



SOUTHERN WARMTH

For Turners Students Visiting Kentucky

Page 3



JEWISH CULTURE IN N.E.

Senior Symposium at GCC

Page 9

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 7 - NO. 27

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 9, 2009

Public Hearing on Montague Center School Reuse

BY DAVID DETMOLD – The town of Montague will hold a public hearing about the future use of the Montague Center School building, at the Montague Center fire station, on April 22nd, a Wednesday, at 7:00 p.m. The 14,182-square-foot building, located at 15 School Street, sits on 3.3 acres of land, adjoining wetlands, with some parking out front. It has been in town hands since last June, when the Gill-Montague Regional School District closed the school. The property, which has a new roof and a recently tested and approved underground oil tank, is assessed at \$768,800.

Using \$20,000 in program income funds, the town has hired Greenberg & Associates, architects of Putney, VT and Landvest, a real estate consulting firm out of Orange, MA to conduct a feasibility study for reuse of the building. The public hearing on the 22nd will give residents a chance to hear the consultants' ideas for how the building could best be reused, and a chance to offer their own ideas on what the best plan for reuse of the building might be.

Les Cromack, chair of the Capital Improvements Committee, which is guiding the process of maintaining, securing, and considering the eventual reuse of the school building for the town, said, "Our first hope is we can put the building on the tax rolls."

Cromack's had been among the voices raised at a hearing at the Montague Center School in October of 2006 calling for the GMRSD to close the school as a cost-saving measure.

"At least we hope to get payment in lieu of taxes on the building. Our next objective is to have something go in there that fits comfortably with Montague Center."

In this regard, Cromack said his committee would not favor an end use for the building that included truck traffic, or lots of traffic of any kind. He said the committee would favor artist live/work space, condominiums, other residential use, or, "would consider a school setting, as long as it does not impact the Gill-Montague school district financially."

Cromack said for most end

see **SCHOOL** pg 10

Life Studies

Photographs by Stan Sherer

On display at the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography



Paris Bookseller by Stan Sherer

BY ANN FEITELSON

TURNERS FALLS – A deeply probing intelligence is evident in photographs by Stan Sherer, on view at the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography Gallery 85.

Sherer, 62, a Northampton resident, has photographed and published locally, nationally and internationally, working for AP and UPI, *the New York Times* and *the Boston Globe*, and has published eight books of his photographs.

He has a trim white beard, a natural elegance, a melodious voice, and a calm but buoyant presence. Conversing about his work at the opening of the exhibit, titled "Life Studies," on Saturday, he said, "I look at things for a long time, and try to see the nuances, the underside, the backside." All sides of a story, his sweeping arm conveys, including what is ordinarily hidden.

Asked what words would describe his pictures, he answers: "classical, understated, contemplative."

When we think of classical documentary photographs, they are black and white and richly detailed; though candid, they give people dignity; they lead us to explore the world and the human condition; and they capture a dramatic moment where multiple layers of meaning are

revealed. They draw us in and keep us fascinated through graphic yet subtle means: gray gradations, rhythmic divisions of space, rhyming shapes, and directions for visual traffic flow. Sherer's work achieves all this. There is much to discover and to meditate on in his work.

His Shopkeeper series, now on display at the Hallmark Museum, shows butchers, bread bakers, broom makers, barbers and all sorts of entrepreneurs and tradespeople, from near (Chicopee, West Springfield) and far (Mali). Sherer shows the synergy between shopkeepers, their wares, and the spaces they inhabit: they look like their stuff, in the same way that humans resemble their dogs, and spouses resemble each other. A French cobbler is as

softened and flattened and worn, as afflicted by gravity and pressure, as the shoes piled around him. He is an old man who lives in a shoe, in a dark cave that he has imprinted during decades.

A merchant in a Budapest bazaar looks just like the teapot in her stall. Both are shiny, rounded and stout; the woman's arms jut out like the teapot's spout.

Sherer explains the series of photos of Shopkeepers in a statement on the wall: "Historically, the role of the general store was to provide for the basic needs of its community.... Small shops still play a prominent role in the formation and character of a neighborhood. We rely on them for more than purchasing items we need. In our memories and in the present too, they can be sanctuaries where we can feel comfortable and protected.... Neighborhood shops give us a 'sense of place.' ... As small towns lose their shops to continually expanding malls, we see the loss of the vibrant thriving commercial centers of town. The photographs I have made over the decades, of shops and their keepers, in many parts of the world, is both a visual homage to shopkeepers and a historical record of a disappearing way of life."

Some images show shops that are simply homey, humming with life, and welcoming. In others, Sherer delights in ironies, synchronicities and contradictions. On Saturday evening at the Hallmark School of

see **LIFE STUDIES** pg 8



"Budapest Bazaar" by Stan Sherer

Baldassare Reaffirmed as Mahar Super 10 – 1, Over Wendell's Objection

BY DAVID DETMOLD

ORANGE – On April 7th, the Mahar school committee, facing official criticism from three of its four member towns over the process used at their March 3rd meeting to appoint Mahar's Director of Student Support Services Michael Baldassare to replace departing superintendent of schools Reza Namin – including a request by the Orange select-board to rescind that vote and go through a formal search process to hire a new superintendent of schools – opted instead to reaffirm Baldassare's appointment, by a vote of 10 to 1.

Also on April 7th, the committee rejected a call by Orange to reduce the size of the 2010 operating budget for Mahar by 5%, to help ward off a projected FY '10 deficit in the largest of the member towns of nearly \$1 million for the coming fiscal year, and unanimously approved a \$12,294,487 operating budget, with a \$4,897,130 assessment figure to be divided among the member towns for the coming year.

The committee also turned back a call from Wendell's Mahar representative, Dick Baldwin, to switch from the statutory method of determining the assessment figures for the member towns to the so-called alternative method of assessing. The 7 – 4 vote rejecting Baldwin's proposal came after a detailed presentation by Wendell finance committee members Jim Slavos and Michael Idoine, who attempted to convey the inequity of per-pupil costs borne by Wendell, and New Salem, which pay much higher costs per student enrolled in Mahar than Orange, even though by a variety of economic indicators they are only marginally wealthier. In FY'10, Wendell is slated to pay the highest per pupils costs of any member town including Petersham, the wealthiest of the four towns.

Baldwin pled the case of local control, stating that the committee, by adopting the alternative method of assessment, could then agree on an assessment formula among the four towns that matched the realities of their municipal finances, rather than leaving it to the state to determine an assessment formula for them.

As the meeting opened, the

see **BALDASSARE** pg 6

PET OF THE WEEK

I Love to Play



Casper

I'm a four-year-old female short hair cat in need of a good home. I guess I am named after Casper the Friendly Ghost because I'm mostly white... well, I'm no ghost but I sure am a friendly girl. I just love to talk while someone pets me; I roll onto my side and purr and stretch. I have mitten paws, called polydactyl: so unusual and quite attractive. And I have subtle gray areas on my head; they look more like little smudges than real spots. You can't miss the black spot on my nose, how cute is that? Of course I love to play, especially with string toys and balls. For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email: leverett@dpvhs.org.

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The Montague Reporter

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

PHONE (413) 863-8666
FAX (413) 863-3050

reporter@montaguema.net
Postmaster: Send address
changes to

The Montague Reporter
58 4th Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Advertising and copy deadline
is Tuesday at NOON.

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CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Earth Day Party

BY LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – There will be an Earth Day Party at the Carnegie Library on Saturday, April 18th at 10:30 a.m. Children of all ages and their families are invited to join Ruth

O'Mara for making fun creative projects out of recycled materials. Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call the Carnegie Library at 863-3214.

MILLERS FALLS LIBRARY NEWS

Spring Decor



LINDA HICKMAN PHOTO

Grace Korpiewski of Millers Falls, pictured left, and sixteen other children enjoyed making spring decorations at the Millers Falls Library club on Tuesday, April 7th.

Mystery Photo Album



Do You Recognize Me?

BY LILLIAN FISKE

THE PATCH – Three members of the Montague historical society – Mary Melonis, curator; Dot

Hmieleski, secretary; and myself as president – have been sorting eighteen years of donations to Lionel Girard. One of the items is a brown photograph album that contains over one hundred family snapshots, over a period of years from World War I to the Montague bicentennial. Not one of the photos is identified.

The album also contained, however, three post cards sent from New York to the Misses Madeline, Alice and Nellie Brady, addressed to 26 G Street, Turners Falls. This leads us to believe we are holding the photo album of the Brady family.

We wonder if anyone knows any member of this family. (If you do, call me: 413-367-2280.) We suspect the album was left behind when the house was sold. As there are no names on the photographs, there is not much point to our society keeping the album, and we would be happy to send it



Home Again!

The Turners Falls State Champions sign, which stood for about a week at the corner of 6th and Canal last fall before vandals pitched it into the power canal in the middle of the night, has come home again, a bit worse for the wear. A resident of Chicopee, walking by the river last week, discovered the sign floating near his home, in the spring thaw. He called the town of Montague, and Tom Bergeron drove down and picked up the sign. Now it is housed at the police department, evidence in a crime still under investigation.

to a member of the family.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress how important it is to identify photographs, especially older ones. Take the time to write the names on the back so they will be of use to future generations.

I have been corresponding with a member of the Bitzer family from Pennsylvania. One of David's stepchildren wants all of the information on John Bitzer I can find, as she is making a family book for her father. She tells me she has many beautiful photos which are unidentified.

Several years before my mother died, I took an afternoon off from work, and we went through four desk drawers of photographs, and she was able to identify all but two of them. I wrote the names on the back. Please take the time to do this; your descendants will be eternally grateful.

Turners Falls Sports Booster Club's

5th Annual Fundraiser presents
A Comedy ESP/Hypnosis Show
Saturday, April 18th

at the French King Entertainment Center
Dinner at 6 p.m., Show at 9 p.m.
DJ Dancing Later, Limited tickets \$27.50
Must be 21 or older, Call for tickets: 413-423-3047, Reservations for groups.

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Benefit for the Erving Senior Center
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Menu: Green salad, pasta with choice of sauce, garlic bread and ice cream
Tickets: \$7, children under 12 \$4
For reservations call Polly at 413-423-3308

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week
Grade 6
Liam Ellis
Grade 7
Alex Osowski, Meghan Casey
Grade 8
Tanisha Sanders

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SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – April 13th to April 18th

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

Monday, 13th

9:00 to 10:00 a.m. Foot screening Gill and Montague residents only. Advance registration needed. Fee \$5.00.

10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics

10:50 a.m. Easy Aerobics

1:00 p.m. Painting Classes, David Sund will be instructing this class. This painting class is with acrylic paints and is suitable for all levels of expertise. Registration fee is \$10.00 for 6 weeks Gill and Montague residents. All others pay \$15.00

Tuesday, 14th

9:00 a.m. Walking Group

10:30 p.m. Chair Yoga

1:00 p.m. Canasta

Wednesday, 15th

10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics

12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, 16th

1:00 p.m. Pitch

Friday, 17th

10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics

11:00 a.m. Easy Aerobics

1:00 p.m. Scrabble

Saturday, 18th

9:00 a.m. Spring Tag Sale at the Montague Senior Center
Pot Luck Lunch followed by Bingo Monday April 20th.

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

The Wendell Full Moon Coffee House show featuring John Sheldon and Blue Streak on Saturday, April 11th will benefit the Center. Seniors willing to create treats to sell at the show should leave messages with Ginny Schimmel at 544-2924.

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For info and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413-423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity:

Monday, 13th

9 a.m. Exercise

12 noon Pitch

Tuesday, 14th

9 a.m. Aerobics

9:30 a.m. C.O.A. Meeting

12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday, 15th

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

12 noon Bingo

Thursday, 16th

9:00 a.m. Aerobics

10:15 a.m. Pool

Friday, 17th

9 a.m. Bowling

11:30 a.m. Lunch: Pizza from Mattie's

Life Changing Experience for TFHS Students in Elliot County, Kentucky



PHOTO KIM BOND-MATHIEU

Back row (l to r): Heather Batchelor, Joey Rinaldi, Tom Willard, Kelli Humphrey, Brooke Hastings, Chris Humphrey, Christopher Klosson, Shamari Kelly
Middle Row (l to r): Evie Snyder, Whitney Sanders, Lisa Jackson, Sami Wondolowski, Emma Banning, Chelsea Bacon, Kim Nelson, Charlotte Parody, Lindsey Wilson, Tranae Gallagher, Kelsey Kane, Julie Thompson
Front Row (l to r): From Laurel Gorge Cultural Ctr: Missy Penix and Kay Harris

BY DAVID DETMOLD – From March 16th to the 20th, fourteen Turners Falls High School seniors, and three sophomores, travelled to Elliott County, Kentucky, near the West Virginia border, in the foothills of the Appalachians. The population of the entire county – 6748 – is smaller than the population of the town of Montague.

