



No BIDS!

Main Rd. Lot Goes Begging in Gill

Page 9

(l-r) Michael Smith, Marty Yarmac, and Dan Oros avoid the chanting call of the auctioneer

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The Montague Reporter

YEAR 8 - NO. 27

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 8, 2010

Leverett School Committee Considers Voting Against School Choice

BY DAVID DETMOLD

LEVERETT – A majority of Leverett school committee (LSC) members say they are uncomfortable continuing to rely on school choice students – and the funds they bring in – to supplement the town's elementary school budget. "School choice is a drug, and an intoxicating one," said committee chair Kip Fonsh at Tuesday's meeting, which took place in the airy elementary school library, filled with picture books and displays of student

projects. "I intend to vote against school choice at next month's meeting."

Farshid Hajir, who chairs the Amherst-Pelham regional school committee and also serves on the LSC, asked, "Is it possible to look forward and have a plan to eliminate our dependency on school choice?"

He added, "The Franklin County School Committee Caucus is trying to spread the idea throughout Franklin County see **CHOICE** page 7

Finance Committee Votes 3-2 to Oppose New Senior Center



DETMOLD PHOTOS

Stanley Gradowski, finance committee chair, (center, facing front) led the majority voting against the new senior center

Leverett Discusses Affordable Housing Options

BY JOSHUA WATSON

LEVERETT – The selectboard met last Thursday for what they described as a "brainstorming session" to discuss the disbursement of Community Preservation Committee funds set aside for the creation of affordable housing in town, under the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

The funds available to the committee total nearly \$600,000, of which nearly \$100,000 is now set aside for affordable housing projects. The committee is obligated under the terms of the Community Preservation Act to devote 10% of all funds derived from a town-approved local sur-

charge on real estate transactions to affordable housing. By law, the committee must also set aside 10% of CPA funds for recreation and open space projects, and 10% to historic preservation, but can allocate further funds at its discretion to any of those categories.

An earlier plan by Leverett's affordable housing committee to build ten units of affordable housing on acreage that would have been donated to the town by Cowls Lumber, in exchange for infrastructure improvements to lots Cowls would retain along Montague Road, was met by resistance from the selectboard, see **HOUSING** page 10

BY DAVID DETMOLD

ERVING – A divided finance committee on Monday voted not to recommend spending \$2.4 million to build a new senior center for the town of Erving. The proposal to build the new 6,600-square-foot center on town owned land on Route 63, north of the elementary school will appear again on the annual town meeting warrant on May 5th.

Twice last year, town meeting failed to gather the two-thirds majority needed to borrow money to build the new senior center. This year, the selectboard has structured the financing package for the new senior center to avoid the need for borrowing –

taking \$1.25 million from free cash, \$500,000 from taxation, and transferring \$650,000 already appropriated, but not expended, for the renovation of the Erving wastewater treatment plant.

This year, with no borrowing needed to fund the senior center, a simple majority of town meeting will be needed to approve the new building.

On May 6th, 2009, the proposed senior center failed by a vote of 57 in favor, 35 opposed. On June 22nd, 2009, the senior center was defeated by a vote of 64 to 38. The town has already expended nearly \$200,000 on the design phase of the project.

On Monday, by a 3-2 vote, the finance committee continued to oppose the project, over the protest of a number of senior citizens at the town hall meeting room.

"My opinion," said finance committee chair Stanley Gradowski, aged 67, "is the building [the seniors] are in is inadequate."

Gradowski referred to the current senior center, housed on the first floor of a former elementary school building. "It is definitely in need of improvements and expansion." But, said Gradowski, "What they've proposed is a little bit exorbitant."

see **FINANCE** page 12

Turners Falls High Sets the Bar High for Spring Sports



HUDYMA PHOTO

Dustin Rivard on the Pole Vault

BY MARK HUDYMA – Turners Falls High School spring sports are happening! All the high school sports teams are hoping for a winning season.

Boys' tennis, which has seen a slew of new recruits in the past two years, is ready for a smashing

spring season.

This year, returning coach David Bully is joined by Will Matthews, TFHS' Latin teacher. With the dual coaching, the athletes are getting twice the instruction, and are improving tremen-

see **TEAMS** pg 10

Montague Approves Energy Stretch Code, Rezoning Montague Center School

BY DAVID DETMOLD – Energy conservation took two big steps forward at the Montague special town meeting on Thursday, April 1st, and town meeting voted nearly unanimously to clear the way for a request for proposals for the productive re-use of the former Montague Center School, by approving a zoning change for that building.

By a majority vote, members approved a change to town bylaws to adopt the so-called Stretch Energy Code, a voluntary expansion of the standard building code designed to save energy in new buildings and renovations, joining Greenfield, Springfield, and six other cities and towns in the Commonwealth that have adopted the energy code to date.

By adopting the stretch code, "All new homes in Montague would have substantially lower energy costs," said Montague energy committee chair Chris

Mason. He estimated homes built to the new code would reduce energy use by about 20% over homes built to the standard code.

Also, by adopting the stretch code, Mason said Montague has positioned itself to receive designation as a Green Community, under the state's Green Communities Act. That legislation allows municipalities so designated to apply for grants up to \$1 million from an annually replenished \$10 million fund to pay for additional energy conservation measures or renewable energy projects in town.

New home construction in Montague will now be subject to inspection by independent energy rating experts to determine whether the builder has complied with the more stringent energy conservation measures, which include standards for insulating, window installation, efficient lighting and heating, among other

checklist items which should add about 3% to 5% to the cost of the average new home.

Similar standards will apply to renovations that involve opening the building envelope of existing homes, but renovations' compliance with the new code will be prescriptive – following a prescribed list of standards – rather than performance based, Mason said.

Mason said the increased mortgage costs for the typical new home built to stretch code standards will be more than offset by the energy savings for that home beginning in the first year of occupancy, resulting in a net cash savings for the new homeowner.

Montague building inspector David Jensen said the voluntary stretch energy code will soon become the standard for all cities and towns in Massachusetts. "We

see **ENERGY** page 5

PET OF THE WEEK

A Real Sweetheart



Helen

My name is Helen, but it really could be "Sweetie-Pie" or "Cuddles." I am a loving, talkative, and affectionate four-year-old Siamese mix female cat who absolutely adores being petted. All these kittens here at the adoption center are zany, but not me! I'm the sweet and serene type. I seem to get along with everyone I meet. I've lived with adults, kids, and other cats. I even lived with a pit bull! He was OK, except he was always eating my food. I am in desperate need of a forever home with a loving person who will share their lap with me. Could that be you? For more information on adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898, or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

SLATE LIBRARY NEWS

Story Hour Fridays in April

GILL – Slate Library, located in the center of Gill, continues its story hour this spring each and every Friday morning at 10 a.m. Join us for stories, arts and crafts and a healthy snack. Story hour topics for April are All

Around the Kitchen on April 9th, Feathered Friends on April 16th, Planting a Garden on April 23rd and Fairies & Elves on April 30th. Stop by and check out a new book, and join us on the corner rug.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Poetry & Tea, Health Workshops, TNT Programs

April is National Poetry Month! Join in a celebration of poetry featuring recent acquisitions to the library collection. **Poetry and Tea** is featured on Saturday, April 10th from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Explore our new books through reading and conversation.

This free event is hosted by Wendell poet, Iilina Singh.

Stay Healthy with the Seasons workshops with Shiatsu practitioner Nini Melvin. Three free workshops on Wednesdays April 14th and 28th and May 12th from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. For

more information visit www.PresenTouch.com. To sign up call Nini Melvin at (978) 544-7960, or the library at (978) 544-3559.

Teens and Tweens (TNT) programs coming up are: **Felting with Devo!** on Sunday, April 11th at 3:00 p.m.: creations made from raw wool and soapy water. **Drama with Amy Gordon** on Sundays, April 11th, 18th and 25th at 3 p.m. Three Sundays of drama games, monologues, short works and creating plays, led by drama teacher and teen literature author Amy Gordon.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS
Library Quilt Raffle

BY LINDA HICKMAN

MONTAGUE – The Friends of the Montague Public Libraries are selling tickets for their annual quilt raffle. Two lap sized quilts and a quilted bag will be raffled off on Saturday, May 8th, at the next Friends' Used Book Sale. Sue SanSoucie and Mary Melonis made the quilts and bag. The tickets are \$1 each, or six for \$5. They are on sale at all three Montague Libraries. The Carnegie Library in Turners Falls is open Monday through Wednesday, 1 to 8 p.m., Thursday 1 to 5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Montague Center Library is open Monday and Wednesday, 2 to 5 and 6 to 8 p.m. The Millers Falls Library is open Tuesday and Thursday, 2 to 5 and 6 to 8 p.m. The Friends will also be selling tickets at Food City on several dates to be announced.



Section of a colorful quilt by Mary Melonis, one of three prizes for the Friends of the Montague Public Libraries' annual Library Quilt Raffle.

The proceeds of the raffle will go to the Friends of the Montague Public Libraries, who help support library programs and improvements. For more information, call the Carnegie Library at 863-3214.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – April 12th to 16th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Meal site manager is Becky Cobb. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For information or to make meal reservations, call (413) 863-9357. Call the senior center for information on any programs.

Monday, April 12th
9:00 a.m. Foot clinic by appointment
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday, April 13th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Yoga
1:00 p.m. Canasta
1:00 p.m. Painting

Wednesday, April 14th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:15 a.m. Friends Meeting
1:00 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, April 15th
No Tai Chi
1:00 p.m. Pitch

Friday, April 16th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Scrabble
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For info and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3308. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity.

Monday, April 12th
9:00 a.m. Exercise
12:00 p.m. Pitch



The Montague Housing Authority recently participated in a two day training on state housing unit inspection requirements and procedures. The training was performed by the Department of Housing and Community Development's facility management specialist unit and is available to all public housing authorities interested in performing thorough inspections to assist in the maintenance and upkeep of their developments. Left to right: Bellamine Dickerman, director, Dennis Balling, DHCD, Robert Boivin, maintenance supervisor.

LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

Two Coots in a Canoe

Author David E. Morine discusses his book about canoeing the Connecticut River from source to sea called *Two Coots in a Canoe: An Unusual Story of Friendship* on Thursday, April 15th, 7:30 pm. Leverett Library, 75 Montague Rd.

Directions at www.leverettlibrary.org. For more information, call (413) 548-9220. This event was originally scheduled for March 24th. It is free and is funded by the Leverett Cultural Council.

Wendell Council on Aging Film

Wendell Council on Aging films will start up again this month with *The Blind Side* (2009). The film is based on the true story of Baltimore Ravens' Michael Oher, a poor, oversized and under-educated African-American teenager. Michael is adopted by a white family who help him fulfill his potential as an All-American offensive left tackle and subsequently an NFL player. The young man's presence in his adopted family leads them to self-discoveries of their

own as well. In early March Sandra Bullock won the Oscar for her role in this film.

The film will be shown on Sunday, April 18th, at 7 p.m., in the meeting room of the Wendell Free Library.

Wendellites of all ages welcome. Rated PG-13.

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6

Mackenzie Phillips

Grade 7

Connor Kelley
Lexxi Nicotra

Grade 8

Emma Johnson

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY

DON CLEGG – Stop by the 3rd Annual “Go, Kids Art, Go!” event at the Leverett Crafts & Arts Barnes Gallery, 13 Montague Road, Leverett on Saturday, April 10th starting at noon.

This children’s art exhibit and party, featuring music by Jay Mankita, dance with Bamidele and Celtic Heels, and storytelling by Eshu Bumpus, will also feature art workshops like Clay for Kids, with MudPie Potters; Paper Weaving and Felting with Susan Loring-Wells; Recycled Collage with Max Rudolph; Crayon Batiks by Connecting to Your Source; and Open Studio with Liz Sheffy, plus face painting, henna painting, a bake sale and raffle. Donations are welcome at the door.

A selection of “GREEN SEEN” Mail Art is now on display at the Wendell post office, as

well as in the lobby of Baystate Franklin Medical Center. Have a look at all the wonderful ‘green art’ received, and many thanks to all who participated.

The Marlboro Morris Men will be dancing through and raising the fertility of the community gardens located on the corners of 3rd and L and 4th and L Street in downtown Turners Falls at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13th. The Morris Men perform their ancient fertility dances at no charge to the viewing public, but tradition has it that if you cross a Morris Dancers’ palm with silver, you will have good luck for a year and a day. We are not aware of any scientific studies on that, but bring a dime anyway.

The Annual EGGstravaganza at Unity Park in Turners Falls drew a record crowd of more than 400 children and adults on Saturday, April 3rd. When the siren sounded to start the mad

dash to pick up more than 5,000 eggs scattered on the ball fields, the scene resembled the “Running of the Bulls” in Pamplona. All the eggs were picked up in less than five minutes.

