mugs, dinner plates, cups, vases and more by LCA Resident Artist Joy Friedman and Leverett potter Frank Edge. One day only For more information 548-9070 or www.leverettcrafts.org.

ONGOING

Jay Maisel at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, 85 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Hours, Thurs.-Sun. 1-5 p.m. Free. (413) 863-0009.

Memorial Hall Theater
POT HOLE PICTURES

April 28th Friday only
OCTOBER SKY
Jake Gyllenhaal dreams of making rockets in a coal mining town in this coming of age story. Directed by Joe Johnston 1999 PG

April 29th Saturday only
AMADEUS
Celebrate Mozart's 250th Birthday!
How does the boonish, hedonistic Mozart (Tom Hulce) produce exquisite music while the cultured Salieri (F. Murray Abraham) produces mediocrity? A paradox examined by this literate, intelligent film - while surrounding us with Mozart's gorgeous music. Directed by Milos Forman. 1984 PG. 180 min. color. This is the director's cut with 30

51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls 625-2896

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*Free (except some trips) and open to local teens.
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- ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN**
DAILY 6:30 9:00 PG
MAT SAT- SUN, WED 12:30 3:30
- THE BENCHWARMERS**
DAILY 6:30 9:00 PG 13 DTS sound
MAT SAT- SUN, WED 12:30 3:30
- THE WILD G**
DAILY 6:30 9:00
MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:30 3:30
- THE SENTINEL** PG13
DAILY 6:45 9:15
MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:15 3:15
- SCARY MOVIE 4** PG13
DAILY 6:45 9:15
MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:15 3:15
- AKEELAH AND THE BEE**
DAILY 7:10 9:30 PG13 DTS sound
MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:00 3:00
- R.V.** PG13 DTS sound
DAILY 7:00 9:30
MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:00 3:00

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Shadbush add Color to a Welcome Spring

BY FRAN HEMOND
MONTAGUE CENTER - Every spring is welcome, and perhaps the present lovely days make this year's April the very best of all. It seemed a long time coming, but a check on past years showed the daffodils and forsythia were right on schedule. And shadbush, too, those unassuming little trees that have brief moments of glory when they add patches of white brilliance to their semi-dormant neighbors. A couple of them at the edge of the north

pond lean precariously out over the water, and during most of the year are angular and hardly noticeable. But come April their white blossoms join the lawnful of yellow daffodils and tangle of bankside forsythia to announce the wakening world. Instead of grays and browns, brightened only by the stately evergreens and sometime sun of March, the scene is now white and yellow against the many shades of green that the grass, the skunk cabbage and leafed-out weeping willow project.

"Their white blossoms join the lawnful of yellow daffodils and tangle of bankside forsythia to announce the wakening world."

Count the shades of green, changing in sun or under cloud,

and try to find the distinctive word that paints the picture. Marvel at the leaning tree trunks that hold their leaves and blooms out to the sun and stand firm while their branches sway and bounce in a passing breeze. More dramatic scenes are repeated all over our area. Exotic magnolias and cultivated trees delight on village lawns. But shadbush, service-berry, Juneberry, shadblow to the poet, call them what you will, pop up in the drainage ditches along our roads, cling

to the dry rocky slopes of Canada Hill, where they make a misty trail along the cliff. They are tough little trees, quite suited to no-nonsense New England. And they take care of themselves. White Japanese quince will add its lovely red to the color scheme, the maple trees and white birches are getting ready to leaf out, the oaks are taking their time. Shadbush, daffodils and forsythia bring color to a receptive April scene.

ERVING

continued from pg 1
 abuts the town cemetery off Old State Road. The cemetery is the final resting ground of two Revolutionary War soldiers, and contains the graves of some of the town's original settlers.

On April 24th, the selectboard held a meeting with the Erving conservation commission and representatives of Mt. Grace Land Trust to discuss the possible land purchase. Tessier told them, "I'm not a strong environmentalist, but I would like to see the town buy that land and get it over to conservation, so it's protected. In this town there is no conservation land." The purchase price being negotiated is \$800,000.