The students from Turners Falls left their classes behind for a week and traveled 15 hours each way in vans, chaperoned by teachers and parents, to pick up trash along misty Kentucky highways, and work with a non-profit housing group landscaping new homes for low-income residents in tiny mountain hamlets. During their trip, they also traveled with a busload of students from Sandy Hook high school to the Rupp Arena in Lexington, where the best boys' basketball team to come out of rural Kentucky in decades took two consecutive wins before dropping the state semifinals to a big city team, the Holmes Bulldogs, who would go on to win the state championship in double overtime.

For Turners, the trip was billed as a chance to perform community service in one of the poorest counties in Kentucky, but to hear the students tell about it, it was "a life-changing experience," as more than one agreed.

"Pretty much what it comes down to is everyone is better in

Kentucky," senior Kelsey Kane told a roomful of parents and staff on Friday evening, April 3rd, at the TFHS library. "People would come over and just start a conversation."

Kane was one of many students to enthuse about the warmth of Southern hospitality that greeted them from the minute they arrived at the high school in Sandy Hook, the county seat, where they slept on air mattresses on the gymnasium floor during their stay.

TFHS government teacher Heather Batchelor said it was not just the Kentuckians who reflected well on their community. "Hearing the adults praise our students as polite, thoughtful, and friendly, we got to see we were representing Turners Falls and Montague the way we should be represented."

Batchelor showed a slide show of the trip, to the soundtrack of John Prine singing "My Old Kentucky Home" and Loretta Lynn singing "Coal Miners Daughter," with scenes of Turners students carrying trash bags full of litter picked up along the curving hillside highway near Laurel Gorge, a state cultural heritage center.

"Laurel Gorge was breathtaking," said Julie Thompson. "Even picking up trash there was fun."

Emma Banning agreed, "Kentucky has the most beautiful scenery I've ever seen."

For several days, the students from TFHS worked with Frank Olson, the chair of the board of Frontier Housing, which in the last 35 years has assisted over 1000 low-income families throughout northeastern Kentucky to own their own homes. They traveled with Olson to the sites of several new homes, where they worked together as a team to provide new landscaping and help out in whatever way was needed.

"The most memorable part of the trip, for me," said Whitney Sanders, "was at the first house we did. The lady who owned the house, Ms. Kelley, was so happy we were helping her. If there was any doubt we were making a difference, the second she talked to me all doubt was gone."

Frank Olson's daughter, Rebecca, is the English for Speakers of Other Languages director for the Gill-Montague school system. She was the one who made the connection with Elliott County for Batchelor's TFHS students, when they proposed taking a class trip and doing community service. The students raised \$600 standing in the breezeway of Food City to defray expenses for the trip, and they received small grants to help them on their way from the Gill-Montague Education Fund (\$250), the Ladies Auxiliary of the Elks (\$400), and Our Lady of Peace parish (\$200).

Olson-Wright wasn't able to travel with them to Kentucky, because she had to stay and translate for the parents of her 35 ESOL students, who were having parent-teacher conferences that week. But she stayed in touch with the TFHS students in Kentucky through regular phone calls to her father, who was proud to host them.

Olson-Wright said when the students came back to Turners Falls, "The most powerful thing was the realization we're all the same: every community has struggles."

In the slide presentation, photos showed the young people from Turners Falls planting shrubs and flowers and trees and installing a silt fence in the dirt see **CHANGING** page 5

MONTAGUE INTEGRATIVE HEALTH

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GREETINGS FROM GOOD NEIGHBORS

The North Quabbin Annual Food-A-Thon is officially underway.

This event unites volunteers from the local food pantries and meal sites in an effort to raise funds and food to support these programs.

We at **GOOD NEIGHBORS**, the food pantry serving the residents of Wendell and New Salem, have seen a **35% increase** in membership since January 2009. In fact, more than **25% of Wendell's population** is currently enrolled, with new people joining every week.

We need our community's support now, more than ever. We have an excellent group of committed volunteers, with new people signing up weekly. The fundraising has begun in both Wendell and New Salem, supported by the Wendell Country Store, the New Salem General Store, our libraries, schools and churches. Donations can be made at any of these sites, as well as Hannaford, Orange Walmart, WJDF, and Athol Memorial Hospital. The food and funds raised will be divided among all of the food pantries and meal sites.

Checks can be made payable to our fiscal sponsors, "North Quabbin Community Coalition" and mailed to: **GOOD NEIGHBORS**, P.O. Box 222, Wendell, MA 01379.

Listen for live broadcasts on **AOTV, WJDF, AND TIME WARNER** for the Food-A-Thon, April 14th, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Orange Center.

If you live in Wendell or New Salem, remember that our doors are open to everyone on Sundays from 1:30 - 2:30 at the old Town Hall on the Wendell common. We offer food, information and referral services to other programs that assist people with low or no income.

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"The Voice of the Villages"

Circulation

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Founded by

Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August, 2002

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A Well Regulated Militia...

When two high school seniors – Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold – stalked the halls of Columbine High School and methodically gunned down 12 students and a teacher before killing themselves on April 20th, 1999, the massacre ignited a national debate on gun violence, with some calling for tighter gun control laws and others calling for the arming of high school teachers.

The same debate played out eight years later, after April 16th, 2007, when Seung-Hui Cho, a college student with a history of psychiatric problems, armed with semi-automatic handguns, shot and killed 32 students and teachers at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA, in the worst rampage by a single gunman in American history. Only this time, the call from the gun lobby was to arm college professors.

No one seriously suggested arming the Amish, however, when Charles Roberts barricaded himself in a one-room Amish schoolhouse with the young female students in Nickel Mines, PA on October 2nd, 2006, and killed five – between the ages of six and thirteen – and critically wounded five more before shooting himself. Nor has the call been raised to arm nursing home patients or staff since last Sunday, when Robert Stewart burst into the Pinelake Health and Rehab Center in Carthage, NC and shot and killed a nurse and seven patients ranging in age from 78 to 98.

We have yet to hear the cry go up to arm immigrants, though the earth has still not settled on the graves of the 13 Filipino, Haitian, Chinese, Brazilian, Vietnamese, Pakistani and Iraqi refugees and émigrés, their English teacher and a receptionist killed at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, NY last Friday, when Jiverly Voong, armed with semi-automatic handguns, walked into the building where he had struggled to learn English, and began blazing away.

Should police in this country be more heavily armed? Their weapons were inadequate to pro-

tect the four Oakland, CA officers gunned down after a routine traffic stop led to a fatal gun battle with parolee Lovelle Mixon on March 21st; or the three officers killed when police in Pittsburgh, PA, encountered Richard Poplawski, armed and wearing a bulletproof vest on Saturday. Poplawski opened fire on police as they came to the front door of his mother's suburban ranch house, responding to a domestic dispute about a dog.

A majority of big-city police chiefs (63%) surveyed in 2002-03, in a study published by the *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* in April of 2006, supported gun control laws, and agreed with the statement, "The government should do everything it can to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals, even if it means making it more difficult for law-abiding citizens to purchase handguns."

Although it would appear that the Democratic Party, as a whole, has capitulated to the NRA and lain down and died on the issue of gun control, still requests for gun permits are up steeply since Obama's election, as the right-wing blogosphere feeds rumors that Washington will soon find a way to "take away our guns." Poplawski, the Pittsburgh shooter, was reported to have been motivated by the fear that "the Obama administration was poised to ban guns."

If only this were so. Let's set aside the legitimate need to hunt game to put food on the table, and the sport that has developed around this ancient practice, and accept the sale and possession of hunting rifles and ammo as defensible. No one needs a handgun or an AK-47 to get the better of a deer.

Anyone who sees the working of a well-regulated militia in the horrific killing sprees unleashed by Harris, Klebold, Cho, Roberts, Stewart, Voong, Mixon, Poplawski and their brothers in arms are simply aiding and abetting the mayhem and making plain the way for more mass mur-

"I give you a lesson in American Civics."



CLAUDIA WELLS PHOTO COLLAGE

BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK, APRIL 3rd, 10:30 a.m.

der to follow. Since the 5-4 *District of Columbia v. Heller* ruling in June of last year, overturning Washington D.C.'s ban on the private ownership of handguns, and finding for the first time an individual right to own guns, we are forced to include the rogue majority of the United States Supreme Court in this category.

Now, American society is an armed camp, bristling with firepower, waiting for any match to strike the tinder. In the "post-Obama" era of right-wing fear and hate mongering, background

checks for gun permits are up 31%, and gun stores nationwide are running out of ordnance and ammo to keep up with the demand. There are already more than 200 million privately-owned guns in America, more than one per household. That arsenal is growing rapidly.

The time will come when Americans will no longer be willing to live with the slaughter imposed on our society by our easy access to guns. Each year, on average, 70,000 Americans are wounded, and 30,000 killed, in

gun violence. There is no way to arm ourselves effectively against this fact. The only way out of America's shooting gallery is to ban the private purchase of handguns and assault weapons, and maintain sensible regulation on other firearms in private hands.

One day, Americans will come to realize they do not have an inalienable right to own handguns and assault weapons, much less to use them against other human beings. The question is how many more innocent people will have to die before we do.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Let Seniors Take Leftovers Home!

I haven't the slightest idea why they now allow the seniors who eat dinner at the Gill-Montague senior center to bring home only milk, bread and fruit, instead of all the food they have paid for. Most seniors do not have the appetite of earlier years, so sometimes they can't eat all the vegetables and meat on their plates.

The other day, a woman wanted to bring home three small sweet potatoes. The meal site manager told her she couldn't. In embarrassment and disgust, the woman threw the potatoes back on the table.

The manager wasn't happy, but she was only going by the posted rules.

Have we become a nation that is afraid to do good things because it may create the opportunity for a lawsuit, or cause trouble? I assure you, seniors are not the Sue You Generation.

I do not know why or how this rule was put into effect, but I certainly don't agree with it, because of the following reasons:

Milk brought home can go sour, bread can go moldy, and fruit rotten. What is the difference between those examples, and meat going rotten or vegeta-

bles going sour?

If I eat at a restaurant on a gift certificate my family has given me, and I bring half of it home, and several days later I eat it and get sick, is that the restaurant's fault?

I know of two churches that serve free community dinners. Whatever is left over is given to the diners to take home.

Why was this new rule at the senior center put into effect? My wife and I, like many other Gill and Montague seniors, have been volunteers at the senior center for over 20 years, and for many, many years senior diners could bring home whatever they hadn't eaten. They were also allowed to bring home any food left in the trays after the diners had seconds.

Isn't it better to have food go into a senior's stomach than into the sewer?

– Allan Adie
Gill

Support Appreciated

Thanks for Dawn Montague's coverage of our non-electric apartment hearing in both of the last two issues (along with your great coverage of our barn raising last fall).

One point: last week's article included the line, "about a third of the attendees went on record in favor of allowing them to proceed with the plans." This is correct but a little misleading. Most of those there – by far – supported our plan. Three more people who wanted to attend in support didn't: there was no place left to park.

All this patient backing through the long hearing from ordinary Wendell residents (if any Wendell resident can be said to be ordinary) gave us a real boost. Everyone thought the planning board did a great job.

The hearing will continue on April 21st at 7:30 p.m. at the town office building. We'd welcome your further support.

– Jonathan von Ranson
Wendell

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Biomass 101 Event Highlights Pros and Cons

BY DAWN MONTAGUE

GREENFIELD – Plans for several power plants that would burn biomass sourced from wood to produce energy are in the works in western Massachusetts. In the past six months, the surge in interest in using biomass to produce energy (and heat) on a large scale has sparked discussions about carbon emissions, ecological impact on forests, pollution, effects on the local economy, and resource use.

On Tuesday night at the GCTV studios, the Greening Greenfield Energy Committee organized a public event to present some of these issues “so that everyone can have an opportunity to hear up-to-date information about the opportunities, issues and technologies related to this valuable resource, and be better prepared to participate in the public licensing process.”

The event was co-sponsored by the Center for Ecological Technology (CET), Co-op Power, Franklin County Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), Greenfield District Heating, and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC).

The studio was filled by nearly 80 people from across the region. Speakers David Damery, director of building materials and wood technology at UMass Amherst, and Gordon Boyce, marketing and utilization forester at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), gave a presentation on forest resources in Massachusetts.

“Massachusetts has a signifi-

cant forest resource which can provide renewable energy to its citizens,” said Gordon Boyce, of DCR “The sustainable management of that forest resource will allow the wood supply to last forever.” He pointed to the fact that Franklin County is more than 80% forested as one reason that biomass power is a viable option for this area.

“We need to reduce our energy usage, and increase efficiency, said Damery. “Heat and energy derived from the renewable forest resource can have significant economic benefits, as it serves as a bridge technology in advance of the full development of solar energy sources,” he added.