MCTV was there to video this dash for the eggs. Watch for the video on channel 17; it’s sure to make you smile.

Each year at this time the *Valley Advocate* announces results of their reader poll for best in the Pioneer Valley in an assortment of categories. This year a neighborhood establishment in Turners Falls is high on the list of “Best Neighborhood Bar.” I wonder which watering hole that could be?

Check out next week’s *Montague Reporter* to see if Turners Falls has the best in the Valley. (We know it does!)

Trinitarian Congregational Church at 147 Main Street in Northfield is holding a **spring clothing sale** on Saturday, April 17th, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. There will be plenty of quality brand names, and many pre-loved items with great prices. A Kitchen Café will also be open. *Send items for local briefs to reporter-local@montaguema.net*

Leverett Forum on Guantánamo Town Meeting Resolution



Attorneys Buz Eisenberg, Carol Gray, and William Newman will discuss the Guantánamo Resolution on Leverett’s April Town Meeting warrant. Come learn about who is still at Guantánamo and hear some personal stories. Tuesday, April 13th, 7:30 p.m., Leverett Library, 75 Montague Road, Leverett (413) 522-7505.

Backyard Goat Husbandry in Gill

GILL – On Saturday, April 17th, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Laughing Dog Farm’s Daniel Botkin will present a beginner’s workshop on “Backyard Goat Husbandry.” (If you’re married to an old goat, this might be the perfect opportunity to put him out to pasture.)

But seriously, goats have a rich history of evolving with their human shepherds on many continents. Goats are said to be the perfect homestead or urban farming animal because of their compact size and high adaptability to niche habitats and types of food. They are also even tempered, hardy, easy to

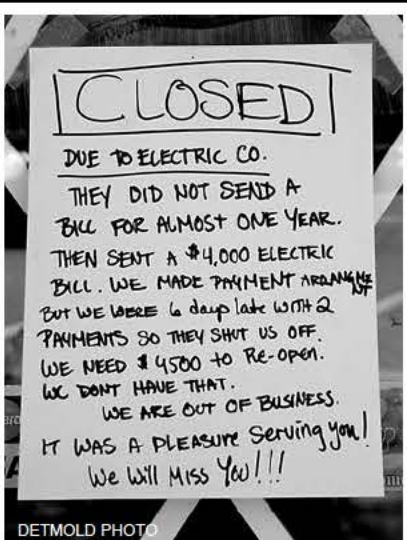
care for and produce rich, digestible milk and high-quality red meat. What’s more, goat manure is cool, pelletized and prized as a soil amendment and for making compost. To top it off, goats are entertaining, acrobatic creatures whose feisty habits keep us laughing all year long.

We’ll cover info on getting started with dairy goats, including fencing, housing, diet, and breeding. Learn to avoid the heartbreak of goat escape!

Classes offered by donation. RSVP requested; email dbotkin@valinet.com for directions.

We’ll Miss You Too!

This sign appeared on the door of Round Here Cafe on Avenue A in Turners, midway through the day on Wednesday. Attempts to reach owner Nayana Glazier by phone were unsuccessful. Cafe patrons were discussing possible fundraising plans before the sun went down, but there is no telling whether the cafe will reopen again. Stay tuned!



H1N1 – the Sequel

It’s not over! The H1N1 Flu Season is still among us. This year, the flu is more unpredictable than ever. Vaccination is your best protection again the flu.

Come in to the Montague town hall, 1 Avenue A in Turners Falls on Tuesday or Thursday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. to get your free H1N1 Vaccination.

Drop in hours will run through May 27th. There will be no office hours during the week of April 24th. For more information, contact town nurse Billie Gammell, at (413) 863-3200, ext. 107.

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A Spreading Stain

Jesus stood for peace and justice. While it may be too late to hope for peace for the victims of sexual abuse, from whatever quarter, it is never too late to hope for justice from the Roman Curia, and a full accounting of past sins, even from the highest office in the Church.

The Roman Catholic Church is not alone among institutions confronting revelations of pedophilia and sexual abuse within its ranks. But by its very nature as a source of spiritual guidance to the laity, and by the manner in which the Church at every level has historically handled the worldwide problem of abusive priests, the ongoing and ever widening revelations of the heinous crime and scandal of sexual abuse within the Roman Catholic Church has rocked that institution to its core and challenged its bond with its parishioners.

Now the scandal has touched the office of the Papacy itself, the Rock on which the Church is founded.

Pope Benedict XVI, when he was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the archbishop of Munich, was responsible for transferring a priest named Peter Hullerman to Munich for therapy. Hullerman was transferred with Ratzinger's consent from the diocese of Essen, in northern Germany, because he had been accused of sexually abusing three boys in 1979, including an 11-year-old Hullerman allegedly forced to perform oral sex.

After Hullerman resisted therapy sessions, the psychiatrist who worked with him, Werner Huth, pleaded with church officials that Hullerman never be allowed to work with children again. But Hullerman was soon reassigned within Ratzinger's archdiocese, where he went on to abuse boys again. Hullerman was convicted and fined for that crime six years later.

Hullerman was reassigned and continued working as a priest until last month. Neither the priest in charge of his new parish, Garching an der Alz, nor the parishioners there were ever told about Hullerman's history, and he was allowed to continue working around children and altar boys for 20 more years.

In 1980, after his therapist declared Hullerman to be "untreatable," Archbishop Ratzinger was copied with a memo detailing the decision to reassign him. Ratzinger's vicar general, Father Gerhard Gruber, has taken full responsibility for that decision, saying the erudite Ratzinger left such administrative matters to subordinates in an archdiocese with over 1,000 priests.

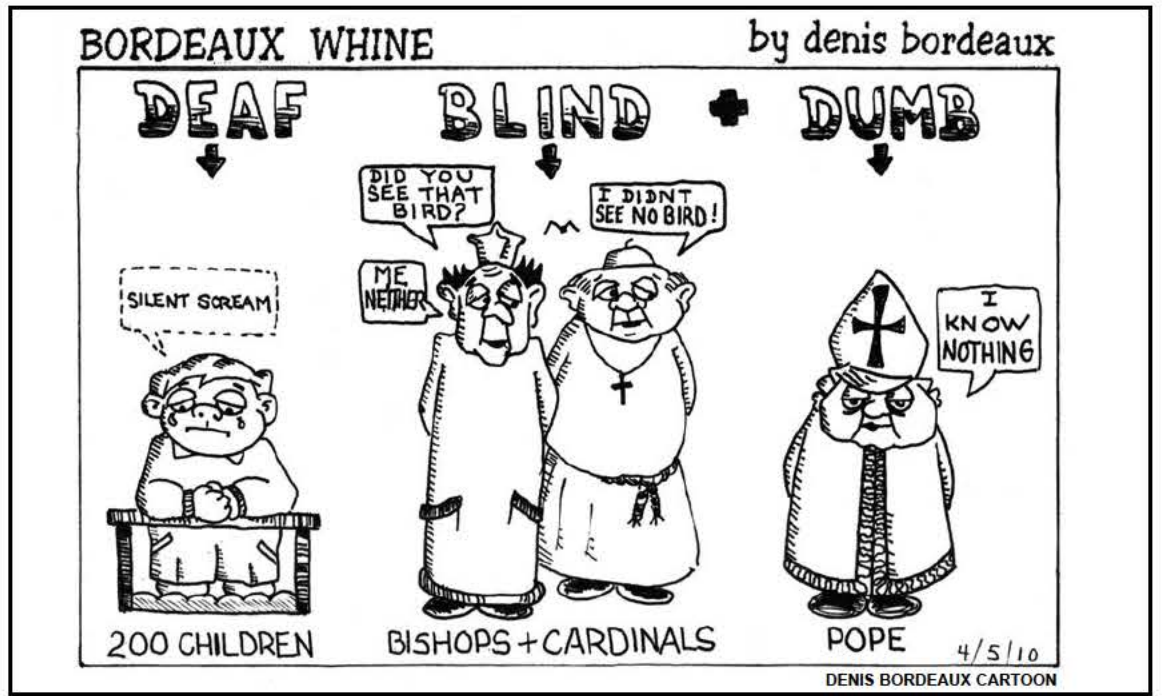
Others are not buying this denial of responsibility.

"We find it extraordinarily hard to believe that Ratzinger didn't reassign the predator, or know about the reassignment," said Barbara Blaine, of Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, the leading advocacy group for sex abuse victims in the Catholic Church.

Ratzinger was appointed the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and moved to Rome in November 1981. In 2002, at a conference in Spain, he gave the following reply to a question about the pedophilia scandal sweeping the Church in the U.S. at the time:

"In the church, priests are also sinners. But I am personally convinced that the constant presence in the press of the sins of Catholic priests, especially in the United States, is a planned campaign, as the percentage of these offenses among priests is not higher than in other categories, and perhaps it is even lower. In the United States, there is constant news on this topic, but less than one percent of priests are guilty of acts of this type. The constant presence of these news items does not correspond to the objectivity of the information or to the statistical objectivity of the facts. Therefore, one comes to the conclusion that it is intentional, manipulated, that there is a desire to discredit the church."

The defensive tone on a matter involving the abuse of children entrusted to the Church's care is striking, as is its similarity to a chorus of defensive statements made on the Pope's behalf by Church leaders the world over in recent days, who accuse the media of fanning the flames of controversy in an orchestrated campaign to undermine the Church.



Even the *Montague Reporter* has received criticism in recent years for its handling of the sexual abuse scandal in the Church. But our Valley is not immune to the problem of priests abusing minors, as a review of the record of Father Richard Lavigne would show. Lavigne, a parish priest charged in the abuse of at least 49 children in his care, including boys from Franklin County, is also considered a suspect in the murder of 13-year-old altar boy Danny Croteau in Springfield in 1972. Lavigne was moved from parish to parish, and allowed to continue working as a priest until 1991, despite the police detailing his abuse of Croteau and other boys to diocesan officials in Springfield in 1972.

On March 24th of this year, the *New York Times* published new revelations from a court case against a priest in Wisconsin, the Rev. Lawrence Murphy, accused of abusing up to 200 boys at St. John's School for the Deaf during the period of time Murphy worked there, from 1950 to 1974. Wisconsin bishops corresponded with Cardinal Ratzinger's office

about the case, and Ratzinger's second in command began proceedings to defrock Murphy in 1996. But those proceedings were dropped after Murphy, pleading infirmity, wrote to Ratzinger personally asking for his intercession. Murphy was allowed to die a priest.

The *Times'* Laurie Goodstein wrote, "The internal correspondence from bishops in Wisconsin directly to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the future pope, shows that while church officials tussled over whether the priest should be dismissed, their highest priority was protecting the church from scandal."

A higher priority than seeking justice for 200 deaf boys raped and abused by a pedophile priest?

Any criticism of the Pope is seen as an attack on the institution of the Church itself, since the infallibility of the Pope is a bedrock principle of the faith. And in fairness, as Pope Benedict has worked to institute a zero-tolerance approach within the Church to abusive priests.

The Pope's letter to the faithful in Ireland last month – where

the fallout from the sexual abuse scandal is particularly intense after revelations that Cardinal Sean Brady, Archbishop of Armagh and the head of Ireland's Catholics, forced a 10-year-old and a 14-year-old boy to sign vows of secrecy about their predation by pedophile priest Brendan Smyth – is a model of contrition and an honest, heartfelt reckoning of the damage wreaked on countless young lives by authority figures in clerical robes to whose care their families had entrusted them.

But Benedict's subsequent reference to "the petty gossip of the moment," at his Palm Sunday homily in St. Peter's Square, was a tone-deaf retreat from his epistle to the Irish, as is his apparent stonewalling about his handling of the Hullerman case in Munich.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me," said Jesus, according to the Scriptures. By that, Jesus certainly did not mean, "Let the little children suffer," and cover up the actions of those within the Church who have inflicted grievous and permanent harm on them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Egg Hunt a Smashing Success

TURNERS FALLS – The Montague Parks & Recreation Department would like to thank the well over 400 children and parents from throughout Franklin County who attended our annual Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza, on Saturday, April 3rd at Unity Park in Turners Falls. Children were given the enviable task of finding well over 5,000 toy- and candy-filled eggs placed throughout the park, in addition to participating in egg decorating, face painting, and pictures

with Peter Cottontail.

The EGGstravaganza would not have been possible without generous support from Hillside Plastics, the Montague Elks, the Franklin County Rotary Club, Greenfield Savings Bank, Sirum's Equipment Company, Equi's Candy Store, Boy Scout Troop #6, Monique Furtaw, and Tia Demers. We would also like to make a special thanks to Peter Cottontail for setting aside time from his busy schedule to be present during the festivities.