Dubay said the town would realize a savings by simply purchasing the land and preventing its development. "If you build a house on a building lot, you pay \$1,000 a year in taxes, but if we educate the kids, we're spending \$9,000 a year just to put them through high school. Figure ten building lots, one kid each, over ten years you'll save the money back. I'm not anti-education, but..."



DETMOLD PHOTO

Among those buried at the historic town cemetery off Old State Road are Revolutionary War soldiers Joshua Austin, who died in 1817 at 85 years of age, and Asa Albee, who died in 1843, at 90 years of age. Civil War veteran of the 10th Massachusetts Volunteers William Dresser was buried there in 1914, at 80 years of age. The town of Erving is negotiating to buy and conserve the land surrounding the burial ground.

Tessier said he hoped to discuss the concept of purchasing the land at annual town meeting on Wednesday, May 3rd to get a sense of the meeting on the proposal. He said the town would have to act positively on a purchase and sale at a special town meeting no later than June 30th, to preserve the option of acquiring the land.

Betsy Bhatti, a land protection specialist at Mt. Grace Land Trust, said the state has funds to help towns purchase and permanently protect recreation and conservation land. She said a so-called Self Help grant from the

state could reimburse the town for 52% of the purchase price of the land, provided it is placed under permanent conservation protection.

She said Mt. Grace would research the grant possibility and assist the town in preparing a Self Help grant.

David Brule, chair of the conservation commission, said his commission would work on developing a management plan for the land. Walking trails, nature corridors, rock climbing, and hunting were all discussed as possible uses for the land.

Dubay spoke about how the town's demo-

graphics had changed since a similar-sized purchase of conservation land failed in the mid-80s. "A lot of new people have moved in since then, from more crowded areas. There's more of a willingness to preserve something. The old timers wish the town could be the way it used to be..."

Brule said the recent development of a subdivision on Laurel Lane "opened a lot of eyes" to the potential for unchecked development in town.

Last year, the town acted unanimously to prevent development of the eight-acre parcel known as the Mitzkowitz property, near the Erving Elementary School. The town bought the parcel, in close proximity to the public water supply, for \$165,000. The town is preserving its options for possible municipal use of that land, Dubay said.

On Old State Road, one of the Giniusz family members intends to continue living in the 19th century homestead, which is being surveyed now to be separated off from the remaining acreage. The farmstead will not be part of the final sale.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

High Speed Getaway

Wednesday 4-19

4:40 p.m. Boyle Road caller advised that a tree was down on wires at corner of Boyle Road and Main Road. Responded with fire department.

11:28 p.m. Officer observed a suspicious motor vehicle in the River Road area. Occupants identified. Minors in possession of alcohol. Under investigation. Fire department also contacted to put out a related campfire in the vicinity.

Thursday 4-20

10:10 a.m. Mutual aid to Bernardston Police with a house check.

3:50 p.m. Medical assistance requested at a French King Highway residence. Same was transported to FMC.

6:30 p.m. Report of a suspicious male on the French King Bridge. Same was identified and left without incident.

Friday 4-21

9:30 a.m. - Report of a

motorcycle traveling at excessive speeds on Route 63. Same passed the Gill patrol unit at a speed of 106 mph. Officers in the area were unable to make contact with the motorcycle.

9:59 a.m. Report of an unwanted party at NMH Gill campus. Same has a trespass notice against her.

was arrested for violation of the trespass order.

4:35 p.m. Officers advised two suspicious parties were in the area behind the Schuetzen Verein. Officers identified same and both parties left without incident.

Sunday 4-23

11:40 a.m. Mutual aid with Northfield police at a West Northfield Road residence for an out of control individual.

12:50 p.m. Mutual aid with Northfield police. Motor vehicle stop; two occupants arrested based on warrants.

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