A number of issues raised during the question-and-answer session were critical of the biomass projects. One questioner asked how carbon dioxide emissions from a biomass power plant compare to those from a coal-burning plant. Burning wood actually emits about 50% more carbon dioxide than coal, but because the carbon dioxide absorbed during the life of a tree is approximately equal to that produced by burning it, the process is considered carbon-neutral overall.

Chris Matera of Massachusetts Forest Watch was frustrated by the tightly moderated session, which provided no forum for back-and-forth between the speakers and the audience: “We couldn’t get at the issues. The event was a sales job by the timber industry.” Matera was disappointed “to see tree-huggers who tell us to recycle turn around and tell us we should

cut down and burn our forests. It’s like living in the Twilight Zone.”

Both speakers acknowledged that burning woody biomass on a large scale for energy presents a set of complex issues, and that there was not enough time to address most of them. “It is important that we explore how we can use this local renewable resource in a sustainable way,” said Nancy Hazard, co-chair of the Greening Greenfield campaign. “But it is important to remember that generating heat and electricity locally, renewably, and with low climate change emissions is only one-fifth of the solution. We must not forget that the most important thing we can do to improve the economy and the environment is to use efficiency and conservation to cut down on the energy we use in our homes and our cars. Only then can we imagine using this valuable resource sustainably.”

Speaking after the event, Hazard said that it really was intended to be a starting point for people to begin to learn about the issues and opportunities around biomass as an energy source.

She said that there are two upcoming events where people can learn more. First, the Pioneer Renewable Energy project, a proposed biomass plant to be sited in Greenfield, will host an open house April 14th at the Greenfield Middle School from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. The second is the Sustainable Energy Summit at UMass Amherst, May 1st to 2nd, organized by Co-op Power.

Part of the fun, according to almost all the students who spoke Friday night, was connecting with the high school students at Sandy Hook around the excitement of their basketball team reaching the state semi-finals, something the Turners students could easily relate to. Kentucky is one of two states that still allows teams from schools of any size to compete against all comers for the champi-

onship trophy. A great deal of press and excitement had built up around the Elliott Lions, a hard-charging, high-scoring, home-grown squad from a school with a graduating class of 74 students, making it all the way to Lexington (the week the TFHS students were visiting). They were finally knocked out by Holmes (enrollment 1000), but not before the Turners visitors got to watch

G-M Taps Ladd for Superintendent

ELLEN BLANCHETTE

GILL-MONTAGUE – On Tuesday, April 7th, the Gill-Montague Regional School District picked a new superintendent of schools. His name is Alan Ladd, and on Thursday he formally accepted the post.

The two finalists for the position came to Turners Falls High School on Tuesday to answer questions in front of the school committee, present their educational views, and discuss how they would lead the Gill-Montague schools at this transitional time if they were selected.

Besides Ladd, who is current superintendent of schools in Groveton, NH, the other finalist was Lynn Celli Saransin, Ph.D., deputy superintendent of schools in Lexington, MA.

The search committee was assisted by Pat Correia of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. The superintendent search committee spent months reviewing applications and interviewing candidates, and Tuesday’s meeting was the end point of that process.

Following the interviews, the school committee took a few minutes to discuss the choice before them before making their decision. The vote was unanimous in favor of Carl Ladd. Due to the peculiar situation Gill-Montague finds itself in, with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education overseeing the district’s finances since last year’s failed budget process, Ladd will still have to meet with DESE Commissioner Mitchell Chester and participate in contract negotiations with the school committee before his hiring becomes official.

Both Superintendent Ladd and Deputy Superintendent Saransin spoke highly of the Gill-Montague school district and how impressed they were with the educational initiatives already in place here.

Ladd appeared to be a very open person, at ease in express-

ing his ideas with intelligence and humor to the committee. In his opening remarks, he said he had both personal and professional reasons for applying for this position. His father, who is 79 years old, lives in Northfield and he would like to live closer to him, so he could see him more often. Also, his youngest daughter is graduating from high school this year, and plans to attend UMass in the fall.

Professionally, he said he can relate to the challenges in the Gill-Montague district; they are similar to the challenges his own district has faced. In terms of style, he said he likes to be a presence, to be available to the people in the schools and the community. He strongly supports sports programs, and promised he would be attending football games and sporting events. He is knowledgeable about technology, and said he would like to see teachers making robust use of the technology in the schools.

In speaking of the quality of education in the district, Ladd said, “The kind of educational initiatives you have in place here are very impressive. The work you’ve done on your turn around plan to put things in place, to put people in place, to put programs in place to move this district forward, I think are very impressive.” He said, in comparing this district with others he is familiar with, “You are very far ahead. You are doing some very good things here and I would really like to be a part of that.”

In answering a question on teacher involvement, he said that teachers should be an integral part of the decision-making process, that they should be directly involved in setting goals for the schools. His district showed improvement in scores of underperforming schools, due, he felt, to this kind of teacher involvement.


In terms of dealing with con-

see LADD pg 10

CHANGING from page 3
yard of a plain new one-story house in a Kentucky hollow. They cheerfully performed tasks their parents probably couldn’t get them to do even if they promised to raise their allowances, for free.

Looking back, Banning said, “This past week was the best week of my entire life. I feel we really helped a community out, and they really appreciated us.”

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Your Pace at Your Place

BALDASSARE from pg 1

Michael Baldassare

committee's legal counsel, Roseann Dipietro, offered her opinion of why the March 3rd vote to appoint Baldassare as superintendent did not violate the open meeting law, even though the subject of appointing a new superintendent had not been posted on the agenda in advance of the meeting, and even though some of the school committee members, according to their comments during the meeting, had been made aware of the move to appoint Baldassare in advance, while others on the committee were taken by surprise by the development.

Following her presentation, Slavas addressed the committee, saying, "The action of last meeting appointing Michael Baldassare felt to me like a deep personal betrayal. Two years ago, Wendell joined the deliberations to form a regional K-12 district with Mahar, not an easy process to join. You have to convince a very reluctant resident population in Wendell. We did a lot of hand-holding in Wendell. They are very protective of their local elementary school."

Slavas continued, "My sense of betrayal is that this committee played into the fears over local control by making such a large decision, a decision of such import, without advance notice to the member towns, and it is going to take a lot of work by this committee to regain that trust. The input I'm getting in Wendell now," on the subject of K-12 regionalization "is 'anyplace but Mahar'."

Patricia Martin, superintendent of the Petersham school

department, spoke up in favor the committee's appointment of Baldassare, and the process they used to appoint him. She said Petersham was eager to regionalize with Mahar, K-12.

"I need to applaud this committee for taking a courageous vote," she said. "The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has been encouraging us to promote from within, so we have an opportunity to see educational leaders in practice. Sustained leadership will lead to improved student achievement."

Orange town administrator Richard Kwiatkowski said even though the Orange selectboard had written to the school committee in support of rescinding the March 3rd appointment of Baldassare and instituting a formal search process for a new superintendent, he did not believe that was necessary.

"Mike Baldassare is an excellent special education director. He is an excellent individual, and he will be an excellent superintendent. The issue is about how it was handled that night, and who knew about it. The damage has been done to the school committee. Rescind your vote; revote your position, and send a clear message to the community and to [Baldassare] that you unanimously support this individual."

Orange school committee representative Deb Habib said, "How do we move forward from this point in a way that is transparent and inclusive?" She added, "We did not give ourselves the opportunity to consider various candidates for superintendent. We did not give our towns an opportunity to weigh in on a superintendent."

Namin apologized for the process the school committee had taken in appointing his successor, but said he had recommended Baldassare to provide continuity of leadership after watching the struggles of surrounding districts, like Greenfield, and Gill-Montague, to fill their superintendencies.

Committee chair Maureen Donelan said, "We are being bullied, here, by the communities. There was a motion on the table. There was a second. There was a

vote. It couldn't have gone any other way in terms of process."

Observers of the March 3rd meeting reported the entire process of Dana Kennan nominating, Cara Deane seconding, and a five-to-three majority voting to accept Baldassare as the new superintendent of Mahar took about four minutes.

As the committee moved to reaffirm that appointment on Tuesday night, Habib said, "I still have not seen a resume [for Baldassare]. I still have not participated in an interview. I have not been able to hear his philosophy about how he would pursue a superintendency."

Nonetheless, as the roll call votes were counted, Habib joined the majority in re-affirming Baldassare's appointment, with only Baldwin, of Wendell, voting, "No." He explained the Wendell school committee had been unanimous in demanding that the March 3rd vote be rescinded.

After the vote, Baldassare said, "This is double the honor. Last month I had five votes, this month I had ten. I look forward to continuing the hard work of Dr. Namin. I've had a couple of years to learn from him. Last year we won a silver medal from *U.S. News and World Report*, of the nation's top high schools. "I'm going to do everything I can to get the gold."

On the vote to retain the statutory method of assessment for the member towns, Baldwin spoke at length about the unfairness of

that method to Wendell, and New Salem.

"The goal is not to make one town pay more than another, but to come up with something that fits our towns and the changing economy. Wendell and New Salem feel we are basically being disregarded under the statutory method. You say, leave it up to the state. The conversations I hear in Franklin County are, 'We don't want to leave it up to the state. We have an alternative that provides us with local control. Let's use it.'"

Donelan said, "I find it convenient for Wendell to pick and choose collaboration. Now this is an area they want to collaborate on. I haven't seen much collaboration from Wendell on other issues."

Namin said switching to the alternative method would cause Orange's assessment to rise by about \$480,000, and the other three towns' assessments to fall, in total, by an equal amount.

Earlier, Slavas and Idoine presented charts showing that under the statutory method, Wendell has consistently paid more per pupil enrolled in Mahar than Orange, even though the towns' relative wealth is similar.

"Wendell's assessment has consistently gone up over the last decade," said Slavas, "while Orange has remained constant. We're hoping to come up with some resolution to this." In the coming year, Slavas said, Wendell will pay \$8,565 per student in Mahar, Petersham will

pay \$7,812, New Salem will pay \$7,044 per student, and Orange will pay \$5,183 per student.

"We don't feel very rich in Wendell," Slavas said.

But Kennan responded heatedly that Wendell had \$160,000 in excess levy capacity, showing its relative wealth, to which Idoine and Slavas, not waiting to be recognized by the chair, jumped in, "That's not relative to our wealth," rather to the town's fiscal discipline over the years, for which it does not deserve punishment but praise.

Kennan said a switch to the alternative method of assessment would provide grounds for a lawsuit against the school committee for denying the poorer town of Orange equal-opportunity education, and that no other town in the Commonwealth was using the alternative method of assessment, at present. "Because of the inequities between the town of Orange and the other towns, you can't make the alternative method work."

Baldwin rejected his argument, saying, "I fail to see your point," and noted that Shutesbury and Amherst were apparently happy using the alternative method, and adapting it to suit their particular needs, which he stressed was in the school committee's prerogative.

Donelan suggested the finance committees from all four towns meet and discuss the matter and make a recommendation to the school committee for a future year.

CHANGING from pg 5

them trounce Anderson County 74-61 in the first game of the "Sweet 16" playoffs.

An ESPN article leading up to that game compared the Lions to the fabled Indiana high school basketball team immortalized in the movie *Hoosiers* (before Indiana broke high schools into four divisions based on size of enrollment). Here's how that article described Elliott County:

"To find Sandy Hook, you get off Interstate 64 at Morehead. From there, turn onto serpentine, two-lane Highway 32 and leave the modern world behind.

"Wind past the small family cemeteries dug into rocky hill-tops. Take note of the caution signs for farm tractors on the road. And if you drive too fast, you'll miss the turn for Main Street, which cuts through what passes for downtown.

"The nearest shopping mall is about an hour away, along the West Virginia border. The nearest supermarket is a 30-minute drive. Same with the nearest movie theater.

Many of the jobs are far away, too. Elliott County sits just outside of Kentucky's coal belt, and the land isn't flat or fertile enough for large-scale

farming. So the people here work as pipe fitters and boiler-makers in Ashland, or at the Little Sandy Correctional Complex state prison, or for the local school district..."

"I met amazing people I will never forget," said Kim Nelson.

They made an impact on their hosts, as well, including Frontier Housing's Frank Olson.

"He was so unbelievably moved by your spirit," said his daughter, Olson-Wright. "He was truly touched by you all, and the way you touched everyone else. I want you all to know how much you meant to me and my community."



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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

More About Mahar

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - Finance committee members Michael Idoine, Barbara Caruso and Jim Slavos had to keep their meeting with the selectboard short, on April 1st, in order to get to their next appointments with police chief Ed Chase, and fire chief Everett Ricketts. The main topic of their discussion was the ongoing effort to get the Mahar school committee to comply with the contract under which Wendell first joined the Mahar Regional School District, and have each of the four member towns in the Mahar district pay an equal amount per student attending the Mahar Regional High School.