See you next year!

– Jon Dobosz
Director,
Montague Parks
and Recreation

L.A.P.P.S. Thanks Local Sponsors

The Local Aquatics Program for Personal Safety, better known as L.A.P.P.S., would like to thank local businesses for their generous contributions. With help from the Montague Elks, Our Lady of Peace Church, St. Stanislaus Society, Tognarelli Heating & Cooling, Greenfield Savings Bank, St. Kaziemerz, the Montague Catholic Social Ministries, and the Sheffield After School Program's staff, last month 22 local youths were able to work with motivated high school volunteers to participate in daily water safety lessons.

These lessons were followed by time in the pool to practice and reinforce the focused skills, and prepare them for what to do if they ever encounter a dangerous water situation.

Thank you again to all the sponsors and volunteers who helped L.A.P.P.S. a success this year.

– Katherine Kuklewicz
L.A.P.P.S. Coordinator
Turners Falls

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Don't Call on Friday

BY JOE JANIKAS

TURNERS FALLS – I don't think it's unreasonable to expect that a taxpayer should be able to go to a phone book and contact their highway department. In the absence of a phone number there, it would seem the next logical number to call would be the town hall. Our Montague town hall phone number – 863-3200 – upon answer gives a list of departments and their extension numbers, but there is no mention of a phone number for the highway department, even though town officials know that the highway department is not in the current phone book.

I guess the next logical step would be for a citizen trying to reach the highway department to interrupt town hall staff using an extension at random and ask them for the correct phone number. Of course, if it's Friday, there's no one there because town hall is closed.

Such was my experience this past January. I felt the highway department phone number could be added to the list at the end of the town hall telephone greeting. So I e-mailed the town administrator and made the suggestion. It seemed to be a reasonable expectation and suggestion from a customer (taxpayer). After a month and a half passed with no change, I contacted a selectperson, who seemed to agree that it was a good idea and that she'd pursue it.

Well, another three and a half weeks have gone by with no change.

Maybe it's that nobody wants to make it easy for the customer. Maybe it's apathy. Maybe nobody cares. Maybe people are intimidated by changing a message on a phone system. Maybe

it's an unreasonable request. I don't think so. Or just maybe, people at town hall feel they don't have the time. Well apparently the selectboard members feel they have plenty of time.

A while ago, the selectboard approved a change from a five-day work week to a four-day work week. People were advised that the change was being implemented to better serve the taxpayer (customer). As far as I know, they never bothered to collect before and after data to measure if the desired results were being achieved. The only measurement was a statement by a selectperson who said the four day work week "seems to be working." Oh yeah, for whom?

The same selectboard also voted to base holiday pay for town hall employees to the normal hours of the day that was missed. This means that an employee, instead of being paid seven hours for a Monday holiday would receive pay for eight and a half hours, and the town would lose the same amount of productivity per holiday, per person, per year. My rough calculations show this change amounts to almost eight weeks of lost productivity and additional paid benefits for town hall staff.

How generous! Any talk of the town going broke should cease immediately. Apparently our elected officials see it differently.

In these days of global financial hardship, I find it extremely disturbing that the selectboard can unilaterally increase benefits to a group that already has an excellent fringe benefit package unmatched in the private sector and in many more local towns.

All around us the private sector (and most public sector) enti-

ENERGY from 1

are looking at the future," he said. "We are taking a short step ahead of the others. In three years, this will be the standard, or better."

Town meeting also approved borrowing up to \$750,000 to pay for Montague's participation in an energy performance contract with Siemens Building Technology to perform a variety of energy efficiency improvements on town buildings. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the town would likely borrow far less than the approved amount – perhaps only about \$200,000 – thanks to an offsetting \$150,000 grant from the Department of Energy Resources, and the decision by the energy performance contract task force to avoid making any improvements to the town highway garage, or to replace windows at the Carnegie Library.

Abbondanzio said window replacement at the library would be expensive, due to the requirement to meet historic preservation standards in the century-old landmark. He said the town had decided not pursue energy improvements at the highway garage, since the town

ties are cutting their workforce, slashing benefits, cutting pay, and expecting employees to do more with less.

This isn't true of our selectboard, who chose to add to benefit packages and can't even implement a simple fix to its phone system to benefit its customers.

(Editor's note: The highway department's phone number - 863-2054 - was left out by error in the 2009-2010 Verizon directory; it will be included in next year's directory.)

hopes to move the highway department into a new facility sooner than the 22-year payback period that would have been required to make improvements to that property.

He said if more funds become available, the town may revisit the decision to replace the Carnegie windows, which library director Sue Sansoucie said made the library cold and drafty for patrons and staff in winter.

With little dissent, town meeting members approved a zoning change for the Montague Center School from a Recreational and Educational Zone to a Neighborhood Business Zone.

Speaking for the capital improvements committee in the absence of chair Les Cromack, Don Valley said, "The current zoning is very restrictive for the most likely and compatible uses where that building sits."

The new zoning will allow professional offices, a craft workshop, multi-family housing, or senior congregate housing to occupy the former school building. Since the Montague Center School was closed and consolidated in September of 2008, the building has sat idle, costing the town \$55,000 or more in maintenance, heat, and security.

Valley said the new zoning would not preclude the Gill-Montague school committee from offering a proposal to place a Horace Mann in district charter school at the former school building.

Kathleen Burek, a resident of Montague Center, spoke prior to the vote, saying a number of people expressed the sentiment at public hearings, "and I was one of them, that felt the Montague Center School should remain a school."

Robin Sherman, Precinct 1,

said, "I am solidly in favor of this [zoning change]. This does not cut off any possibilities at the school. It just increases the possibilities there."

Town meeting approved the transfer of \$15,000 from free cash to supplement the \$40,000 originally appropriated for FY '10 for the reserve fund used by the town to pay legal costs, after hearing from Jensen and town counsel Rich Bowen on the progress of the town's continuing lawsuit with former Railroad Salvage owner Gary Kosuda, of Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Jensen said, "I'm not sure I can summarize the suit, to my embarrassment. It's not been an easy cast to fight." He said Kosuda has been found in contempt of court orders, and the Railroad Salvage building placed under the care of a receiver, but Kosuda has failed to make the ordered payments to the receiver for the costs associated with ensuring the property's safe disposition. Though there is a purchase and sale agreement in place with a new owner, James Bent, of upstate New York, that agreement has not been executed due in part to ongoing appeals by Kosuda.

Meanwhile, a portion of the upper stories of the crumbling old mill building has been demolished to allow one-way traffic incoming on Power Street, one of the two access roads to the Patch neighborhood of Turners Falls. Power Street had been closed for four years due to the deteriorating condition of the four story brick building, out of fear the bricks would continue falling into the traveled way.

"I've been over optimistic," said Jensen. "This case is close to concluding, unless something unexpected happens soon."



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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Changes Proposed to Personnel Policy

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – At the March 31st selectboard meeting, Carolyn Manley and Harry Williston met the selectboard to give them a preview of updates the personnel committee is proposing to the town's personnel policy, which they hope to present as a package on the annual town meeting warrant.

One big change is a definition of a permanent full-time employee as a person contracted to work for the town 30 or more hours per week, and permanent part-time as contracted to work less than 30 hours per week. Sick and vacation time would be accrued by hours worked, rather than days, a change that will fit the highway department's schedule better, since in the summer highway

personnel work four 10-hour days instead of five 8-hour days. Unused sick and vacation time would be accrued up to 60 days, instead of being paid out at the end of each fiscal year, a change which will benefit both the town and any employee requiring a long sick leave, at no extra cost to the town.

Vacation time would be extended to permanent part time employees on a pro rated basis.

The probationary period for a new town employee would be 90 days, as now, but with possible 30-day extensions for up to 90 additional days.

Every town position should have a job description and a contract.

Assessor Tom Mangan met the selectboard for the annual

tax classification hearing, and recommended, as he has in the past, the town keep only one tax rate for both residential and business properties. The selectboard voted accordingly.

The board is considering either Wednesday, June 2nd or Wednesday, June 16th for the annual town meeting. Selectboard member Dan Keller said the state aid figures should be available to the finance committee and the town by then, so setting an accurate budget may be possible.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich relayed the definitive report from the dam inspection at Mahar High School. Repairing the dam would cost between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Breaching the dam, the recommended option,

would cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000, a sum that would be borrowed as a capital expense. Wendell's share would amount to \$7,000, which will have to be authorized at town meeting.

Wired West submitted a formal proposal for the town to join other municipalities in getting universal open access to the internet. The proposal will go to town meeting for approval.

Union 28 superintendent Joan Wickman sent the board a letter requesting a town meeting article to change the amendment to this year's Education Reform bill that allows a majority vote of one school committee to pull that school out of a superintendency union, such as Union 28. Board members felt sympathy for Wickman's position, but felt town meeting was not the right forum to take the matter up. The legislature draft-

ed this year's Education Reform bill, and the legislature is the place where the law can be changed, the board reasoned.

Finance committee member Jim Slavos said that instead of an article, a resolution at annual town meeting on the subject might be useful.

The energy task force informed the selectboard that the one-year authorization for the task force is coming to an end, and another committee should be formed to work on exploring the option of Wendell becoming a Green Community under the requirements of the state's Green Communities Act.

Donna Horn rented the town hall for a second "Misfit Prom" benefit for the fire department, to be held on the evening of Saturday, May 29th. Suggested donation for a ticket is \$10. The misfit prom is for anyone who was dissatisfied in any way with their high school prom.

NOTES FROM THE FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOL COMMITTEE CAUCUS

Caucus Plans to Tackle School Funding

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE TURNERS FALLS – In a wide ranging discussion Monday night in their meeting at Turners Falls High School, the Franklin County School Committee Caucus decided to take on the difficult decisions around school funding they see politicians and education leaders avoiding.

Caucus members have decided to put off the second annual Franklin County Education Summit, titled "What's the Big Idea?," originally planned for April 10th, until Saturday, November 6th. In the meantime, the caucus will organize working groups on specific topics, looking for ideas and solutions to the

common problems facing local school districts.

The first working group meeting, on Funding, Revenue and Innovation, will be held on May 3rd at the Greenfield Grille (formerly Famous Bill's) from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., with the first half-hour devoted to socializing. This group is open to all Franklin County school committee members and superintendents.

Caucus members are concerned about the lingering threat of forced regionalization, and pressure from Boston for change built on a model that may not fit this rural area.

Doris Doyle of the Greenfield school committee attended the "Day on the Hill" in Boston recently. Implying that urban school issues are driving the direction of educational reform, Doyle said, "School choice and charter schools came out of urban schools. Things that work in large urban areas don't work for smaller rural districts."

Bob White from the Frontier school district said, "One-size-fits-all out of Boston, doesn't work."

Kevin Courtney added the problem was even bigger, with policies coming out of

Washington, D.C. with pressure for reform that includes school choice and charter schools.

Kip Fonsh of Leverett said he had voted against school choice when it came up at his school committee. He said there was a lot of pressure on him to vote for it, but he felt it was not in the interest of his school district. Fonsh said he thought school choice was immoral.

Doyle said that school choice makes local school districts compete with each other. Members agreed that everyone, winners or losers in the school choice competition, are concerned about choice and its affect on education, as well as the impact of school choice on district funding.

Out of this discussion came a consensus to focus on the larger issue of funding for local schools. Caucus members agreed that depending on property taxes so heavily for school financing doesn't work, but felt there was no chance for a state income tax hike in the current economic climate.

John DeWitt, caucus chair, said, "Revenue generation is our weakness. Why can't schools have their own power, their own banking, municipal power generation, alternative energy? Why not outfit every school in the county with alternative energy?"

Courtney said he's meeting

with finance committee members and business directors to look at how to better organize services.

Michael Langknecht, chair of the Gill-Montague school committee said, "Our five-person business office cannot run a \$16 million dollar business."

Dan Hayes, member of the Shutesbury school committee and Union 28 chair said legislators don't want to deal with school funding issues because it's politically risky and there are no easy solutions. Still, he encouraged the group to consider dealing with the legislature directly, if only because no one else is willing to. He encouraged the caucus to have a summit dealing with funding, looking at big issues that appear intractable.

DeWitt said, "We just need to 'roll up our sleeves and get things done.'"

The working groups could consider methods of reforming funding formulas and revenue sources for rural areas, looking at making funding work for rural school districts. DeWitt suggested the districts in Franklin County develop Innovation Schools as a way to keep some dollars now flowing toward independent charter schools within school districts, while providing many of the advantages to students and families charter schools supposedly bring.

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Montague Center to Form Separate Ambulance Zone

BY BILL DRAKE - As the Turners Falls fire district formally announced plans this week to start their own ambulance service for the town of Montague, the Montague Center fire district preempted that move with an announcement of their own.

The Montague Center fire district has filed paperwork to form their own ambulance service zone, for Montague Center and Lake Pleasant, and to sign a three-year contract for ambulance service with the town's current provider, Baystate Health Ambulance (BHA).

"What's the best for Montague's residents?" asked Montague Center prudential committee member Sam Lovejoy.

He told the Montague selectboard on Monday, "However you want to parse what Montague is, this needs more thought on a broader level."

Lovejoy was there to notify the selectboard that in the prudential committee's opinion, what is best for Montague Center is a continued partnership with BHA.

In a letter dated March 22nd, the MCFD prudential committee advised the selectboard they had taken steps to create their own ambulance service zone and sign

a three-year contract with BHA. The contract has a walk away clause after the first year if either party is not satisfied with the agreement, and would provide free ambulance service for the new service zone covering the villages of Montague Center and Lake Pleasant.

"At least on a preliminary basis, as opposed to trying something we don't know anything about, we'd rather stick with something we do know about," said Lovejoy.

What Lovejoy and the MCFDPC are familiar with now is the free to the town ambulance service BHA currently provides to all the five villages of Montague.

On September 21st of 2009, the Turners Falls Fire District prudential committee proposed in a letter submitted to the selectboard that the town not sign a contract to maintain service with BHA, since the TFFD planned to seek approval from district voters to create their own ambulance service for the town, to begin as soon as July of 2010.

Lovejoy said since the first week of January, when the two fire departments' prudential committees met, "and we were told within a few weeks they would send us the numbers and lots of

information, and as of today we haven't seen a thing."

"No, that's because they have to bring it to their annual meeting on April 20th," said selectboard member Pat Allen. She asked how Lovejoy and the Montague Center committee knew what not to be interested in.

"I would say, the experience of most of the fire people, the prudential committee," said Lovejoy, "what's not to be interested in is: 'Is it going to cost the town anything? Is it going to cost the taxpayer anything?'"

Lovejoy was unwilling to read or comment on a letter penned by the Turners Falls Fire District prudential committee. In the letter the committee states the belief that a single ambulance source for the entire community is the best option and asking to table the MCFD request until the end of April or the beginning of May.

Lovejoy was unwilling to wait until the April 20th meeting to sign a contract with BHA.

"The service zone paper work, I believe," said Lovejoy, "is completed and is either in the mail to the appropriate authorities, or not." He said at a meeting in a week or two Montague Center would formally create its own ambulance service zone.

Lovejoy said he hadn't found anyone he had talked to who thought the Turners Falls fire district could break even providing its own ambulance service, concluding that "It would eventually be taxpayer money [funding the

service]."

Lovejoy said there is, "A fear that town money will become involved in odd ways." He provided an example of paying for the training of new emergency dispatchers and claimed the town "would become Double A ball, like we were ten years ago with the regular dispatch service, and the moment you train them, they get a better job."

Lovejoy also cited the start up costs of acquiring equipment, and the fact that BHA currently provides free ambulance to the town (charging clients directly) as the main reasons for staying with BHA.

Through it all, selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt felt there was still a chance for further negotiating.

"The door is not as closed as it seems," said Pruitt.

She cited the one-year walk away clause in the proposed Montague-BHA contract as a sign that, perhaps, the contract itself is a precautionary move.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio sketched out a plan for future capital improvements in town. There are \$175,000 in capital items planned for the current fiscal year, or about 1% of the town's \$17 million operating budget. All of the capital items are currently funded by reserve funds.

Abbondanzio pointed out that, ideally, the town would spend 2% of its total budget on capital improvements, but that with a

30% cut in state aid over the past five years, spending \$340,000 would be a burden on the town's operating budget.

Abbondanzio highlighted a plan that would gradually phase out use of reserve fund money to pay for capital improvements, ending the use of reserves for capital projects by 2014, a time Abbondanzio cited as a likely target for the state to recover fully from the current recession.

In other town news, the town will be receiving \$1,000 a month as it rents out the former police locker room along with 9,500 square feet on the east side of the town hall parking lot to SPS New England, Inc., the contractor for the Gill-Montague Bridge renovation. The agreement is for two years with a one-year option to renew, and six-month renewal options after that, "in case the bridge work lasts longer than three years," said Abbondanzio.

Tom Bergeron of the DPW listed surplus equipment to be posted for sale, including a 1990 Chevy Sierra pickup with a broken frame, a 1993 Nissan Quest, a trailer and an old HP printer. The full list will be posted in the Montague town hall.

Once again, Abbondanzio made a request for three citizens to come forward and help form a citizen advisory committee for the Regional Housing Authority block grants. This is the third or fourth time the selectboard petitioned people to form the committee.

CHOICE from pg 1

for all school committees not to be school choice anymore. I want to explore the possibility over the short term for our school committee to not have some communities benefiting and others suffering anymore from school choice."

Committee member Aaron Samoza also compared school choice funds flowing to Leverett, at an average rate of \$5,000 per pupil, to a drug. "Shifting gears now that we're dependent might be too severe," he cautioned. "Though I too feel torn."

School committee member Pam Stone did not comment on the topic of school choice, and Stephen Kavanagh was absent from the meeting.

Of the 164 elementary school students at Leverett Elementary School (LES), 29 (17.7%) are

school choice students who attend the school from surrounding towns.

Principal Anne Ross said there would be no openings available for additional school choice students to enter LES in the coming year.

Hajir said that fact may allow the school committee to take a symbolic vote against school choice next month, although he stressed the 29 school choice students currently enrolled would not have to leave the school. Indeed, by law, they are now guaranteed slots at LES until they graduate.

"School choice is something I've been thinking about, partly in light of what's happening in Franklin County. I've always voted for school choice for strategic reasons. We bring in \$5,000 for each student, and probably

have to spend much less to educate the child."

But Hajir said two issues that concern him about school choice are the rate at which the state reimburses LES for educating special needs students who choose in, and also, "the social costs of school choice, and what it does to communities around Leverett."

Ross said only in the case where the number of special education students choosing into LES reaches the point where she would have to hire additional staff to work with them would the rate of state reimbursement fall short of the school's need.

Hajir said he would not propose ending Leverett's involvement with the school choice program, "If it is going to hurt the school. As I go on as a school committee member I feel more

and more the inter-relatedness of all schools."

Union 28 superintendent Joan Wickman said the question would revolve around the size of classes that would result if only Leverett students attended the Leverett school, and whether the smaller classes would have to be merged. She noted that the current 5th grade is made up of 19 students, and ten of those are school choice students. Without them, "that class would be marginally sustainable."

There are 21 kindergarteners from Leverett attending LES now, and 19 four-year-olds waiting in the wings, but apparently only three 3-year-olds are known to be living in town at the moment, although that data may not be complete.

"There are definitely winners and losers in Franklin County,"

with school choice, said Wickman. "It doesn't feel good that that's where we get our money."

Fonsh proposed discussing the problem of LES's dependence on school choice funds with the selectboard and finance committee, and coming up with a long range plan, before taking action. Hajir said the selectboard's plans to create affordable housing may make Leverett accessible for more young families.

As if to emphasize the dilemma, earlier in the meeting Ross asked the committee to find an additional \$10,000 to fund a new math curriculum for LES from school choice funds.

The school committee is considering establishing a fee-based Spanish language after-school program, now that the \$18,000 to

see CHOICE pg 10

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What Does the United States Owe Haiti?



DETMOLD PHOTO

John Bracey spoke at Stinchfield Hall, Greenfield Community College, on Friday in a talk organized by Abbie Jenks and the Peace and Social Justice program.

BY DAVID DETMOLD GREENFIELD – “Which is the beacon of the world?” asked John Bracey, professor of the W.E.B. DuBois program of Afro-American studies at UMass Amherst on Friday at Stinchfield Hall at Greenfield Community College. “The revolution of slaveholders, or the revolution of slaves?”

Bracey delivered a lecture on the topic of “What Does the U.S. Owe Haiti?” to a crowd of about 30 organized by G.C.C.’s Peace and Social Justice program, where he delved into the history of Haiti, the second free republic in the Western hemisphere, which threw off the chains of colonialism and slavery simultaneously in a war of independence that lasted from 1791 to 1804, under the generalship of the brilliant strategist, and former slave, François-Dominique Toussaint L’Ouverture.

“There’s a reason why people do not know about Toussaint,” Bracey declared. “Why do you

have to portray Haiti as a poor benighted place, where the government can’t be trusted, an international basket case whose troubles can’t be helped? If you let Haiti take its rightful place in history, it undermines the U.S. claim that it is the savior of the world.

“The majority of the revolutionaries,” in the American colonies in 1776, “were slaveholders,” said Bracey. “Yet they claim to be the beacon of the world. The French revolutionaries of 1789 – you know, *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* – they at least had the sense to abolish slavery in the French colonies.”

The French colony of *Saint Domingue*, modern Haiti, was the foundation of much of France’s wealth in the 18th century, producing about 40 percent of all the sugar and 60 percent of all the coffee consumed in Europe at the time, along with lucrative exports of indigo and cotton, produced on plantations worked by half a million African slaves, under bondage

to about 30,000 white plantation owners and a similar number of free *gens de couleur*, mixed-race offspring of slaveholders and their slaves.

Bracey said the decision by Napoleon to sell the Louisiana territories to the young American republic in 1803, at a bargain basement price, was due to the fact that Toussaint, and the Haitian revolutionaries who succeeded him and freed the colony from French rule, “had devalued the entire French holdings in the New World.

“The wealth was in the Caribbean colonies,” argued Bracey. “There was more wealth flooding out of Saint Domingue than the entirety of Canada and the Mississippi Valley. Once Toussaint rolls up and took on the French, the Spanish, and the British,” all of whom attacked Haiti once the chaotic revolution spread from the northern plain, where the slave revolt exploded in fire and slaughter in the summer of 1791, to the four corners of the island over the next ten years, “the French lost the economic usefulness of their New World colonies,” and “Napoleon was willing to cut his losses and take what he could get.”

He took Toussaint, too, deceiving him with an offer of armistice, taking him captive, shipping him to France, and starving him in a frigid dungeon

in the mountains of eastern France, where he died in April of 1803, of pneumonia.

“When I grew up in Jim Crow Washington D.C., Toussaint L’Ouverture was the major figure in Black American History,” said Bracey. School children used to vie to play Toussaint in costume performances, or settled for one of his lesser captains like Dessalines, or for the soldier who changed uniform, to personify the soldiers in Toussaint’s army who were said to march about in constantly changed uniforms at Toussaint’s orders to deceive the French about their numbers.

His victory over the armies of the European powers led to the only successful armed revolution by slaves in world history, and elevated Toussaint to a level of esteem reserved for the great military tacticians of his time in the eyes of contemporary Europeans.

But in America, “Toussaint and his genius is wiped out,” said Bracey. Not until the Civil War, in 1862, does America finally recognize Haiti as an independent republic. And immediately after the Haitian revolution, the importation of any slaves from *Saint Domingue* is immediately banned. Why? “Because the *Saint Domingue* negroes are infected with this strange desire for freedom, and we don’t want them infecting our slaves,” said Bracey.

In exchange for recognizing its former colony as an independent nation, France demanded reparations from Haiti equivalent to \$21 billion in modern U.S. dollars, as the value of their former slaves and slaveholdings. Haiti agreed to pay it, in order to get commerce moving again, and wound up indebted to U.S. and foreign banks ever

since, Bracey said.

He pointed to this debt as the primary cause of Haiti’s failure to develop an adequate national infrastructure, along with the repeated invasions by the U.S. Marines to enforce repayment terms, including a twenty-year U.S. military occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934.

“You brutalize the people and lay waste to the economy, walk away and then you say, ‘Why is this place a mess?’ You made it a mess.”

Now, after decades of brutal dictatorship under the Duvaliers, supported by the United States, and the removal from power of Jean Bertrand Aristide, the first democratically elected president in Haiti’s history, the country is again reeling from the after effects of a devastating earthquake that wrecked the capital, Port Au Prince, and America aid dollars, not to mention troops and medical teams, are again flowing toward the country.

And though Bracey praised the effort to “save every life that can be saved,” he insisted, “We’re not doing Haiti a favor. We owe them. This is not altruism. This is a debt we’ll pay time and time again, if you don’t build infrastructure there.

“There’s nothing wrong with the Haitian people. They are a very proud people. Give them the resources necessary. They’ll run themselves.”