Finance committee members said they met with the Department of Elementary and

Secondary Education on Saturday March 28th, with representative Steve Kulik and senator Stan Rosenberg present, and were to attend another meeting with Kulik, Rosenberg, and the FRCOG on Saturday, April 4th.

Idoine said the DESE did not dispute Wendell's analysis of the statutory and alternative methods of assessment, but he also said the DESE is rejecting equal per student payment as such.

The highway garage needs a good deal of maintenance, including new paint, replacement siding, and repair to warped trim separating from the building. The roof should be replaced, but may be kept going for a few more years with another repair.

The selectboard decided to

get an estimate for the maintenance, so the town can appropriate money for the work at a town meeting. Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich suggested the projects be separated to make the process of selecting a contractor simpler, so neither a painter, contractor, nor roofer would be required to bid on all the work necessary.

Slavos said the finance committee has talked about limiting the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) for town employees this year to 2.1%, to match inflation, but he said we need to acknowledge what is going on in the larger economy. The pay for the town coordinator and highway supervisor are being raised to bring their level up to the middle of the Franklin County range, but that is a separate issue. The town coordinator's salary is shared with New Salem, another issue.

Idoine said the town of

Ashfield had zeroed all raises this year. Keller thought a 2% raise might be appropriate, but a decision is not needed as yet.

The open space committee wants to use the town hall on Saturday, April 25th, to mark Earth Day. April 25th is also the day scheduled for a Fiske Pond cleanup, to open trails littered by ice storm branches and fallen trees, as well as a community garden work day.

Aldrich reported that the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association gave a bid of \$24,654 for Wendell's liability insurance, lower than the bid given by Massamont, the company presently providing the town's insurance. The selectboard voted to accept that bid.

The selectboard set the tentative date of the annual town meeting on June 15th.

Nancy Graton has put out donation jars for Good Neighbors, and food pantries around the North Quabbin area, for the annual food-a-thon and fund drive. She asked if she could put one at the town office building. Keller commented that as a non-profit organization,

Good Neighbors could do it, but the office building does not get a lot of traffic. Lewis said the jar should not be too visible, so that it stays where it is placed.

On Saturday, April 18th, the Community Church of North Orange and Tully is running Operation Touch of Home, a drive to send letters, individual sized snacks, paperback books, DVDs and travel-sized games and toys to soldiers stationed overseas. Money for supplies and shipping will also be accepted, and donations can be left at Adams Animal Hospital, the Athol YMCA, and the Diemand Farm by April 11th.

As the April 1st meeting began, and while the Wendell selectboard was waiting for finance committee members to come into the office, board chair Ted Lewis and board member Dan Keller agreed to meet on Saturday morning, April 4th, to locate appropriate sites for the emergency back-up generators ready to be installed at the town hall, the office building, the library, the highway garage, and the senior center.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Assaults and Vandalism

Tuesday, 3/31

9:15 p.m. Officer initiated arrest of [redacted] on a straight warrant.

Wednesday, 4/1

3:26 p.m. Report of a neighbor disturbance on Turnpike Road. Reporter advised of options.

7:25 p.m. Following a traffic stop, [redacted] arrested

[redacted] Charged with operation of a motor vehicle with license suspended, giving a false name or address to police, failure to use care starting, stopping, turning or backing, and default warrants.

Thursday, 4/2

2:25 p.m. Report of a neighbor disturbance at a Turnpike Road address. Services rendered.

8:58 p.m. Report of hit and run accident at the Water Department on Millers Falls Road. Services rendered.

Friday, 4/3

8:40 a.m. Report of larceny from Rau's Sunoco & Towing on Turners Falls

Road.

10:20 a.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a K Street address. Arrested

[redacted] Charged with two counts of violation of an abuse prevention order, two counts of assault and battery domestic, two counts of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, and two counts of intimidation of a witness. Arrested

[redacted] Charged with two counts of assault and battery domestic, two counts of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, and two counts of intimidation of a witness.

10:23 a.m. Report of illegal dumping at a Meadow Road address near Garbiel Farms.

11:15 a.m. Report of larceny of picnic table near the water in Turners Falls.

3:33 p.m. Report of larceny at a Second Street address. Reporter advised of options.

6:16 p.m. Report of a neighbor disturbance at a G Street address. Peace restored.

10:53 p.m. Report of

Avenue A address. Arrested

[redacted] Charged with assault and battery domestic.

[redacted] Saturday, 4/4

2:58 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a West Main Street address. Arrested

[redacted] on a default warrant and a straight warrant.

5:42 p.m. Report of a fight at a Second Street address. Investigated.

8:15 p.m. Officer initiated investigation of a suspicious auto at Unity Park. Dispersed gathering.

9:31 p.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at an Eighth Street address. Peace restored.

Sunday, 4/5

1:38 p.m. Officer initiated investigation of vandalism at Unity Park club house.

4:29 a.m. Report of neighbor distur-

domestic disturbance at a Turnpike Road address. Peace restored.

8:08 a.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Greenfield Road address.

8:16 a.m. Report of vandalism at an M Street address. Services rendered.

7:47 p.m. Report of vandalism at a Griswold Street address.

Tuesday, 4/7

2:31 a.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a K Street address. Arrested

[redacted] Charged with assault and battery domestic and intimidation of a witness.

9:25 a.m. Report of vandalism at a Taylor Hill Road address. Investigated.

12:15 p.m. Report of larceny from a Federal Street address.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Compromise in Works for Gas Station Zoning

BY DAVID DETMOLD

ERVING—Ralph Semb, who co-owns the French King Entertainment Center, met with the selectboard on Monday to advance his case for changes to the town's zoning laws. Semb and his son Eric hope to build a gas station and convenience store, with a drive-through fast food window, on the lot where the former Countree Living restaurant was recently torn down.

"This just drags on and on," said Semb. "It is costing me tons of money. It's just drained us. I don't know how we're going to do it."

The Sembs collected 176 signatures on a petition calling for a zoning change to allow a gas station to be built in the protection zone of the town's water supply, and 108 signatures to allow a drive-through business to be built in a new zone of the Central Village district, which prohibited drive-through lanes for businesses when town meeting approved new zoning bylaws four years ago. But town attorney Donna MacNicol warned the selectboard the Attorney General would toss the petitioned articles out if the town meeting approved them, because they were illegally worded, without proper maps, boundaries or use requirements for the proposed new West Central and East Central business districts.

On Monday, the selectboard and the planning board met and agreed to ask town meeting to take a vote on whether the town should work together with interested citizens to change the zoning bylaws to reflect the changes the Semb petitions requested. The selectboard said that vote would require a two-thirds majority to pass.

If town meeting approves, planning board chair Jeff Dubay said a public hearing on the planned changes could be held in June, in time for a final town meeting vote on zoning changes by September.

Assistant assessor Jacquie Boyden suggested the phrasing of that article should say "interested

citizens," rather than "the Sembs," so as not to provoke a ruling from the Attorney General that the town was attempting to push through "spot zoning" to benefit a particular enterprise.

Selectboard member Linda Downs-Bembury told Semb on Monday, "It's not like we changed the zoning so you couldn't do the project. When you started planning the project, the zoning was out there."

Semb said he paid \$36,000 to \$38,000 in property taxes, and would have trouble making those payments without revenue from that property.

"I don't really care about the gas station," he said. "It would save people going a long way to get a gallon of gas." He referred to the new generation of double-sided storage tanks, and said, "I live on the same aquifer everyone else does. There shouldn't be any problem at all." He said he lost \$100,000 when they shut down Jillian's on the 2, the most recent restaurant at the location that used to house Countree Living and Weatherheads. He said long ago, there was a Richfields gas station at that spot.

"I want to pay my taxes, but obviously we're limited now. We have to have the income. We're only trying to create good things for the town. I think we've kept things pretty good over there all these years."

Earlier in the evening, the town held a public hearing on the proposal to build a new senior center on town-owned land a few hundred yards north of the elementary school. John Caitlin, the Quincy architect working with a \$165,000 community development block grant to pay for design-ready plans for the project, handled the presentation, before a small crowd of senior citizens and town officials.

The new one-story senior center would comprise 7,000 square feet in area, with a south-facing terrace on the side of the building facing Route 63, and parking to the rear. The floor plan allows room for a 1750 square foot

LIFE STUDIES from pg 1 Photography, he talked about finding "a dead-pan humor underlying certain moments" as he showed his image of a Paris bookseller who uses his head to prop up the lid of his bookcase.

In another picture, of a newsstand, racy girly magazines are arrayed next to the stolid middle-aged gingham-clad squarish bosom of the proprietor. It's a visual joke, but it's more than that. It makes us think about the passage of time, the uneasy coexistence of youth and age and of things in conflict, the way something profound can be formed in a moment and lost just as quickly.

A second series of photographs at the gallery is of Albanians (residents of the country that borders Greece, not of the capital of New York), showing their lives in the post-communist era, which seem more medieval than modern.

Sherer was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to document daily life in Albania. With his wife Marjorie Senechal, he authored a book, *Long Life to Your Children! A Portrait of High Albania*.

Almost everything in these images is rudimentary: a woman bakes bread at home at her hearth. A man plays a handmade one-stringed lute. Another man sits on the ground, sharpening a scythe by hammering the blade. A woman hoes with a handmade implement. A man stands with his horse, loading the handmade wooden saddle with an axe with a roughly carved handle; they stand in front of a handbuilt hut; the title of this photo is: "Zef Grishaj preparing for the day's work, 5:30 a.m." He is going to be chopping firewood until 9 at night, Sherer tells the audience of digitally equipped students. In another photo, a woman sits at a treadle sewing machine, but she's sitting on a carton, not on a chair. In fact, as Sherer relates, she's sitting on the carton the



Paris Newsstand by Stan Sherer

sewing machine came in, and she supports her large family by sewing.

He spoke about the role of women in the country: "haulers," showing a woman and a donkey both equally burdened by bales of straw. And of men, "carriers of oral and musical traditions," and "street currency traders."

"Men think they run the show, but women really keep the culture alive." Laundry, he said, reveals the anthropology of a household. A stark photograph titled "Widow" shows a diminutive woman clad entirely in black hanging massive amounts of white linens, which curtain her from view, reducing her to her role as laundress and widow. Sherer's images excavate and elucidate the culture, from group potty-training of toddlers to graveside rituals.

"In a poor country, it is necessary to share resources," he notes. He shows a photograph of two bicycles being ridden down a rainy street. We initially see beautiful textures of wet pebbled asphalt, scored sidewalk grids, and flaking paint. Sherer points out that the two cyclists carry only one umbrella to protect them from the rain. Two cyclists,

one umbrella: a photographer sees and seizes things like this in a flash.

Sherer: "What I enjoy the most is moving through the world, and making my observations, not searching for anything in particular other than moments that call out to me." It takes careful watching to know when to pounce, to know what you've been waiting for.

The last series of work Sherer shows are large color prints titled "Lantern Slides". A departure from the forthright documentary photographs, they merge 1930s scientific illustrations with images of dormant plants – dormant like the medium of lantern slides – yielding lush painterly abstractions. They are rich and surprising, combining, as the more straightforward photographs do, many elements: geometry, nature, one individual (the illustrations are the work of British mathematician Dorothy Wrinch, who lived from 1894 to 1976), and history.

See this exhibit! But if you can't, you will enjoy looking at Sherer's photographs at his website, www.stansherer.com.



multi-purpose room, that could be partitioned off to form a smaller classroom and dining area, adjacent to the kitchen. There is room for a 455 square foot arts and crafts classroom on the north side of the building (artists love northern light), a 600 square foot games and exercise room, and a 390 square foot lounge, that is designed to be "like your own living room at home."

Caitlin said with baby boomers now reaching the age where senior centers are becoming a major asset to community life, the goal of the new project is to get seniors out of their homes and interacting in a space designed to stimulate their creativity, allow for health clinics and exercise, and encourage their social interaction.

The building is designed to be very low mainte-

nance, with concrete siding, a 40-year roof, metal-clad windows and polystyrene trim. The center of the roof will feature solar tubes to focus sunlight on the central hallway, eliminating the need for interior lights in the center of the building. Geo-thermal heating and cooling will cut down on utility bills, and eliminate entirely the need for additional air conditioning.

It will cost \$150,000 to connect the new building up to town water lines near the school, and \$70,000 to install a pump station and forced sewer main. Even with these costs and features, Caitlin said he had recently shaved \$300,000 off the project's price tag, to reduce the cost to \$2.59 million. The town is hoping to receive \$600,000 in additional CDBG funding to defray some of that cost.

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Jewish Culture in New England

MICHAEL HOBERMAN DELIVERS SENIOR SYMPOSIUM, MARCH 30TH, AT GCC



Michael Hoberman talks with Marjorie and Robert Reid of Greenfield at the Senior Symposium at G.C.C.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GREENFIELD – Jews around the world celebrate Passover this week, meditating on the meaning of exile, oppression and redemp-

tion, and the journey from slavery to freedom. Last week, in Greenfield, Michael Hoberman, a professor in the English Department at Fitchburg State

College, delivered a Senior Symposia lecture at Greenfield Community College on a Jewish journey of a different sort, though perhaps no less strange originally than the sojourn in Egypt. He spoke of Jewish culture in New England, how it has shaped New England culture, and how New England has shaped the Jews living here from the time of the Puritans to the present day.

With an audience of 40, mostly senior citizens, Hoberman began his lecture by saying, "It is easy to document a steady Jewish presence in New England from the 17th Century onward, but you could do that anywhere in the world."

Here, the Puritans of the

Massachusetts Bay Colony, escaping from religious prosecution in England, set up a rigid, patriarchal theocracy, intolerant of religious dissent. Yet the ministers and magistrates who banished Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson, hanged Mary Dwyer, and burned the Salem 'witches' tolerated – and tried to convert – the few Jews known to have set up shop in Boston harbor.

Hoberman speculated the early Puritans felt more threatened by Protestant schismatics than by Jews, with whom they felt "some strange connection between Puritan Hebraism and Judaism." Besides, as in many parts of the world, the itinerant Jews were probably valued in Puritan New England for their global commercial connections, Hoberman said.

"The Puritans favored the Hebrew Bible; they named their children Old Testament names, called themselves the New Canaanites," and in later days flocked to hear Jewish peddlars passing through small Colonial New England towns just to hear them read the Siddur, "to hear the language as it was read by a native speaker."

Hoberman compared the strains of Calvinist theology predominant among the Puritans, who believed only God's elect could enter the kingdom of heaven. Some among the Puritans believed the roster of the elect had been preordained, and nothing they could do in their temporal lives could affect whether they made the list or not. Others, like the Puritan Bay Colony's early governor, John Winthrop, espoused a more communitarian ideal that held a man, and by extension a community, could affect God's judgment by living righteously.

This strain of Puritan thought gave rise to the 'Protestant work ethic,' which Hoberman, tongue in cheek, equated to "the Jewish achievement drive."

Sephardic Jews, fleeing the harsh convert-or-die tactics of the Spanish Inquisition, and the edicts expelling them from Spain in 1492 and Portugal five years

later, traveled the world seeking safe harbor in places like Italy, the South of France, the Netherlands, Barbados, and eventually Boston and Providence, where they pursued commercial trades, which in many places were the only trades legally available to them.

In Boston, the traders Samuel and Joseph Frazen, Jewish merchants who probably came to the Bay Colony from Dutch Brazil, set up a warehouse in the harbor between 1695 and 1705, during which time Cotton Mather, the famous Puritan minister and pamphleteer, paid them a visit.

Hoberman said Mather recorded in his diary that he woke up one morning with "an intense desire to convert at least one Jew." But it seems Mather did not realize his aim, at least where the Frazens were concerned, according to Samuel Sewell, a contemporary of Mather's.

To these early New England ministers, the Jews were "looked up to as the people of the Book, the founders of monotheism, but because they rejected Christ, they were scorned."

In return, Puritan New England offered little in the way of access for Jews, who were excluded from civic affairs by reason of their religion, yet assured no place in the Calvinist heaven should they consider converting.

Hoberman led the symposium on a rapid clip through the establishment of the first congregation of Jews in New England, in Newport, which was the second city of New England until the Revolutionary War. During the war years, some Jews returned to England, and others threw in their lot with the colonists, but gradually the predominance of the Sephardic Jews gave way to fresh waves of immigrants, including Ashkenazi Jews from Germany and Eastern Europe, who founded the first congregation of Jews in Boston in the 1840s.

While the numbers of Jews in pre-Colonial North America probably numbered around 2500, according to Hoberman, those see **CULTURE** page 11

Expectations of Adolescence

A total of three exhibits opened in Turners Falls on Saturday.

At the Hallmark Museum Gallery 52 are photographs by Blake Fitch, 37, titled "Expectations of Adolescence." The photos follow Fitch's half-sister and cousin over ten years as they mature from girls into women, mostly at the family summer home in the Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River. The cousins swim and sunbathe, posing somewhat grudgingly in serene surroundings, barely interacting with each other or their environment, seeming to be waiting for something to happen, revealing little. When the girls are pictured indoors, wild 60s wallpaper and matching patterned curtains contrast with their self-contained wariness.

In one poignant image, the photographer's sister is shown at the Museum of Natural History in New York City, looking at a diorama of goats. The kid (the young goat) looks upward with just the same expression as the girl, both regarding the horned, adult

goats. The young look up; the old look out, and down. In another revealing image, the girls pose in front of a mantle on which wedding photos are displayed. They are next in line, we can only think, one profiled, one frontal, like the formal photos behind them.

At Gallery 56, museum curator Paul Turnbull has selected works from the museum's permanent collection. Photographers include: Susan

Kae Grant (shadow-plays based on her dreams) John Paul Caponigro (colorful rippling water), Lynn Goldsmith, Stella Johnson, and Ron Rosenstock. If you missed the fetes associated with the openings of any of these photographers' work during the last few years, or the shows, now is a good time to see all of their work in one place at one time.

The three exhibits are on view through June 28th.



"Kate at History Museum" by 1997 Blake Fitch

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LADD from pg 5

trovery, Ladd said he likes to listen, talk to people about their concerns, educate them with facts, and try to form consensus. This applies to budget issues, controversial educational decisions, or whatever the issue might be. He said he believes that by listening and finding compromise he can bring people together on difficult issues.

The committee asked his views on special education. This is both a budget issue and an educational one, as the costs to districts are unpredictable and can undo any well-planned budget.

Ladd was very clear on his criticism of the way the federal government has let down the schools. "If the federal government supported special education to the extent that they committed, our budgets would look a lot different."

Having said that, he went on to say that, in his opinion, "We shouldn't need special education, because every child should get exactly what they need in order to be successful, regardless of whether they are on an individualized education plan or not. It's really critical that there not be a divide between special education and regular education. That's my philosophy. There's got to be a way to create an environment in the classroom where special education students are treated no differently than regular education students. They are treated as just one of the students and are given whatever resources are necessary to be successful."

He also supported partner-

ships with other districts and higher education for students who need more to challenge them. He complimented the district on the Early Transitions Program, which has students taking classes at Greenfield Community College while still in high school. He suggested they might also consider partnering with other districts in the area through online courses and video conferencing. This could make up for the reality that small school districts cannot always afford advanced placement teachers.

In terms of the budget process, he said what is needed is a good-faith effort on both sides, an open process, and good communication between the parties.

Each finalist got an hour-long interview. After Carl Ladd completed his interview, Lynn Saransin met with the committee. In her opening remarks she spoke about her core values: academic excellence for all children, respectful, caring relationships with everyone, not just schools but the wider community. She said, "I'm a teacher first, never stopped teaching." She added that she was well connected with state officials.

When asked about the part music and art plays in school, Saransin said she thinks it is important to emphasize all of the extra curricular activities that will "hook" a child who might be underperforming so

they'll stay in school.

On the question of special education, she said, "Special education budgets can make or break a district." She suggested tiered intervention, thoughtful monitoring and planning, tracking students who might need special ed services so as to be ready to provide them without a shock to the budget process.

On regionalization and collaboration, she said it should not be forced, that it needs to be done carefully. She was supportive of collaboration around services, but said forcing regionalization would hurt morale and affect children.

On technology in the schools, Saransin said that thoughtful planning within the budget could support a replacement plan to keep technology current. She said this goes back to discussions of priorities, and would have to be part of the discussions with the towns.

Like Ladd, she also had high praise for the district, saying, "Gill-Montague truly needs to be celebrated."

During the discussion among school committee members after the interviews were over, members expressed various views but gradually came to a consensus. Linda Kuklewicz said she thought it was good that Saransin had established connections with state officials. She expressed concern that Ladd, being from a very rural area, might have trouble adjusting to

our community. Sandra Brown said she felt Ladd might be more versatile, and she liked his sense of humor. She also liked the way he spoke of the value of teachers. Terri Lapachinski said, "We had two highly qualified candidates, with two different styles." Joyce Phillips said Ladd seemed down-to-earth, and she liked his answer on special education - treat all children the same. She said, "We need someone who has that openness."

School committee chair Mary Kociela said, "We're really very lucky to have had such highly qualified people applying for this job."

The committee had considered taking a straw poll first, but after the discussion they took a voice vote and Ladd was the unanimous pick.

After the vote, the next step was to call Ladd and let him know they wanted to offer him the position. He then asked if he could come back and ask a few more questions, because he had another interview on Wednesday in a school district in Vermont.

Ladd said he was looking for assurances that he would get support from the school committee. His concern seemed to be that they might be inclined to micro-manage the running of the schools. Several members of the school committee spoke to this issue and assured him they have more than enough to do with their own work and had no

interest in trying to do his.

Ladd suggested having a retreat after the elections where they could discuss goals for the schools and get to know each other. Kociela said they'd held a retreat when interim superintendent Kenneth Rocke came to the district. Ladd presented his view that the school committee sets the vision for the district - what they envision student achievement should look like - and that it's incumbent on the superintendent to enact that vision. Kociela agreed, saying, "It's a leadership team. It's important we have common goals."

With that, Ladd left and the meeting was adjourned. The committee will try to set up a meeting between Ladd and Commissioner Chester this week.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG
Unlicensed Operations

Thursday, 4/2	5:05 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against [redacted]	turbance on Center Road.
5:31 p.m. Animal complaint on Center Road.	[redacted] Charged with unlicensed operation of motor vehicle.	11:55 p.m. Assisted Northfield police department with an arrest.
5:35 p.m. Assisted disabled motor vehicle at Gill lights.	5:55 p.m. Arrested [redacted]	Saturday, 4/4
Friday, 4/3	12:15 p.m. Arrested [redacted]	10:20 p.m. Report of disturbance on North Cross Road, order restored.
[redacted] Charged with operating a motor vehicle with license suspended, subsequent offense, and three warrants.	7:01 p.m. Family dis-	Sunday, 4/5
		1:45 p.m. Report of disturbance and unwanted subject on North Cross Road, removed same.

SCHOOL from pg 1

uses, town meeting would have to approve a zoning change, probably to neighborhood business zoning, for the property. He estimated parking for 30 or 40 cars could be created at the location of the former school.

"We are under no illusion that people are going to stand in line to buy this building in the current economy. We are going to have to be patient. We will have to spend some money. But when we sell it, it needs to fit into the community."

He added, "It is possible that somewhere down the road we may have to accept an amount

for the building that is not beneficial for the town."

In addition to the \$20,000 in program income funds, and the \$97,500 for the new roof the town provided for the building in '07, Montague has also allocated \$50,000 at town meeting last year to heat, secure and maintain the building, about \$30,000 of which has been expended.

Town manager Frank Abbondanzio told the select-board recently that he would seek to place an added warrant for \$30,000 before town meeting this year, to pay for maintaining the Montague Center School for another winter.

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ROSE WHITCOMB DETMOLD PHOTO

Carol Hetrick presents certificates of appreciation to peer mediators from the Sheffield School at the GMCSP dinner last month.

BY MARTHA WHITMORE
TURNERS FALLS – By ten minutes past six on March 25th, the St. Kazimerz dining hall was buzzing with the friendly conversation of community members who had come out in support of the Gill-Montague

Community School Partnership. Representatives from many local organizations, including the Brick House, the Mediation and Training Collaborative, and Montague Catholic Social Ministries, had set up colorful displays that lined the back wall.

Brothers Luke and Simon Eaton provided background music for the milling crowd in their first performance as a guitar and mandolin duo.

The Gill-Montague Community Partnership was formed in 2002, in response to concerns over incidents of violence at the Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School. Last week, at the Community Awards Dinner, community members were invited to join in celebration and recognition of youth involved with the partnership, as well as a few of the adults who have helped them along the way.

After a lasagna dinner, a block of time was allotted for "Dessert and Discussion," during which a facilitator sat at each table and wrote down people's replies to a list of questions

concerning in-school and after-school activity for the youth of the Gill-Montague district. Despite the distractingly delicious chocolate cake, the group was able to generate a long list of answers to such questions as: "What after-school programs are in existence now that you appreciate? What programs are missing? What frustrates your child or other children about school? What excites them?"

Next came a one-of-a-kind musical interlude headed up by Danny Cruz and Jeremy Tetreault with an original song called "Snow Leopard" they had written for a Life Sciences class project about endangered species. The Eaton brothers took the stage once more, joined by Justin Smith on banjo and vocals on their rendition of "St. James Infirmary Blues."