Bracey concluded, “Haiti will survive. They’ve survived worse than this. This is not about survival. The question is, ‘Can you build an independent, strong Haiti that stands on its own, that’s not an international basket case?’ It’s imperative that we readjust our attitude about the world in which we live in the 21st Century.”

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Stolen Property Recovered

Monday, 3/29 9:55 a.m. Recovered stolen property from Williamsburg at station.	campus. Subject locked out of room.	large fire and alcohol in woods off of French King Highway.
Friday, 4/2 1:40 p.m. Suspicious vehicle investigated on Barton Cove Road.	Friday, 4/2 1:40 p.m. Suspicious vehicle investigated on Barton Cove Road.	Saturday, 4/3 9:05 a.m. Report of abandoned vehicle left in woods stuck off of French King Highway.
Tuesday, 3/30 12:20 p.m. 911 call from Mount Hermon	9:04 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police on Gill Road with unwanted subject.	Sunday, 4/4 6:55 p.m. Past report of suspicious vehicle on Hoe Shop Road.

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POWER TOWN MUSIC MAKES THE SCENE

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS – Dakota Roberts sat at the front of the Brick House community room on Monday evening in ripped up paint splattered jeans and beat out twangy chord progressions on his acoustic guitar, like so many troubadours before him, singing rough hewn tunes of his own authorship. Plowing ground broken in the past by the likes of Ray Davies, Billy Bragg and Jonathan Richmond, Roberts sang “Canvass for Another Day,” a song he said he hated, with lyrics redolent of anomie and dead end streets in a town that seemed all too much like Turners.

“I will gladly hold your hand for you
As you vomit up my wine
And when I’m so drunk I can’t stumble
You’ll do the same for me,” he sang.

Then he broke off with a muttered, “Somethin’ like that, I don’t know...”

And the crowd of two dozen teens, Brick House board members and others assembled for the first community meeting of Power Town Music broke into enthusiastic applause.

With a little more encouragement, Roberts agreed to play another original.

“All my music’s real shattered,” he said offhandedly. “I’ve been working on this one for a few days. If I don’t have a line, I’ll just omit it, cause it’ll just make me sound stupid.”

This song featured the refrain, “Here I Go Again, (down the same old dusty road).”

The crowd ate it up.
Brick House director Prakash

Laufer stood up and told the audience, “Three months ago, some board members came up with the idea of Power Town Music. It’s really amazing we’ve been able to manifest this dream, with a recording studio [at the Brick House’s well attended Hot Spot Teen Center]... contributing music to the upcoming Block Party, and supporting young musicians.”

Laufer said at a recent concert organized by the Turners youth-based Power Town Music, he was struck not only by the variety of the performers, but by their uniformly positive message.

“We need hope for the future. We need to recognize that in all of us,” exhorted Laufer.

The crowd brought back Roberts for an encore, and he gave a nod toward Bob Dylan in the intro, before singing,

“In this town, I will never find my peace,
Never trust these folks,
You should keep your bottle close
You go crazy in this town,
In this town.”

Brick House board member Peter Hamelin spoke next. Hamelin helped conceive Power Town Music, and has worked with the young musicians like Dakota Roberts at the Hot Spot to help develop a more entrepreneurial approach to their music – emphasizing aspects of the business like designing posters, booking gigs, running sound boards and lighting, even taking tickets at a recent sold out benefit show put on by Peter Tork, of the Monkees, at Burrito Rojo.

“When I first moved here a few months ago, next door here

on 3rd Street, I met Dakota Roberts sitting in front of the Brick House with a giant Mohawk, playing a Kurt Cobain song, and I said, ‘I’m gonna like this town.’”

Without further ado, Hamelin introduced another Turners Falls star, Monte Belmonte, host of WRSI’s morning show, who came to offer a voice of experience to the mix.

“It’s awesome the Brick House exists. I wish it existed in my town when I grew up,” said the smooth-shaven Belmonte. “It’s almost like a commune of music and art as opposed to just a bunch of enclaves of musicians who sometimes try to out-rock each other.”

He told the story of how he broke into radio, working as an early morning intern at a station north of Boston where he got on air by chance, impersonating Al Gore on the eve of the 2000 Bush v. Gore election. No one could know on election day that the vote counting would go on for weeks. ‘Intern Al Gore,’ became a popular fixture on that show, leading to a paying gig for Belmonte, now the program director of the Valley’s ‘alternative’ radio station.

Belmonte said when recorded music came along, people thought it might spell the death of live music. Then when radio came along, they thought it might be the end of both the recording industry and live performance.

“Maybe the rumor of radio’s death has been exaggerated lately,” with the advent of file sharing, iPods, and the like, “but the music industry as a whole is in a strange place,” mused Belmonte.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Dakota Roberts

“People trying to figure out how to get music for free could mean the collapse of the whole music industry, or it could evolve and change. I have a hard time imagining society as a whole will not want to continue to have aural experience, because music is part of what makes us human. People may go back to the days when hearing live music was important to them. As musicians,” he told the Turners youth gathered before him, “you need to figure out what to do with that. ‘Will I look for the opportunities I can seize or steal, or try to make money, and alter my style?’”

Demonstrating an amazing ability to alter his style, D’Angelo Nieves switched from guitar to trumpet to saxophone with fluid grace, all the while recording and playing back tape loops with one foot, to weave an indefinable free jazz performance unlike any one man band Tin Pan Alley busker could have dreamed of back in the day.

Lisa Davol talked about ideas for future collaborations between RiverCulture and Power Town

Music, and Hot Spot Teen Center coordinator Jared Libby and Hamelin talked about the three goals of Power Town Music: to build a thriving, sustainable local music scene in Turners Falls, one that both local musicians and tour musicians can be involved in.

“The second piece is to create jobs, not only for musicians, but also for young people to perform all facets of what it takes to have a music scene,” said Hamelin, who added a third goal was to educate young people in Turners in the music business. He envisions young people working as interns at the August Block Party, or at the upcoming Wednesday evening concerts in Peskeomskut Park, and at other venues.

Fourth Street musician Bridger Felton talked about some upcoming Power Town Music events, including a show with national touring act Caravan of Thieves, April 30th, at the Burrito Rojo, and the Water Under the Bridge festival weekend on June 11th and 12th, when Power Town will work with all the downtown venues to create a vibrant scene.

Underwhelming Land Auctions



PARZYCH PHOTO

Michael Smith, (l-r) Marty Yarmac, and Dan Oros celebrate after avoiding the chanting call of the auctioneer Wednesday afternoon, at the land auction on Main Road in Gill.

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL – Two lots taken for unpaid taxes went on the auction block on Wednesday, April 7th.

Auctioneer Douglas Bilodeau auctioneered a one and a quarter acre lot and buildings on Chase Road in Gill, at 5 p.m. Sole bidder Nathan Towne offered the minimum bid of \$5,000.

Fred Chase did not bid against Towne, when urged by the auctioneer. Towne’s parents live in a house on adjoining land. “Why should I bid against my neighbors?” Chase said. “We sold them the land their house is on.”

The site up for sale could also be deemed a sight. The remnants of a house trailer, several sheds falling into disrepair, or maybe just

falling down, scattered pieces of old lumber, insulation and furniture litter the lot.

Stephen Kuzinski and his relatives lived in a trailer on the lot. According to Chase, Allen Smith was demolishing the trailer for scrap.

“They stripped all the aluminum siding off the trailer first and then accidentally set fire to it when they were cutting up the frame with a torch,” Chase said. “The fire department put the fire out.”

Over on Main Road by Marty Yarmac’s place, Bilodeau tried unsuccessfully to get a minimum bid of \$5,000 out of three parties interested in the two parcels for sale there, comprising a little more than three and a half acres. Yarmac abuts the south side, and Michael Smith abuts the north side. Neither was

willing to bid the minimum, citing the fact that the lot has a stream running through it, wetland across the front, and a hillside with a thin layer of earth overlying ledge to the rear. Nor was the third interested party, Dan Oros of Greenfield, willing to make the minimum bid, after a discussion with Smith and Yarmac.

Bilodeau left after failing to find a bidder, or even to get someone to sign a contract for a lower offer. Smith and Yarmac explained to Oros the lot was unbuildable, since previous owners Clinton and Althea Dawson were unable to get a pass a perc test on the property.

Smith said he was interested in possibly using the land to raise a few game birds. But Smith and Yarmac’s enthusiasm was underwhelming.

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TEAMS from pg 1



MARK HUDYMA PHOTO

Katelyn Dodge at the Bat

dously. If you are looking for something to do on a warm spring afternoon, come see a tennis match at the high school. You won't be disappointed.

Meanwhile, "The girls tennis team has the most potential in any of the past five years," said coach Victor Gonzalez. The girls team has four seniors who are all starting, and have a depth of singles experience. They also have two fully experienced doubles teams. Seven of the top ten players have all played in varsity matches.

"This is the lineup most coaches dream about," said Gonzalez. Overall, the mood on the team is hopeful, and there has already been discussion about the

possibility of post season play. The baseball team is also looking forward to an exciting season, with coach Jim Zellman at the helm. Hopes are high for our varsity boys. The feeling among observers is there is a great deal of raw talent on the roster, and with hard work and effort they can produce a winning team.

In the words of sophomore Jack Hubert, "We have potential, but just potential right now." Fair enough.

Meanwhile, the Turners Falls girls softball dynasty will continue this year, coached by Gary Mullins. He says the team is "very excited" about the upcoming season.

Although the championship team only has three returning players from last year, they have the depth of a full junior varsity

team, and players who've been developing skills since middle school.

The team will feature Emily Mailloux, Elysia Ollari, and Emma Butynski, as well as "several good pitchers." The bullpen includes Hannah Bellows, Dakota Smith-Porter, and Haley Ozdarksi.

Mullins said, "In time, we should have a great team."

Girls track is returning this year with a combination of depth and fresh recruits, the perfect combination for a competitive team. Coached by Ron Hebert and Bob Avery, the team has five seniors, accompanied by several seventh and eighth graders, and lower classmen.

Coach Hebert said the girls are looking strong, and are hoping for a winning season. The team will feature Libby Nicotra on the

high jump and long jump, Kat Palso on the high and low relay, Sam Horan running the 100 and 200 meter races, as well as pole vaulting, Nina Dodge in the throwing events, and Emily Felton throwing javelin.

Boys' track, with just four seniors, was having trouble acquiring the bodies needed to run a solid team, but have recently picked up a few sixth and seventh graders. The seniors are Scott Brown on hurdles, Lucas Foley pole vaulting, Dustin Rivard running the 800 meter, and Chris McMahon running the 100 and 200 meter races, as well as long jumping.

Mark Hudyma is a sophomore at TFHS. Sophomores Zach Boisvert and Katherine Kuklewicz contributed reporting for this story.

from CHOICE pg 7

fund the all school program during class time has been cut from the budget. A petition signed by 13 of the school's 40 staff members asked the school committee to reconsider that cut, but the committee said the budget is now set.

The school committee signed off on a plan to create a shared facilities management position with the town, so that LES John Kuczek, the elementary school's supervisor of building and

grounds, could also supervise the maintenance of town buildings. This one-year trial position will allow Kuczek to take over maintenance supervision of town buildings part time, while still working fulltime for LES, as highway superintendent Will Stratford relinquishes that responsibility. Stratford is going to be taking on more of a supervisory role at the town landfill, in addition to his duties at the highway department, and no longer wanted to oversee main-

tenance of town buildings.

The school committee will explore the possibility of holding joint meetings with the Shutesbury school committee, to cut down on the number of meetings Wickman has to attend each month, and to build ties between the two towns in Union 28 that both send students to the Amherst upper schools. The plan is to alternate meetings between the two towns, with one committee meeting for an hour and a half privately (say from

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.), then both committees holding a joint meeting on common concerns for an hour, followed by a separate hour and half meeting for the other school committee.

Fonsh said a review of Union 28 bylaws is underway, with the intent of updating the bylaws to meet the present needs of the five communities in the superintendency union. A separate effort is underway to frame wording to revise the amendment sponsored by representa-

tives Steve Kulik and Chris Donelan to January's education reform bill that allows any school committee, by a simple majority vote, to pull its town out of a superintendency union. Wendell's Ray DiDonato has prepared wording to send to Kulik for that revision, which, according to Hajir and Wickman, Kulik has expressed willingness to advance in next year's legislative session.



HOUSING from pg 1

who late last year denied additional funds for a builders' feasibility study of that plan.

The entire membership of the affordable housing committee resigned in protest.

The selectboard are now discussing the possibility of dividing the town's available affordable housing funds into four sub-categories, to be further classified and finalized at a later meeting.

According to the plan, one category of funds would be available for a zero percent mortgage "buy down" or loan program, to assist potential homebuyers with limited income in purchasing homes in Leverett. A portion of the fund would be disbursed to the homebuyer, who would agree to an "affordable housing covenant," which would take the form of a lien on the property in the amount disbursed by the fund, repayable to the town upon future sale of the property.

Ken Kahn, a Leverett resident and member of the planning board, presented information on the program, and stressed the advantages of having the money eventually returned to the fund, rather than lost to property equity or absorbed by the state.

Another category of funds would be made available through a town-sponsored grant program for elderly or disabled homeowners with limited income to make accessibility improvements on their homes, to insure their continued ability to remain in their homes.

Bob Schmid, of Leverett, who works as a contractor and often installs accessibility improvements in seniors' homes, described a number of potential projects, limited in scope and cost, but valuable to those whose mobility has been affected by age or injury, which range from wheelchair ramps to simple hand rails in bathrooms.

Also under discussion is a program, described by board member Julie Shively as the "least favorable" of the four options, under which the town would use a portion of the CPA funds to purchase "affordable housing restrictions" on existing properties from the current owners, based on need. As under the mortgage buy down plan, those homes would then have an affordability covenant in the form of a lien held by the town.

Finally, funds may also be used to renovate "in-law apartments" on existing properties in the town, to allow owners and their family to remain in the community.

"The whole idea is to build community," said Shively.

Board member Peter d'Errico will be in communication with Rita Farrell, a senior advisor the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, in order to further articulate and consolidate the plans, and the board will then schedule an open meeting for the town to discuss the proposed use of town funds.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Telephone Pole Downed

Tuesday, 3/30 8:00 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle at the parking lot of the French King Bridge. All set, using cell phone.	Center. Unable to locate disturbance. 4:00 p.m. Report of a suspicious person at North Shore Road at Laurel Lake. Resident's relative staying at the cottage.	of a suspicious vehicle on Gary Street. Located owner, vehicle is out of gas. Will remove as soon as possible.
Wednesday, 3/31 5:02 p.m. Report of a suspicious party at the Erving Elementary School. Arrested	10:15 p.m. Assisted Gill police with large underage party in the woods near The Wagon Wheel.	Sunday, 4/4 8:55 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for domestic assault and battery and operating a vehicle after license suspension on Route 63.
Friday, 4/2 1:30 a.m. Report of fireworks in the area of Erving	Saturday, 4/3 5:50 a.m. Barking dog complaint on Mountain Road. Upon arrival owner had brought dog into residence. Owner left.	Monday, 4/5 Report of a telephone pole down on River Road. Pole down at base. Utilities notified.

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Another Weir at Turners Falls



PARZYCH PHOTO

Franklin County Fabricators install a new weir at the Turners Falls Fish Ladder

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH – Franklin County Fabricators are installing another weir at the Turners Falls dam with their truck crane.

The weir is designed to enhance the capabilities of the present fishway weir, to make it easier for shad to migrate upstream.

This remedial work by First Light was undertaken because shad are not very robust swimmers and the shad fish count has been diminishing.

According to Kim Noyes, of First Light Power, shad passing the Turners Falls gatehouse last year numbered 3,813, down slightly from the year before, when 3,982 shad made it to the top of the fish ladder in Turners Falls. In 1990, by comparison, nearly

28,000 shad swam up the ladder beneath the Gill-Montague Bridge. Even that number is a far cry from the objective of restoring shad to their original habitat, according to the management plan agreed to by U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire back in 1967.

The objective then was to bring 850,000 shad over the dam at Turners Falls, via the fish ladder constructed in 1980. The ladder has been modified several times since to make passage easier for the shad and other anadromous fish, fish like salmon and sturgeon and shad that swim back upstream to spawn.

Figures for released Atlantic salmon swimming up the Turners fish ladder have remained miniscule: eight in 2009, two less than in 2008.

The object of the present modifications is to increase the number of dams, or weirs, with smaller steps in the fishway to facilitate the shad in their passage upstream.

The weir, designed by David Robinson of First Light and constructed by Franklin County Fabricators, is essentially a framework made with

two H beams standing on end, resembling a guillotine. Planks slide in the slots instead of a knife. Four and a half foot long hemlock planks, 5½ x 12 inches wide, purchased from Denison Lumber of Colrain, are stacked 13½ feet high inside the H beam slots.

Acme screw jacks, on either side, raise and lower the planks. Acme threads have a 30 degree pitch, similar to square threads, but are more rounded. Acme threads are used for the transmission of power rather than for fastening. V threads, as in common nuts and bolts, tend to jam because of their V shape and 14½ degree pitch. Exposure to water in the weir would result in rusting and jamming quicker than a shad could pass upstream.

Hemlocks are under siege by the woolly adelgid, an insect that burrows into the bark and kills the tree, but so far Mr. Denison has not seen an excessive destruction of the species, an excellent source of structural lumber that is resistant to rot when wet, making it ideal for use in First Light's fish weir.

Native Americans constructed weirs to trap fish and may well have used them on the Connecticut River. Fish weirs in local rivers were constructed from fieldstones or with stakes interwoven with saplings and tree branches. The Indians, and early colonists, built weirs on rivers to catch spawning salmon going upstream and eels going downstream on their return to the sea.

You'll be able to check out the results of the latest improvements to the Turners Falls fishway when the viewing station opens for the season this year, from May 15th to June 20th.

Under the Bridge

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH
TURNERS FALLS – SPS New England, the contractor for the \$40.7 million reconstruction of the Gill-Montague Bridge, has begun preliminary work on the bridge using a "snooper."

SPS super Henry Mulvey and one of his workers went over the side of the bridge on Thursday in the bucket of an underbridge inspection unit, commonly called a "snooper."

T.F. FIRE DISTRICT SEEKS OWN AMBULANCE SERVICE

TURNERS FALLS - In a plan pitched to increase public safety for town residents and return revenue to the Turners Falls Fire District budget, the Turners Falls Fire District prudential committee is moving forward with a plan to bring a new fire department-based ambulance service to the town of Montague.

The new district-owned emergency medical response system hopes to serve all the residents of Montague, in both the Turners Falls and Montague fire districts, according to a press statement from Turners Fire chief Ray Godin, released Tuesday.

The adoption of a fire department-based ambulance service will be the subject of a vote at the April 20th annual meeting of the Turners Falls Fire District.

The prudential committee is scheduling a "Pre-District Meeting" for Tuesday, April 13th at 7 p.m. at Hillcrest School, to present details of the plan.

"This plan provides for an upgrade in public safety for all of the residents of Montague, additional staffing for our professional fire service, and a new revenue stream for the Turners Falls Fire District," said Mark Allen, chair of the Turners Falls Prudential Committee.

The short-term plan includes the purchase of one ambulance that would be garaged at the Turners

The bridge has been inspected many times over the years, by the state and then by a company from Pennsylvania, again by the state and now by SPS.

According to field engineer Pat Frechetti, the purpose of the most recent inspection is to reassess the degree of deterioration. Once the reconstruction begins in earnest, a specialty firm will pass cables beneath the bridge substructure and build a work platform by adding scaffolding, bit by bit, in sections underneath the span.

Falls Fire Department, and the hiring of up to five firefighter paramedics to staff the ambulance full time.

In addition to faster response times, the District will collect the revenue from insurance reimbursements. That revenue is currently being collected by Baystate; there is no revenue sharing with the town or the District. "This program will bring money to the District, allowing us to hire local firefighter and paramedics," said Godin.



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FINANCE from pg 1

Senior center director Polly Kiely said the current center has only two rooms, so seniors have to continually move furniture (including heavy eight-foot tables) around to accommodate activities. (One senior fell and broke her wrist moving the tables in 2008.) There is only one bathroom for men and women, which is also used for foot clinics. Two seniors quit the center recently in a dispute over use of the single bathroom, which is not wheelchair accessible. The kitchen is housed in a former coat room. This month, on April 23rd, a spaghetti supper to feed up to 60 seniors will be prepared in this small kitchen space.

Kiely said her own office is a partitioned space that allows no privacy for health consultations with seniors. "I've got a gold shag rug from 1974 that should be in the Smithsonian along with Archie Bunker's armchair," she

said.

Kiely said she has level funded her expense account request for running the senior center – \$1,350 – for all but one of the last 16 years.

"We've been good citizens; we've made do," she said.

The architect's plan for the new building would allow for a south facing terrace looking toward Route 63, a 1750-square-foot multi-purpose room, which could be partitioned to form a smaller classroom and dining area, adjacent to the kitchen. There would be room for a 455-square-foot arts and crafts classroom on the north side of the building, a 600-square-foot games and exercise room, and 390-square-foot lounge designed to be "like your living room at home," in architect John Catlin's words.

Gradowski said, "I'm opposed to it for the following reasons. I've been on the Erving finance committee for 21 years. This is the first time we've had to borrow from Peter to pay Paul." Gradowski said the town had recently negotiated a cut in the scheduled replacement of older computers at the elementary school from \$21,000 to \$5,000, and, he said, that meant the town would have to spend \$37,000 on new computers for the school next year.

Gradowski said he believed the school budget would continue to increase next year, even though, "every other school district has reduced their budget." But when he asked the Erving school committee what their plans were for next year, "They just laughed at me."

"I'd like to see a new senior center," said Gradowski. "I'm 67 years old. I would use it." But in an era of declining state aid, he said he couldn't justify spending \$2.4 million on a new senior cen-

ter.

Finance committee member Winniphred Stone said, "Seeing as we're cutting everyone else's budgets, it looks very strange to me that we're building this new building. I don't see where we're going to get the money. I don't see it as a viable or cost effective project at this point."

Finance committee member Dan Hammock, who led the charge at last year's town meetings to defeat the senior center, had not softened in his opposition to the project.

"Even if there is 'money available' from free cash and money we did not spend on other projects – so we don't have to borrow money – you still have a \$28,000 annual operating expense," for maintaining the new building. "I'm not at all convinced the economy is getting better, until everyone is back to work. I agree with Stanley we need something better than what we have. I know it's only \$28,000. But it's only \$15,000 for new computers. It's only \$5,000 for parks and recreation maintenance. Now there's no late bus," for after school activities.

"We've been very conscious not to say, it's the seniors on one hand, kids on the other," Hammock continued. "It's just that there's not enough money to go ahead and take this giant chunk of money. We should put it into stabilization, so when a fire truck craps out or we need a new loader, we'll have it."

The town of Erving presently has nearly \$5 million in its stabilization account, said town administrative assistant Tom Sharp, after the meeting, including nearly \$4.5 million in undesignated funds, and separate accounts for employee benefits (\$112,000), retiree insurance (\$223,655) replacing school computers (\$63,811) and fire

truck replacement (\$23,400).

Sharp said the town was not scheduled to replace a fire truck for several more years.

He said it is too soon to tell how much money the town will have certified as free cash at the end of the fiscal year in June, but he estimated it would be close to a million dollars.

"I'd ask you have a lesser senior center," said Hammock to the assembled seniors on Monday. "I say it with sensitivity because I know you need it."

Kiely rejoined, "It seems like seniors are always on the short end of the stick. The school budget is a monumental expense compared to what the seniors are asking for. I hate to see people not support the seniors. They've built this town; they deserve your respect."

She said the \$28,000 maintenance figure to operate the new building is very close to what the town pays to maintain the current senior center.

Hammock said he meant no disrespect to seniors. "We're in better shape than most towns. For the last 15 years we've been socking funds away. We're in a better position than they are, and I'd like to keep it that way."

Kiely asked, "How big a stabilization amount do you need?"

Gradowski replied, "All we need is one catastrophic situation to occur before we'll be borrowing from stabilization, or cutting services."

Finance committee member Pete Cavanaugh said, "I've been in that building. It's inadequate. We've got the money set aside in the budget now. I think the town should build this building. You owe it to the seniors."

Finance committee member Dennis Wonsey agreed with Cavanaugh.

Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin said the construction

funds have been set aside, and "the likelihood is the construction will come in less than \$2.4 million. You'll never get a better construction market than right now." But he warned the town would still have to maintain the old building, while adding a similar (\$28,000) annual maintenance sum for a new senior center.

Kiely said later the town could look to rent out the first floor of the old elementary school on Pleasant Street, to gain added income, while continuing to maintain the upper floor and parking area for the administrative offices of School Union 28, the other tenant.


On Monday, Hammock countered Goodwin, saying it was not the operating cost of the new building that prompted opposition to the plan, but simply that, "People don't want to spend \$2.5 million on a new senior center."