Finally, the climax of the evening arrived with the awarding of certificates to each school's peer mediation program, a Youth Recognition Award to TFHS senior Lindsey Wilson, and a community award to Morgan McConnell, a local youth involved in community work. Suzy Polucci then took the microphone to present Cheryl Fox, co-director of the Mediation and Training Collaborative, with the Cheryl Fox Youth and Community Award. The honor went to Fox in celebration of her love, dedication, and service to support youth in the Gill-Montague community. Following that, Community Coalition for Teens co-coordinator Rachel Stoler was presented an award, thanking her for her dedication to the community.



Busy as Bees at Great Falls Discovery Center

BY DON CLEGG

GREAT FALLS – April has shaped up as a busy month at the Great Falls Discovery Center, and they aren't even on summer hours yet! Those don't start until mid-May.

For now, the Discovery Center is mainly open on Saturday and Sundays, but this Friday evening, April 10th, the Great Falls Coffeehouse presents the Third Annual "A Cappella Showcase," featuring performances by O-town A Cappella, from Mahar High School, Junction 135, a Gentlemen's Barbershop Quartet and the Gospel and Shape Note singers. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., with performances starting at 7. Homemade refreshments will be available, and the Center's gift shop and displays are open for viewing at intermission.

Saturday, April 11th, features

an exhibit tour with an unusual twist. The theme for April at the Discovery Center is pollinators, so participants in this fun family event will try to find evidence of pollinators in the Center's life-size dioramas. Weather permitting, the exploration for pollinators will continue out of doors.

On Saturday, April 18th, the pollinators theme continues with a host of fun family activities, including nature walks and stories about insects. This offering at the Discovery Center will be the last presented by naturalist Sue Cloutier, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Cloutier is retiring at the end of the month, after four years with the Discovery Center. Her presence and her decades of field experience will be missed.

The Senior Health Fair put on by the student nurses of Greenfield Community College

will be held in the Great Hall from 9:00 a.m. until noon on Thursday, April 23rd. Stop by and get your free blood pressure, cholesterol, and sugar level check-ups and eye exams. Healthy refreshments will be served, and door prizes awarded.

On the evening of April 23rd, from 7 to 9:00 p.m., also in the Great Hall, join Tom Sullivan for the first in his series on planting your yard and maintaining your gardens. Tom is an expert in landscape design. Part two in the series will be held on May 14th.

All Out Adventures is coming to the Great Falls Discovery Center on Friday, April 24th, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., offering a day of Letterboxing. Whether you are an expert in this fun, fast-growing hobby, or wish to try it for the first time, give All Out Adventures a call to pre-reg-

ister at 413-527-8980 or register online at info@alloutadventures.org. This will be a handicapped accessible event.

April wraps up at the Discovery Center with the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Park Service Day. DRC parks all across the state on April 25th, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. are encouraging you to roll up your sleeves and get involved with some good old-fashion grounds and yard work at your local park. To get on the volunteer "Grounds Crew," give Diane Clark from DCR a call at 413-863-3221.

As always, if you have any questions or need further information, contact the Great Falls Discovery Center, at 2 Avenue A in downtown Turners Falls, at 413-863-3221 or www.GreatFallsMa.org.

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CULTURE from pg 9

numbers swelled to 200,000 by the Civil War, and eventually reached almost 5% of the total population of America, before receding to 2.5% today.

In our part of New England, Ashkenazi Jews arrived as peddlars, horse and cattle traders, pursuing the trades of their forefathers from Poland, Germany and the Russian steppes.

The diaspora that brought Jews to America did not stop at Ellis Island. Hoberman said in the 60 interviews he conducted for his book *How Strange it Seems: The Cultural Life of Jews in Small-Town New England*, he talked with people like Milt Edelman, whose fami-

ly settled in Mars Hill, ME, a stone's throw from Canada. His father, Hyrum, reached that tiny hamlet after complaining about the densely packed conditions in the lower East Side of New York. "He hated it," said Hoberman. "He wanted to get far away to some place more familiar," more like northern Russia.

He was advised to go to Grand Central Station, get a ticket for Maine, and get off at the last stop, and that's what he did. The Edelmans became potato farmers, and opened a store.

The Shapiros of North Adams and the August family of Northampton established themselves in those Western

Mass locales first as cattle and horse traders, then as car dealers. In Eastern Europe, where their ancestors were prevented from owning land or pursuing many livelihoods, cattle and horse dealing were some of the few professions available to Jews.

"So many Jewish merchants got their start going door to door as peddlars," said Hoberman. "Abraham and Strauss started out as park peddlars."

Samuel Borofsky came from Russia in 1911, and helped his father peddle ice and fuel in New York City, before moving north to open an army and navy surplus goods store in Brattleboro, now regionally famous as Sam's Outdoor

Outfitters.

"That story is repeated in many small towns in New England," said Hoberman. "Most of those places are gone," as Jews moved from retail into the professions and the arts, where their influence is still felt, even as it was in Puritan New England.

Hoberman is at work on his next book, *New Israel/New England: Jews and Puritans in Early America*, to be published by UMass Press in 2011. He is also the author of *Yankee Moderns: Folk Regional Identity in the Sawmill Valley of Western Massachusetts, 1890 - 1920*. He lives, with his family, in Buckland.



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NMH COMPOSERS CONCERT

BY LESLIE BROWN

GILL – Over a hundred rapt music fans filled the better part of the new Rhodes Art Center's Raymond Concert Hall on a recent Sunday afternoon to hear works composed by students and faculty.

It was fitting that on my way to the concert I was listening to that afternoon's broadcast of NPR's "From the Top", a weekly program that highlights new, young performers. Fitting because this broadcast featured an incredibly talented twelve-year-old pianist who came from China to study in New York. Also fitting because the inaugural concert in this fine new building featured a taping of "From the Top" featuring the Select Women's Ensemble from NMH.

The Rhodes Art Center, while modern in its way, is built using the latest concepts in environmental architecture, yet still fits the older architecture of the historic campus, with its compatible red brick façade and grey roof complete with tower. The Raymond Concert Hall, named for Al Raymond, music director at the school for many years, is an intimate space with concert hall acoustics.

The concert's headliner – a piece by ninth-grade student Henry Lawrence – would have been appropriate for another appearance on "From the Top". The piece, "Hearts Like Waves,"

was performed by classmates on the violin, cello, and viola with Marianne Lockwood, piano studies director, playing the piano.

This mature mood piece was beautifully lyrical, and did indeed echo with the movement of the waves. Lawrence described the work as one which started as a composition assignment in seventh grade. "It is my first complete serious composition... The piece goes in many directions. I like that. This is the way I work." We hope this is just the beginning for the young composer.

Sheila Heffernon, chair of the Performing Arts Department and choral and vocal director, was featured in her musical compositions to the text of poems by Blake, Tennyson and Shelley. The musical setting for Blake's "Little Lamb" is a tribute to her mother, and an acknowledgement of grief and loss. The homophonic piece was lovingly performed by the student Chamber Ensemble.

The setting of Tennyson's "New Years Bells" features bells and chimes in a piece which Heffernon says connects with her love of bells and the music of the holidays. It was composed for the 2000 Christmas Vespers, and is indeed a joyous work.

Her last composition is set to Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark". It features the flute, whose notes describe the joy and inspiration of listening to the sounds of the

birds. The flute was played by an extremely talented young sophomore student, Jordan Kreyling.

Also featured in this concert were two pieces by an alumnus of the school, Erik Lindgren of the class of 1972. Mr. Lindgren is the composer of over six dozen works, the founder of a commercial recording studio, and a founding member of the music ensemble Birdsongs of the Mesozoic.

Lindgren's piece "Baroque-a-go-go" was composed during his senior year at NMH and was played at the concert featuring the composer as pianist, accompanied by fine student performances on flute, cello and clarinet. This piece, originally conceived as a parody of Progressive Rock, is also a tip of the hat to Baroque composers.

The same group also performed his very modern piece, "100 Years of Excellence", written for the centennial of the Marlboro, MA public library.

The concert's focus was the premiere of Steven Bathory-Peeler's chamber symphony, "Constellations". Bathory-Peeler is the Director of Orchestras at NMH and has written a wide variety of pieces performed by

the Windham, Vermont orchestra, the Portland String Quartet, and the Hartt Contemporary Players.

This chamber symphony is

described by the composer as inspired both by four personal ideas and by the "Constellations"

see **COMPOSERS** pg 16

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Old Sink Hole

Tuesday, 3/31

7:15 a.m. Report of a sewer leak on Route 2 near North Street. Assisted with traffic.

8:10 a.m. Report of car vs. deer accident on Route 2 near ledges bypass. Vehicle gone upon arrival, deer removed by environmental police.

Wednesday, 4/1

2:09 p.m. Report of harassing phone calls to an Old State Road address. Investigated.

6:20 p.m. Arrested [redacted] on a default warrant.

Thursday, 4/2

10:30 a.m. Officer observed loose white pit bull dog on North Street. Owner advised of town bylaw.

2:40 p.m. Report of a loose dog near a Forest Street residence.

Located same and advised owner of town bylaw.

Friday, 4/3

2:45 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration and without insurance.

5:50 p.m. Assisted Montague police with a traffic stop on Franklin Street.

6:45 p.m. Assisted Montague police with a domestic disturbance on K Street.

11:57 p.m. Checked suspicious vehicle at Erving Elementary School parking lot. It was an employee.

Saturday, 4/4

11:00 a.m. Dog hit by car on Route 2 at North Street. Vehicle did not stop. Owner took dog to vet.

11:10 a.m. Medical emergency on Prospect Heights Lane. Assisted Ervig fire and Baystate Health ambulance.

Sunday, 4/5

12:00 p.m. Report of a loose dog on Forest Street. Gone upon arrival.

6:24 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

7:26 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle after revocation of license, without insurance, and illegal attachment of plates.

Monday, 4/6

10:25 p.m. Report of a sink hole at East Main Street. Met with highway superintendent. Found to be old. Highway department to handle same.

MCTV Channel 17 Afternoon/Evening Schedule 4/10 - 4/16

visit www.montaguema.net for complete schedule

Friday, April 10

2:00 p.m. Why or Why Not Nuclear Power?

5:00 p.m. All About Bats

5:20 p.m. Discovery Center: Northern Bats

6:30 p.m. Exploring New Worlds in New England

7:00 p.m. GMRSD Budget Meeting 3/31/09

9:30 p.m. GMRSD 4/7/09

Saturday, April 11

2:00 p.m. Discovery Center Birds of Prey.

3:30 p.m. Dodging The Bow

5:30 p.m. On The Ridge: Youth Turkey Hunt Day 2009

6:00 p.m. On With The Show

6:30 p.m. TWB Ergonomics

7:30 p.m. UNpanel1

9:30 p.m. Turners Falls vs New Leadership

11:30 p.m. Transport Taxes

Sunday, April 12

2:30 p.m. the epics at the vous

3:30 p.m. Tapping Maple Ridge

4:30 p.m. Naturalist Laurie Sanders

5:30 p.m. Montague Update-Susan Shilliday

6:00 p.m. Montague Grange Variety Show

7:30 p.m. 2009 Discussion Deval Patrick

9:00 p.m. Allagash 2007

9:30 p.m. An Inside Look into Iran

Monday, April 13

2:30 p.m. Exploring New Worlds in New England

3:00 p.m. Falls Table 4-14-08

4:00 p.m. Fate of the Stallion

4:30 p.m. Franklin County Matters

Cogeneration

5:30 p.m. Gentling The Bull#2

6:00 p.m. Health Hill: Transfat

6:30 p.m. Independent Voices

7:00 p.m. Select Board Live

9:00 p.m. Honky Thumbelina

10:00 p.m. Into the Way of Peace

Tuesday, April 14

2:00 p.m. Luke Massery Live Piano Recital

3:30 p.m. Martha and Clarkson Edwards

4:30 p.m. MCTV Video Camp 2007

5:00 p.m. Michael Nix

6:30 p.m. Mind Control

7:00 p.m. GMRSD (Live)

Wednesday, April 15

2:00 p.m. Peoples Harvest1

3:30 p.m. Over The Falls: Tree Steward

4:00 p.m. The Looming Crisis in Oil Depletion

6:00 p.m. RTR Extending Treatment to Everyone

7:30 p.m. Safe and Green Campaign

9:00 p.m. Seabrook 1977.

10:30 p.m. Seneca Falls

11:00 p.m. Senior Aerobics

12:00 a.m. Encore Body Art#16

12:30 a.m. Encore Body Art#15E

12:57 a.m. Encore Body Art#13

1:28 a.m. Encore Body Art #10

Thursday, April 16

2:00 p.m. All About Bats

2:20 p.m. Discovery Center: Northern Bats

3:30 p.m. Carlos Anderson Gospel Choir Celebration

5:00 p.m. Both Sides of the Bridge

6:00 p.m. Child and Family: Children's Mental Health

6:30 p.m. Over The Falls Local Fiber Farms

7:00 p.m. Select Board 4/13/09

9:00 p.m. Turners Falls vs New Leadership

11:00 p.m. Common Man Concert - Tim Van Egmond

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Q. *I heard that taking beta-blockers for high blood pressure is not a good idea. I take a beta-blocker, so should I ask my doctor to take me off it?*

A recent study found that beta-blockers may increase the risk of having a heart attack or

THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Beta Blockers and Related Drugs

stroke if you are using them to treat high blood pressure alone. If you are taking a beta-blocker, discuss it with your doctor. Warning: Don't stop taking the drug on your own.

More than half of Americans over age 60 have high blood pressure. Many people with high blood pressure need more than one medication to treat it. So, I've received many questions about blood-pressure drugs.

There's a lot of confusion about these medications because there are so many of them and they work in a variety of ways. Today's column is devoted to

clearing up some of the confusion.

Beta-blockers make your heart beat more slowly and with less force. Your heart pumps less blood and your pressure goes down.

The following are the brand names for common beta-blockers: Sektal, Tenormin, Kerlone, Zebeta, Cartrol, Tandate, Lopressor, Toprol XL, Corgard, Levatol, Visken, Inderal, Betapace, and Blocadren.

Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors: ACE inhibitors keep your body from making angiotensin II, a hor-

mone that normally causes blood vessels to narrow. ACE inhibitors expand blood vessels so your blood pressure goes down.

The following are common ACE inhibitors: Lotensin, Capoten, Vasotec, Monopril, Prinivil, Zestril, Univasc, Aceon, Accupril, Altace, and Mavik.

Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs): ARBs are like ACE inhibitors because they protect against angiotensin II. ARBs don't lower levels of the hormone; they prevent this chemical from affecting the heart and blood vessels.

The following are common ARBs: Atacand, Teveten, Avapro, Cozaar, Benicar, Micardis, and Diovan.

Calcium channel blockers: These drugs block calcium from entering the muscle cells of the heart and blood vessels. This relaxes blood vessels and lowers blood pressure.

The following are common calcium channel blockers: Norvasc, Cardizem, Dilacor XR, Tiazac, Plendil, DynaCirc CR, Cardene, Adalat CC, Procardia, Nimotop, Sular, Calan, Covera HS, Isoptin, and Verelan.

Diuretics, also known as "water pills," help the kidneys flush extra water and salt from your body and decrease blood volume to lower pressure.

The following are common diuretics: Midamor, Bumex, Diuril, Hygroton, Thalitone, Lasix, Esidrix, Hydrodiuril, Saluron, Lozol, Enduron, Zaroxolyn, Aldactone, Demadex and Dyrenium.

Vasodilators open blood vessels by directly relaxing the muscle in the vessel walls.

Common vasodilators are

Apresoline and Loniten.

Alpha blockers, also called alpha-adrenergic antagonists, reduce nerve impulses that tighten blood vessels; this permits blood to flow more freely.

Common alpha blockers are: Cardura, Minipress, Minizide, Hytrin, Flomax and Uroxatral.

Alpha-beta blockers: These drugs work two ways: they reduce nerve impulses to blood vessels and slow the heartbeat.

Common alpha-beta blockers are Coreg and Normodyne.

Central-acting agents: Central-acting agents work by preventing your brain from sending signals to your nervous system to speed up your heart rate and narrow your blood vessels.

The following are examples: Catapres, Clorpres, Combipres, Wytensin, Tenex, Aldomet, Aldochlor, and Aldoril.

Combination drugs: There are a variety of preparations that combine medications. For example, Cozaar, which is an ARB, is combined with a diuretic, to form Hyzaar.

The following are other popular combination drugs:

Lexxel, Lotrel, Tarka, Tenoretic, Ziac, Corzide, Inderide, Timolide, Lotensin, Vasoretic, Prinzide, Zestoretic, Uniretic, Accuretic, Avalide, and Diovan HCT.

Renin inhibitors are a relatively new type of blood pressure drug. As the name indicates, they inhibit renin, which is an enzyme secreted by the kidneys that is involved in the release of angiotensin.

Tekturma is a renin inhibitor.

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

Willie Nelson Coming to Mullins Center

BY FARRAH ALEXANDER

AMHERST – If you're looking for A-list celebrities and first class entertainment, look no further than Amherst. This April thru May, the Mullins Center in Amherst is delivering four hard-to-resist performances that should prove an irresistible draw regardless of the down economy.

In April, iconic Grammy-award winning musician Willy Nelson will take the stage at the Mullins Center. He's a singer-songwriter, author, poet, political activist, and one of the principal organizers of Farm Aid. Willie Nelson will be performing along with Ray Price and Billy Bob Thornton and the Boxmasters on Friday, April 17th, at 8 p.m.

Nelson's discography boasts an astounding 200 albums, mixing genres and sounds, and, unlike other country musicians, hasn't shied away from unexpected collaborations. Nelson has recorded with everyone from Snoop Dogg to Phish and U2, and was recently featured on the soundtrack for *Brokeback Mountain*.

Born and raised in Texas, Nelson's political and environmental activism has widened his appeal beyond country music's traditional demographics. Not only has Nelson built two bio-

diesel plants, one in Oregon and one in Texas, but at the age of 75 he still regularly tours the nation on his bus which, appropriately, runs on bio-diesel.



Willie Nelson

Adding even more buzz to the performance will be the presence of Billy Bob Thornton and the Boxmasters, whose sound combines the influence of the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and the Kinks and fuses it with Merle Haggard and Johnny Cash to create a rockabilly meets British rock mash-up.

Tickets to the show are still available and can be purchased, or you can try your luck at winning them. "We're set up for a capacity of 3,500. We're partnering with a number of country music stations – specifically Bear Country out of Greenfield, KIX out of Springfield, and the

River, who will also be giving away tickets. We started a lot of our promotions over the last couple of weeks, and will continue right up until the show," said Mullins Center marketing director Scott Sassenbury.

Then, in May, as part of the Broadway in Amherst series, Michael Flatley's *Lord of the Dance* will be appearing for one performance only, followed by a brand new production of the classic favorite, *Annie*, and finally, New England's own Pink Floyd cover band, Pink Voyd, will be taking to the Mullins Center stage the final week of May.

"Our venue is reasonably priced in terms of tickets. When you compare going to see *Lord of the Dance* or *Annie* or other productions," in major markets outside of the Mullins Center, "it's probably going to be more costly than seeing a show here," Sassenbury said.

Tickets for the Friday, April 17th, 8 p.m. Willie Nelson and Family concert, or for the May 2nd, 8 p.m. *Lord of the Dance* performance, the May 14th, 7:30 p.m. *Annie* production, and the May 25th, 7:30 p.m., Pink Voyd concert are still available and can be purchased at Ticketmaster.com or by calling (413) 733-2500.



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JEP'S PLACE: Part CXVIII

Suggestion Box



BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL – Mr. Lambert dropped Ma off to walk about a mile to the Keith Paper Mill. Part of her hike took her across the Turners Falls – Gill bridge, spanning the Connecticut River. Strong winds coming off the river swept the bridge with icy blasts, carrying spray from the falls. She'd often be shivering so much by the time she got to the mill that the foreman wouldn't let her begin her job of slicing cloth on the big upright razor sharp knives until her hands stopped shaking.

Later, when Pa passed a physical exam and resumed working at the mill, they rode to work in Pa's car.

There were no openings for his old job in the beater room. The mill super assigned Pa to the rag room where women worked, apparently figuring it would be easy work in consideration of his heart condition. But the foreman gave Pa the job of wheeling heavy bales of rags to the cutting tables on a two-wheeled hand truck. The bales often weighed a half-ton or more.

It took a considerable effort to tip the bale onto the truck. Once balanced, wheeling the bale wasn't too bad, except when a wheel dropped into a hole in the floor, pulling Pa to the floor or pitching the heavy load forward, and him with it.

The exertion caused angina.

When Pa stopped to catch his breath and wait for the pains to subside, he'd get dark looks from the foreman. Another heart attack ended Pa's working days for an extended period.

During the war years there was a severe labor shortage. To prevent job hopping, an employee couldn't quit and take a job elsewhere unless the present place of employment granted a written release. Students working seasonally were an exception.

I got a job at the Keith Paper Mill while Pa was working there. Though I was 15, the personnel manager didn't ask my age. With the labor shortage, he wasn't fussy.

I went to work in the finishing department, wrapping rolls of paper. It was the most boring job I have ever had in my entire life.

To ward off boredom and to earn extra money, I began using the mill suggestion box. Payment for ideas accepted was a percentage of money saved.

I saw plenty of places where the mill could do things more

efficiently, and stuffed the box with suggestions. Many times, my suggestions resulted in more money for me than my paycheck.

Unfortunately, most of my suggestions were for the manufacturing department. The finishing department super said he didn't like me dreaming up suggestions while working for him, when it only helped manufacturing be more efficient.

He sometimes put me to work hauling paper on a wagon from a machine at one end of the factory down one or two floors to another machine and then back again for some other operation, before going back down to the shipping room at the opposite end of the mill. I suggested they line the machines up next to each other so that work flowed from one machine to the other, ending next to the shipping room. It greatly benefited the finishing department, but the super was embarrassed that a high school kid had come up with an idea that should have been plain for him to see. Rearranging the machines was

a major project involving upper management, bringing further attention to his ineptitude. He was not pleased. On the last day of my summer job, an hour before the quitting time, he saw me getting a drink from the water fountain. He asked me what I was doing.

"As little as possible," I said with a grin, "I'm going back to school; this is my last day."

He turned white with fury, "This is your last hour," he roared. "You're fired!"

That was the only time in my life I ever got fired. But I was a good worker, and during a two week semester break in college, I was hired in the same mill to work in the millwright department. When the finishing department superintendent saw me back at work, the color drained from his face. I gave him a cheery "Hello," but he stalked past me without reply.

– Continued Next Week

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Gill Day on MCTV

BY DON CLEGG – On Saturday, April 18th, from noon to midnight, Montague Community Television will be airing programs that have been videotaped in Gill.

Gill is one of three towns, along with Montague and Erving, that use MCTV as their public access television station.

This will be the station's first marathon television series in some time. Not to be confused with our marathon broadcasts of the Montague annual town meetings. Shows to be aired will include the Common People Concerts held

on the Gill Common on Tuesdays during the summer, Rosner's Monthly Antique Auto show, Candlelight Service from the Gill Congregational Church, History of the Gill Church, In the Artist Studio, and some first-time airings of other programs that highlight the town of Gill and its residents.

MCTV hopes viewers will enjoy this offering and encourages feedback on this series and ideas for future programming. Contact MCTV by calling 413-863-9200, or email dean@MontagueTV.org.

Earth Day Events

BY MARIANNE SUNDELL WENDELL – The Wendell Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 25th will include festivities on the town common and in town hall, the annual townwide cleanup, and a work party at the Fiske Pond conservation area to clear up ice storm damage. The event on the common, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., will include local and regional groups focusing on environmental stewardship and sustainable living, local farmers, artists, herbalists, live music with Kellianna, and a community potluck at noon. The townwide cleanup starts at the highway garage at 9 a.m. The work party at Fiske Pond starts at 2 p.m.

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Appetizers \$10

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FRIDAY, APRIL 10th
 Friends Coffeehouse: An Acapella Fest at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Join us for this community musical event at 7 p.m. Delicious refreshments. Suggested donation \$6 to \$12; children free. Info (413) 863-3221.

Pat & Tex LaMountain at Bart's Cafe, Greenfield. Thirty years in the Valley and having more fun than ever. Folk, swing, acoustic rock, no cover, 7 to 9 p.m. Info: (413) 641-0030.

Dr. Helen Caldicott, noted physician and author, at Latchis 4, Latchis Theatre, Brattleboro, VT. 7 p.m. Dr. Caldicott is an articulate and passionate advocate of citizen awareness regarding the nuclear and environmental crisis. She is the author of seven books, and has been the focus of several films. Lecture is free and open to the public.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Lin Preston Band*, rock & roll covers, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Blame It On Tina*, Wendell's fav's, Jen Spingla, Bob Rosser and of course Tina, 9 to 11 p.m.