This got Marjorie Clark's dander up. "I've lived here since 1969. I've paid my taxes year after year. I've asked for nothing. The school is every year up - up - up. I've never said a word. I've paid my taxes. Now after 40 years I ask for a senior center for everybody. Now – they can't afford it. They never said that for the school. They shouldn't say that to me."

The finance committee split 3-2, with the majority voting to recommend against building the new senior center.

Ammarie Gilbert, who had remained quiet while listening to the back and forth, now got up from her chair and said to Hammock, "And again you're turning your back on the senior center!"

Hammock replied, "It's a dollars and cents thing."

"Oh, baloney," said Gilbert. "You've got the money in there." 

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Parkinson Disease – Cause and Treatment

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Q. What causes Parkinson disease?

Parkinson disease (PD) is a complex disorder of the central nervous system. It is the second most common neurodegenerative disease in the United States, after Alzheimer's.

The defining symptoms of PD include tremor, slowness of movement, rigidity, and impaired balance and coordination. As these symptoms become more pronounced, patients may have difficulty walking, talking, or completing simple tasks. They also may experience depression,

difficulty sleeping and other problems.

In the early 1960s, scientists determined that the loss of brain cells was causing PD. The cells that were depleted produced dopamine, a chemical that helps control muscle activity. Today, PD is treated with drugs and surgery.

Medications for PD fall into three categories. The first includes drugs that increase the level of dopamine in the brain. The second category affects neurotransmitters in the body to ease some of the symptoms of the disease. The third category includes medications that help control the non-motor symptoms of the disease such as depression.

There are two commonly used surgical treatments for PD: pallidotomy and deep brain stimulation. Because these procedures are invasive, they are usually reserved for severely afflicted

Parkinson's patients who do not get adequate relief from medications.

Q. What percentage of older men have erectile dysfunction?

The incidence of ED increases with age. Between 15 and 25 percent of 65-year-old men experience this problem. In older men, ED usually has a physical cause, such as a drug side effect, disease or injury. Anything that damages the nerves or impairs blood flow in the penis can cause ED.

The following are some leading causes of erectile dysfunction: diabetes, high blood pressure, atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), prostate surgery, hormone imbalance, alcohol and drug abuse.

And, of course, there are your emotions. It should be no surprise that, if you're having a relationship problem with your sex partner, you can suffer from ED.

Here are some other psychological influences: anxiety over a previous failure, everyday stress, depression, and feeling unattractive to your partner. If you're suffering from ED, you should see your doctor for a discussion and physical exam.

Monitoring erections that occur during sleep can help the diagnosis. Healthy men have involuntary erections during sleep. If nocturnal erections do not occur, then ED is likely to have a physical rather than psychological cause. Tests of nocturnal erections are not completely reliable, however.

Q. What is a taste disorder?

There are several types of taste disorders. You can have a persistent bad taste in the mouth. This is called a dysgeusia. Some people have hypogeusia, or the reduced ability to taste. Others can't detect taste at all, which is called

ageusia. People with taste disorders experience a specific ageusia of one or more of the five taste categories: sweet, sour, bitter, salty and savory.

The most common complaint is "phantom taste perception," which is tasting something that isn't there.

If you think you have a taste disorder, see your doctor. Diagnosis of a taste disorder is important because once the cause is found, your doctor may be able to treat your taste disorder. Many types of taste disorders are reversible, but, if not, counseling and self-help techniques may help you cope.

If you cannot regain your sense of taste, there are things you can do to ensure your safety. Take extra care to avoid food that may have spoiled. If you live with other people, ask them to smell and taste food to see if it is fresh. People who live alone should discard food if there is a chance it is spoiled.

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

Vecina a Vecina

BY EMILY KOESTER

TURNERS FALLS – Lorna Kepes hurries out into the rain to drive around Turners Falls, gathering up women who want to attend, but who don't have transportation. Others walk or drive to the Turners Falls Women's Resource Center at Montague Catholic Social Ministries on 3rd Street. It is a chilly, dreary day in early spring, but inside it is warm and bright, and Christine Diani is making a hot pot of coffee, and practicing her newly acquired Spanish vocabulary.

On Monday mornings for the past eight weeks, eight participants, four of whom speak Spanish as a first language, and four of whom speak English as a first language, have been gathering to do what women all around the world have been gathering to do for millennia: talk to one another. Kepes and Diani are co-facilitators of the group "Vecina a Vecina ~ Neighbor to Neighbor" which has developed organically from the needs and interests of women who live in Franklin

County and who visit the Women's Resource Center.

A loosely connected network of individual service providers who speak Spanish already exists in Franklin County. Some work at various Community Action programs, others work in human service agencies in and around Greenfield: REACH, Clinical & Support Options, Montague Catholic Social Ministries, Department of Transitional Assistance, and NELCWIT, to name a few. In general, the number of Spanish-speaking service providers is not keeping up with the growing population of Spanish speakers living in our area.

In the spring of 2009, Teresa Cordoba, an outreach worker for NELCWIT and native of Colombia, began bringing some of the Spanish-speaking women she worked with to open hours at the MCSM Women's Resource Center in Turners Falls. The women seemed to enjoy the welcoming atmosphere and engaging activities at the center, but

Diani, program coordinator for the center, noticed the women never came to visit or take advantage of the program opportunities without Cordoba there to act as guide and translator.

Diana herself felt frustrated at her inability to reach out to these women, so she and Kepes, an English as a Second Language teacher, put together the "Vecina a Vecina" program.

With funding provided in part through the town of Montague's Community Development Block Grant, participants in the two hour weekly session work together to create the curriculum with Diani and Kepes. The program follows a general structure. Each week the women review the group agreements, which are written in both languages. (A native Spanish speaker reads aloud the agreements written in English, and a native English speaker reads the ones written in Spanish.) This is followed by a check-in, a typical part of many groups at the Women's Resource Center. But in order for all participants to be able to understand one

see VECINA pg 16

Neighbor to Neighbor en Español

TURNERS FALLS – En Turners Falls hay un programa nuevo de conversación en inglés para mujeres latinas. Mas como tertulia que clase, el programa se llama Vecina a Vecina y es exactamente esto: vecinas hablando con vecinas. Por dos horas cada semana mujeres latinas pueden practicar inglés y

enseñar español a sus vecinas norteamericanas.

El proximo programa comenzará el 12 de Abril en Turners Falls Women's Resource Center/Montague Catholic Social Ministries en 3rd Street. Cuidado infantil gratis. Para mas información llama a Christine Diani 863-2455.

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GO GREEN FAMILY

Episode 6: Running on Grease

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON

MONTAGUE CENTER – In the Tinker garage in Gill a WGBJ camera was trained on Billy Tinker’s newly acquired blue diesel pickup truck. Program manager Sam Lively prompted, “Billy – why don’t you tell us what it takes to run this pickup on biodiesel?”

“Any old diesel can run on biodiesel – that’s because Rudolph Diesel, who invented the diesel engine, designed it to run off peanut oil. But you wouldn’t want to run it on straight biodiesel till the weather warms up. Right now you would want to use B-20 – that’s 20 percent biodiesel.”

“What would happen if you ran it today on straight biodiesel?” he asked.

“Morning like this – 15 degrees Fahrenheit – your biodiesel would clog right up. You’d be pushing that pickup home. But guess what? I just finished converting this truck for veggie oil – we’re gonna be running it on waste cooking oil from the Shady Grove Diner and Frontier Wheel Restaurant now! I’m getting that petroleum monkey off my back and doing it for free!”

After recording the blow-by-blow details of Billy’s grease truck conversion, the camerawoman left to check in with Rita in the kitchen. She found her reapplying her lipstick while

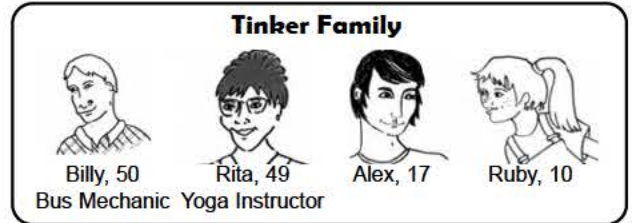
gazing into a hand mirror.

“So Rita... What’s it like having a grease truck in the family?” the camerawoman asked.

“I’m not one of those who

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feels that this is the solution to our resource needs. With the extra tanks and the mess of it...” She looked at her teenage son Alex sitting nearby. “Alex, why don’t you explain?”

“It’s kind of a pain,” Alex began. “First Dad had to install a second fuel tank – you need one for the oil, plus one for diesel. Then he had to have a way to heat the veggie oil because otherwise when it’s cool it gets thick, like butter. So he installed a heat exchanger inside the grease tank, plus a filter, and a second heat exchanger for the filter.

“So to drive the truck, you have to start it with diesel to heat up the veggie oil. Then you have to wait five minutes before you press this button on the dash-

board to change over to grease. And of course you have to switch back to diesel before you turn it off so it will restart in cold weather.

“Plus, my dad spent all last week tracking down restaurants with free waste oil. He brought home two containers that take up half our basement, and he spent hours filtering the oil with this contraption of pumps and tanks. And don’t even get me started on what our basement smells like!”

Continued next week, when the results of the Transportation Challenge will be revealed. Which family do you think deserves to win? Cast your vote at www.montaguema.net and stay tuned to find out who the Go Green Family judges selected.



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

Earth Week Rebates Available for Old Appliances

this offer.

To get the rebate, you will need to visit the website www.masssave.com/residential and use the online tool, or call (877) 627-9721. There you’ll be able to get a reservation number and a rebate form to use after you’ve purchased the eligible appliance and exchanged it with your old one.

Reservations for the rebate will only be taken starting on April 22nd and will only be available through May 5th. However, you can get lists of the participating stores and eligible appliances now by visiting the MassSave website listed above. Because rebates are expected to run out quickly, you’ll want to pick out the appliance(s) ahead of time, so you can reserve your rebate as soon as the program begins on April 22nd.

More information about this program is available on the MassSave website, but here are some key details:

• The program will run from April 22nd through May

5th, or as long as rebate funds last within that two-week period. Rebates are available for energy efficient refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers, and freezers. (See the MassSave website for a list of eligible models.)

• To get the rebate you first need to get a reservation number for each kind of appliance you plan to exchange. You can exchange up to four different appliances and get a rebate for each one, but you have to get a separate reservation number for each kind of appliance.

• Reservation numbers will only be available starting on April 22nd and can be obtained by visiting a participating retailer, visiting www.masssave.com/residential and using the online tool, or calling (877) 627-9721.

• To get the rebate you have to turn in and recycle your old appliance. Participating retailers will be able to arrange pickup of your old appliance when they deliver the new one.

BY SALLY PICK

MONTAGUE – Starting on Earth Day, April 22nd, you’ll be able to get up to a \$250 rebate to exchange your old refrigerator, dishwasher, clothes washer, or freezer and buy a new energy-efficient model that will save you money on your electric bill for years to come. However, these rebates will only be available for a limited two-week period, so you should start planning now if you want to take advantage of

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SHEFFIELD UPDATE

TURNERS FALLS – As of Friday, Sheffield readathon students have read over 6,300 books!

Thursday night, April 8th, the

Sheffield Art Gallery Opening, “Recycled Renaissance” will take place in the Sheffield gymnasium and around the halls from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Two Fires

Wednesday, 3/31
12:20 p.m. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked license and failure to use care starting, turning, backing etc.

9:35 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] on a probation warrant.

Friday, 4/2
6:17 p.m. Assault and battery on Avenue A. Advised of options.

7:58 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] on a default warrant.

8:15 p.m. Fire on Hatchery Road. Services rendered.

10:34 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] for

unarmed burglary on Third Street.

Saturday, 4/3
5:17 p.m. Trespassing at Elks building site on Millers Falls Road. Referred to other agency.

5:29 p.m. Assault and battery on Fourth Street. Advised of options.

8:01 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Seventh Street. Peace restored.

9:01 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] on a straight warrant, red light violation, unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle, and operating a motor vehicle without a license in possession.

9:36 p.m. Fire on Federal Street. Services rendered.

10:21 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Third Street. Peace restored.
Sunday, 4/4

4:37 p.m. Illegal dumping on Turners Falls Road. Referred to an officer.

6:56 p.m. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted] for transporting alcoholic beverage as a minor. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted] for possessing liquor as a minor, and possession of alcohol in a motor vehicle. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted] for possessing liquor as a minor. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted] for possession of liquor as a minor.

Monday, 4/5
8:15 p.m. Disturbance at Railroad Salvage Area on Power Street. Referred to an officer.

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JACK COUGHUN ILLUSTRATION

THURSDAY, APRIL 8th
 Jay Ungar & Molly Mason Family Band at the Montague Grange. There's a chance that this concert will sell out, so if you'd like to secure admission, make your check out to *Swinging Door Music* and send it to David Kaynor, PO Box 30, Montague, MA 01351. General admission is \$15; Grange members, senior citizens, kids, and folks of limited means: \$10.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Free Range*, rock out with Betsy, Mark and Bruce to classic rock & dance music, 8 to 10 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *High Country, Low-Fi w/ Jeffrey Foucault* and friends, 9 p.m. \$5.

FRIDAY, APRIL 9th
 Fourth Annual A Cappella Night at Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, 7 p.m. (413) 863-3221 or www.greatfallsma.org. Suggested donation \$6 to \$12. Young a cappella singers from five regional high schools: *Turners Falls Select Choir* from the Turners Falls High School, *5-Alone* from Pioneer Valley Performing Arts, *The Nellies* from Northfield Mount Hermon, *Spiralia & Shoulder Narrows* from Brattleboro Union, and *The Octets* from Stoneleigh Burnham.

The Greenfield Community College Chorus performance of *Back to Gospel: Choral Classics and More*. In the Sloan Theater at Greenfield Community College. Director of Margery Heins, with Amy



Art Steele at Christina's in Erving, on Saturday, May 10th, 6 to 9 p.m.

Roberts-Crawford, accompanist, and a string ensemble, 7:30 p.m. Info: (413) 625-8461.

Christina's, Erving: *The Reprobate Band*, blues specialists. 7 to 11 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Dan Daniels and Your No Good Buddies*, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Stop Gravity*, percussive soul, 9 to 11 p.m.



Heather Maloney at Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls on Saturday, April 17 at 8 p.m. She'll be joined by Elizabeth Lorrey.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Three bands, *Graveside Embrace, Static Age* and *Deadmans Dossier*, 9:30 p.m.

Millers Pub, Millers Falls: *Karaoke with Dirty John*. 659-3391.

Between The Uprights at 2nd Street, Turners Falls: Top 40 hip-hop and dance music spun by DJ Brownie, 10 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, APRIL 9th & 10th
 Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *This Boy's Life*. DeNiro & DiCaprio shine in this 1993 movie, co-sponsored by The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's *Big Read*. 7:30 p.m., with music before the movie at 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 10th
Go, Kids Art, Go! 3rd annual event at the Leverett Crafts & Arts Barnes Gallery, Leverett. Children's Art Exhibition and party, music by Jay Mankita, dance with Bamidele and Celtic Heels, and storytelling by Eshu Bumpus. Workshops in clay by MudPie Potters; paper weaving and felting with Susan Loring-Wells; recycled collage with Max Rudolph; crayon Batiks by Connecting to Your Source; and more! 12 to 4 p.m.

Artist's Reception for Nature Photography and Oil Painting Exhibit by Patricia Hayes at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, 1 to 3 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Exhibit runs through April 30th.

Free hot lunch with a family-friendly focus (puppets, hiking, music, farm) at

noon at the beautiful Montague Farm Zen House – serving all families. 177 Ripley Road in Montague, near the North Leverett line. Free transportation may be available. Contact Karen Werner: 367-5275/Karen@zenpeacemakers.com.

Contra Dance, Wendell Town Hall. Dances start at 7:30 p.m. George Marshall will be calling. *The Noah's Raven Dance Band*, along with guests will be supplying the back beat for your dancing pleasure. No charge at the door, contributions welcome and will be donated to the music department at the Swift River School.

Christina's, Erving: Art Steele, blues. 6 to 9 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Zydeco Connection*, 9 to 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Tum-it-Loose*, rock & roll dance, 9:30 p.m.

Between The Uprights, Turners Falls: Top 40 hip-hop, dance music spun by Mass Mobile DJs, 10 p.m. No cover.

SUNDAY, APRIL 11th
 Hallmark Institute of Photography Open House for admissions, Industrial Boulevard, Turners Falls. Beginning at 12:30, meet instructors, tour facility. Information (413) 863-2478/hallmark.edu.

Celebrate Elders quilt exhibit opening reception at *A Notion to Quilt*, 623 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls. noon to 5 p.m. Remain on display through 4/18.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Paris 1890 - Unlaced!*. Ooh la la! Actress Anne Undeland performs five characters in this quick and saucy romp through 1890s Paris, a glittering glimpse into the world of courtesans, grandes dames and ambitious can can dancers! Originally commissioned and produced by Ventfort Hall Mansion and the Gilded Age Museum in Lenox, MA. Written by Julian Hiam and directed by Sarah Taylor. Tickets: \$12. (413) 863-2281/ www.theshea.org. Parental discretion is advised. 2 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Joe Fitzpatrick*, acoustic trio – warped Americana, 8 to 10 p.m.

MONDAY, APRIL 12th
Appalachian Still on "Homegrown" at GCTV, 393 Main Street, Greenfield. *Appalachian Still* offers its special version of Americana old-timey mountain music at a live recording for GCTV's popular show, 7 p.m. A free pint of beer across the street at the Peoples Pint

will be given to the first 40 audience members who come to the live T.V. show!

THURSDAY, APRIL 15th
 Sara Thomsen in concert at the Echo Lake Coffeehouse, in the Town Hall, 9 Montague Rd., Leverett, 7:30 p.m. \$10-12 at the door. (413)548-9394/ www.sarathomsen.com.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Wailin' Dave Robinson, Tommy Filault & Co.*, blues based roots music, 8to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16th
 Deja Brew, Wendell: *Kristen Ford Band*, Indie Rock, 9 to 11 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17th
 Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: Singer, Songwriter and multi instrumentalist *Heather Maloney*, 8 p.m. Joined by *Elizabeth Lorrey*. Heather Maloney, who has been traveling up and down the eastern seaboard in support of her critically acclaimed debut CD "Cozy Razors Edge" has proven herself as a skilled songstress and singer, and a powerhouse performer; she uses her heartfelt intelligent lyrics, humor, spirited musicality and joyful performances to offer tales of love, self inquiry and the human experience.



Zydeco Connection - April 10th 9 to 11 p.m. at the Deja Brew, Wendell. Hot zydeco dance band. Lil'Cyn on accordion, Eileen Almeida on rubboard and lead vocals, Mike Rose on drums, and Dave LeBlanc on bass.

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

ONGOING
 Gallery at Hallmark, Avenue A, Turners Falls. William Wegman photographs, *Out of the Box*. On display through May 2nd. Gallery open Friday thru

Christina's
 A Taste of Italy
 Fri 9th 7-11 pm The Reprobate Band Blues Specialist
 Sat 10th 6-9 pm Art Steele Blues
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 Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips.
 Info: Jared at 863-9559.
 Hot Spot Teen Center is in The Brick House
 24 Third Street, Turners Falls, 01376

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
Friday & Saturday April 9th & 10th THIS BOY'S LIFE
 DeNiro & DiCaprio shine in this 1993 movie, co-sponsored by The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's *Big Read*. 1993. R.
 Music 1/2 hour before the movie
 Fri. The Feel – all-girl rock band
 Sat., Freightshakers – roots bluegrass
 51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls 625-2896

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 Showtimes for
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 DAILY 7:00 9:30
 2. **CLASH OF THE TITANS 3D**
 DAILY 7:00 9:30 in DTS sound
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00 PG13
 3. **HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 3D** PG
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
 DAILY 7:00 9:30
 4. **THE BOUNTY HUNTERS**
 DAILY 6:40 9:20 PG13
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
 5. **CLASH OF THE TITANS 2D**
 DAILY 6:40 9:20 PG
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
 6. **DATE NIGHT** in DTS sound
 DAILY 6:30 9:00 PG13
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
 7. **HOT TUB TIME MACHINE**
 DAILY 6:30 9:00 in DTS sound
 FRI, SAT, SUN 3:30 R
 7. **HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2D** PG
 FRI, SAT, SUN MATINEE 12:30

Deja Brew Cafe & Pub
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Saturday, 4/10 9 to 11 p.m.
 Zydeco Connection
Sunday, 4/11 8 to 10 p.m.
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Uncle Hal
 (Harold Bosco & co.)
SAT. 4/10 \$3 Jones Trio (jazz that thumps)
SUN. 4/11 8pm FREE TNT Karaoke
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Theater Review

The Republic of Dreams

Double Edge Theater, directed by Stacy Kline



MILENA DABOVA PHOTO

Armoire March – Republic of Dreams

Carlos Urina (top), Matthew Glassman, Jeremy Louise Eaton

REVIEWED BY
DAVID DETMOLD

ASHFIELD – The possibility suggests itself that no dream, however senseless or absurd, goes wasted in the universe.

– Bruno Schulz, Republic of Dreams 1936

These are the final, haunting words of Double Edge Theater's fantastic one act *The Republic of Dreams*, based on the writings of Bruno Schulz, a Polish Jew killed during the occupation of

his hometown, Drohobycz, by the Nazis in 1942.

During Schulz's lifetime, Drohobycz moved back and forth between Austria, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Germany, at the whim of its conquerors, while Schulz, the recondite genius of his native heartland, dreamed up his own prescient world of mutable boundaries, bold introspection, and leaden aspiration.

The play, which took place in

a lofty barn after a cold march through the dark of a false spring in Ashfield, began not with a loaded pistol on the mantelpiece, but with a gun leveled and aimed at the heart of Joseph, its fervid narrator, who is assassinated before his story can unfold.

Around him wheel the set pieces and rhetorical skills of a well-honed band of *dramatis personae*, like stars in a skewed heaven. The play advances with the inner logic and vivid *tableaux* of a waking nightmare, a hallucinatory dream.

We are in Eastern Europe, in the *shtetl*, where an old woman lights the menorah and prays as a scholarly man in a bowler hat operates a meat grinder. People are seen in the shadows, or in silhouette, in chiaroscuro half-light, or hellishly backlit. The table moves, the actors fly through the air, they enter and re-enter the scene through a magician's trunk, or pose like mannequins, figures of wax, of

clay, about to become dust.

All that is solid melts and gutters; all that is evanescent becomes fixed in the spotlight of memory.

Time is too narrow to hold the events contained within it. The seats on the moving train are taken; there is no room, the hard wooden benches are packed tightly end to end. At the end, there is room only in the box-cars.

"This is the story of a certain spring. A spring more real with enthusiasms, and telegrams from far away."

A woman in a mask whispers from beneath an umbrella, fetching belles in top hats and garters dance nimbly with a strong man and a big bass drum.

"Each spring begins like this... Hidden pathways in the park reveal themselves, leading them into thickets ever deeper and more rustling, where they lose themselves in a backstage tangle of velvet curtains and

secluded corners, where darkness ferments and degenerates somewhere at the back gates of the world."

A curtain falls like a freshet of moths above the gray stage, where a wooden door swings open to reveal a Lady Godiva with long blond tresses covering her immodest beauty like a parted veil.

"Bianca, how heavy is my heart with the mysteries I anticipate."

Shadows and more shadows, in a phantasmagoria of manic waxworks, until the ghost train departs, box by box by box.

"We build our homes of broken sculptures," intones the narrator. And again, the narrator dies; he is assassinated, and we march into the cold again, beneath the ancient stars.

Theater can tell stories, it can reveal truths, or hint at eternal verities. At Double Edge Theater, the actors lead us to a world where shapes shift, time allows a multiplicity of meanings, and the end is revealed at the beginning, rocking along above the cinders of our past.

Great work, heading now for a tour of Poland, or whatever country cares to claim it now.



MILENA DABOVA PHOTO

Matthew Glassman, at work in the Republic of Dreams

VECINA from pg 13

another, this check-in can take up a large portion of the morning. Next the group of eight divides in two: advanced language learners and beginning language learners. Kepes mingles with and guides both groups.

Participants of the advanced group can already converse with one another, and are learning to write in their new language. Diani is a member of the beginning group, where she struggles alongside the other women to learn words to a language she was not born listen-

ing to.

There is a break, a review, and then the morning is over, far too quickly for some.

Free bi-lingual childcare is offered to participants of the Vecina a Vecina program, so the next generation of area residents are getting a head start on their mothers in bilingualism. The women whose children were being cared for in the family center go next door to gather them up, and the group disperses, back out into the drizzle.

It is hoped that, as these friendships are forged, and

understanding is increased, more inhabitants of the greater Franklin County community will be able to support one another, and live harmoniously together, across language barriers.

The next session of the Vecina a Vecina ~ Neighbor to Neighbor program is scheduled to begin on Monday, April 12th.

For more information about the programs and activities at the Turners Falls Women's Resource Center, contact Christine Diani at 863-2455.



"Paris 1890 - Unlaced"

Ooh La La!!
(A little risqué business!!)

Lenox, MA Sold Out Hit

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