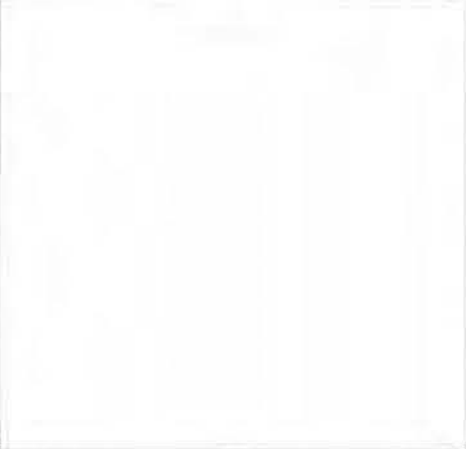
At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Night Train Djs B-coming & 12XU* (reggae, funk, hip-hop) free.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11th
 Peter Cottontail's Eggstravaganza at Unity Park, Turners Falls: 1 p.m.

Wendell Full Moon Coffee House, Wendell Center: *John Sheldon and Blue Streak*, 8 p.m. Open mic begins at 7:30 p.m. \$6 to \$12. Partial proceeds to benefit the Wendell Senior Center.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Turn It Loose*, rock & roll, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Richard Chase*



Art

Group, Acoustic folk, singer songwriter, 9 to 11 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Doug Hewitt Group*, jazz, \$3 cover., 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12th
 At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke* with Opa Opa Beer special and swag, 8 to 12 a.m., no cover.

MONDAY, APRIL 13th
 Sing-A-Long at Montague Center Library, 6:30 p.m. Children's Librarian, Linda Hickman, performs a variety of children's music & plays guitar & banjo. For children of any age and families. Info: Carnegie Library 863-3214 during the week or Montague Center Library 367-2852, Mondays.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Slope Editions is proud to present a free poetry reading, 7 p.m. featuring Elizabeth Hughey, Darcie Dennigan, and Ryan Flaherty.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14th
 At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Craft Night, 7 p.m. on. Careful mixing of knitting & drinking, bring a project to work on.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15th
 Mid-Week Music Concert Series - Stoneleigh-Burnham Chamber Players. Directed by Greg Snedeker. Free. Donations gratefully accepted. 12:15 to 12:45 p.m., All Souls Church, Greenfield.

Super Fun Bowling Club, Noncompetitive bowling club open to all abilities and ages! Bad-Ass Bowling - Alright tough guys, let's see what you've got! Dress to kill, or at least to beat someone up. 7:30 p.m. French King Entertainment Center, Erving. www.superfunbowling.com.

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

Echo Lake Concert Series, Leverett Town Hall: *David Rovics*. An internationally acclaimed singer/songwriter at 7:30 p.m. Opening for David is the local band, *Red Valley Fog* with Ben Grosscup and Carolynn O'Donnell. Also special appearance by an up-and-coming Washington-

based singer/songwriter, Shawnee Kilgore. \$10 admission.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Karaoke with DJ Dolla, 7 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quizmostah Chad Quiz Night Quiz!* Bring a team, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16th
 Performances for Young People Series at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Jim West and company perform a puppet extravaganza presenting a variety of the legendary fables of Aesop! From *The Goose that Laid a Golden Egg* on through to Aesop's *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* (and many others), this large-scale puppet production features more morals to the story, more classical music and more silliness than ever! Call the Shea Theater (413) 863-2281.

Gallery A3, 28 Amity Street 1D, Amherst: Conversations with the artists, Gloria Kegeles and Helena Dooley, 7:30 p.m. Gloria Kegeles' *Chrome Dreams*, automotive photographs and Helena Dooley's *Synesthesia: Music to Color*, painted images of sound. Exhibition runs through May 2nd. More on Gallery A3 at www.gallerya3.com.

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

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

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Kosher Ham*, 9:30 p.m. \$3 cover. www.myspace.com/thekosherham.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17th
 First Annual Franklin County Technical School DodgeBall Tournament in the school gym, 7 p.m. Cash prizes for the top two teams. teams of 5 players face off in double-elimination. Entry fee is \$25 per team, **due by April 15th**. All teams must be registered by April 15th. Contact Dan Prasol (413) 863-8119 x 233.

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

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

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 18th
 Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Exploring Insects*. Engaging activities, a nature walk, and a story about insects. All ages. 1 to 2 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls; In Gallery 52: *Blake Fitch - Expectations of Adolescence*, a ten-year photographic project documenting the emotional and physical growth and emotional maturation of two young girls. In Gallery 56: *Founder & Museum Collections - Selections II*. Museum Curator, Paul R. Turnbull has selected a limited overview of some of the Museum's collection. And in Gallery 85: *Stan Sherer - Life Studies*. Three documentary projects. 'Albania' and 'Shopkeepers' are straightforward studies of people & places. 'Lantern Slides' is a personal visual interpretation and construction by Mr. Sherer. Exhibits on display through June 14th.

AUDITIONS
 The Country Players holds open auditions for Oliver! Sunday, April 26, from 2 to 5 p.m. at the GCC Downtown, Greenfield and Monday, April 27 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Feel free to attend either or both of the audition sessions. Oliver! will be produced at the Shea Theater July 10, 11, 17, 18 & 19. The cast includes 10 men of all ages and 6 women in speaking roles, as well as a chorus of children and adults. No experience on stage is necessary.

HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER
MONDAYS - Drop-in, 3 to 6 p.m.
TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project, 3 to 6 p.m.
THURS - Drop-in, 3 to 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 to 8 p.m.
Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips.
 Info: Jared at 863-9559.
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- 1. MONSTERS VS. ALIENS**
 PG in DTS sound
 DAILY 6:30 9:00
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- 2. HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE**
 G in DTS sound
 DAILY 6:30 9:00
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- 3. CLOSED FOR RENOVATIONS**
- 4. CLOSED FOR RENOVATIONS**
- 5. HAUNTING IN CONNECTICUT**
 PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- 6. FAST AND FURIOUS**
 PG13 in DTS sound
 DAILY 7:00 9:30
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
- 7. OBSERVE AND REPORT**
 R in DTS sound
 DAILY 7:00 9:30
 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30

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Friday, 4/10 9:30 to 11:30 p.m. *Blame It On Tina*
Saturday, 4/11, 9 to 11 p.m. Acoustic Folk/Singer Songwriter *Richard Chase Group*
Sunday, 4/12 Closed for Easter
Wednesdays Knitting & Craft Night
Thursday, 4/16 8 to 10 p.m. Wailin' Dave Robinson, Tommy Filault & Co.
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FRI: 4/10 | 9:30PM | FREE
 Night Train Djs B-coming & 12XU (Reggae, Funk, Hip-Hop)
SAT: 4/11 | 9:30PM | \$3
 Doug Hewitt Group (Jazz)
SUN: 4/12 | 8PM | FREE
 TNT Karaoke w. Opa Opa

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 Pork w. Tomatillo & Chorizo Glaze

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MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – For the past two weeks we've been balancing between the end of winter and the beginning of spring, enjoying warm days of sun during which we've thrown the windows open to the fresh, soft air and wintry days of wet, damp cool with snow, calling for hats and gloves and the warmth of the wood stove.

Almost unnoticed, spring has slipped in.

I watched the snow covering the garden peel back slowly. Then one recent morning, I looked up from my reading and noticed it was gone, retreated to the edge of the woods, its force remaining only in a thick layer of ice on the north side of the garage.

The daffodil bulbs have shot up from their tips to a strong height of three to four inches which have started to show buds. The recent rains have brought on the tips of new green grass throughout the lawn.

The tomato seed I planted two weeks ago has germinated, producing inch high seedlings. I've heard the song sparrow, and the squirrels have moved out of the attic.

I've been reading about worm farming and compost. Apparently you can maintain a bin of worms to consume your kitchen garbage (minus, of course, meat or dairy food) and then harvest the worm castings as an organic food additive to your garden soil. Or, if you're as lazy as I am, you can compost your vegetable and fruit leavings along with your tea leaves and coffee grounds and spread them on and in your garden soil.

I think I am a lazy gardener. With two black plastic bins purchased long ago through the

town's DPW, I have been composting for many years. I don't, however, own a special tool to turn the piles to keep them hot, speeding up the processing of usable compost. I am a passive composter, working one bin while the other processes itself over the season into rich, black gold for the following year's garden.

We once bought a pound of earthworms and put them into the garden. They seemed to disappear for a while, but they eventually returned, bringing their relations to join the workforce. These helpful critters turn the soil and add their castings to the garden, thus enriching growth. This, in combination with composted manure turned under in the fall and composted garbage added in the spring, constitute my garden soil treatments.

When I put in my plants, they often receive a pinch of bone meal, and periodic feeding with liquid fertilizer according to their need. That, and a bit of mulch and weeding, are about it.

I am giving thought to last year's woodchuck, and the inconsistency of the ammoniated rags

as a repellent. This worked when I was home to renew the odor. I am thinking about the wisdom of a fence again.

One woodchuck (never mind a family) and a rabbit or two can demolish your home garden in a day or so. I'll have to balance this likelihood with the labor of putting in a fence, which is not only high enough but is also buried a few inches beneath the soil. Any woodchuck worth its salt can scale a chicken fence and, by dint of sheer weight and gravity, tumble right in.

Maybe I need to get a good hunting dog.

Seriously, this planning wakes me up at night in the early hours. The whole focus of home gardening is the pleasure of growing and eating your own locally produced, fresh food. If it's too much work, you won't want to do it. If you're not willing to work a little, you won't see your hoped-for produce to the kitchen table.

I'll keep you posted on that fence. In the meanwhile, enjoy the end of last year's root crops in some soul-warming soups.

Carrot-Ginger Soup

Chop two cups of scrubbed carrots and one medium peeled potato.

Soften a teaspoon or more of grated ginger root with a half cup of chopped onion and two cloves crushed garlic in two tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat.

Add two cups of chicken broth and the carrots.

Reduce the heat to low until carrots and potato are soft.

Puree in a blender or put through a food mill.

When ready to serve, heat with a cup of soy milk, cream, yogurt, or buttermilk depending on your taste.

Add more liquid (chicken broth or dairy) until the soup is the consistency you enjoy.

Serve with crusty whole meal bread.

Creamy Parsnip Soup

Substitute two cups of parsnips for carrots above.

Use ¼ teaspoon each of ground coriander, cumin and turmeric in place of ginger root.

Simmer and enjoy.

ORGANIC GARDENING SKILLS OFFERED AT KELLER FARM

WENDELL, MA – On April 18th, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Keller Farm on 28 Cold Brook Road, the Northeast Organic Farming Association, Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA/Mass) will hold a workshop on how to start and maintain successful organic gardens. The event is part of the Massachusetts Organic Gardening Workshop Day, designed to meet the resurgence of energy and enthusiasm for backyard and community gardening. Similar events will be held in 12 other towns and cities throughout the state.

"Lots of people want to start gardens. The one thing they need first is the confidence they can succeed," said Ben Grosscup, event organizer. "With this workshop, we're offering an opportunity to learn the basic skills needed to get started, from experienced gardening educators."

Farm owner Nina Keller will be teaching the workshop. "I'll be giving people the basic information they need to get started with enriching the soil, getting the right timing for planting,

planning crop rotations, mulching for soil water retention and weed suppression, and composting to recycle nutrients and organic matter back into the garden," she said. "I intend to leave everyone with the understanding they can succeed at growing food for their families."

"More people are interested in healthy food and also in economizing their household finances. Also, with the global ecology the way it is, it makes sense for us to use the land we have to produce food instead of paying extra in order to mow it. Not only do you save money and get better food, it also gives you a fun activity to do with your family. You just need to have some basic skills to make it happen," Keller said.

Participants are also strongly encouraged to bring their own questions to the workshops.

Organizers say the level of interest in gardening has never been as high as it is now in their own living memory. In 1943, however, in the midst of shortages related to World War II, nearly a third of all the vegetables consumed in the United

States came from Victory Gardens, small plots planted in neighborhood spaces.

Julie Rawson, NOFA/Mass executive director and leader of another workshop in Worcester, said, "Sharing the knowledge people need to grow their own food has been the mission of NOFA since it began more than 30 years ago. Today, with the economic and ecological crises we're in, I think a lot of people are once again turning toward backyard gardening as something essential for well-being."

To register, visit www.nofamass.org, or contact Ben Grosscup at 413-658-5374 or ben.grosscup@nofamass.org.

Dr. Helen Caldicott
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COMPOSERS from pg 12 of Jean Miro, whose "unique and arresting glyphs...(and) striking, stratified layers...suggested a transferable musical idea of a stratified foreground high above a vague and shifting background."

The piece in four movements translates the composer's ideas into a dissonant piece of tension and release played out against the repeated texture of the percussive

instruments. I can't pretend to fully understand modern, atonal music, but I found this piece compelling and mesmerizing.

This premiere performance received a standing ovation.

Keep attentive to local concert listings. There are many fine performances by young musicians still to come in this acoustically beautiful new concert hall, right here in the midst of Gill.

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12 p.m. Lunch Lobby in the Statehouse

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