



MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

Heading to the West Coast of Mexico

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 8 - NO. 41

also serving Irving, Gill, Everett and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

AUGUST 5, 2010

Bridge Demo Begins



Renovation of the Gill-Montague Bridge comes none too soon, by the look of this carrying beam, on the Gill side of the structure. A canvas tarp isolates a section of the bridge's understorey to enable painting and shot blasting to continue.

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

GREAT FALLS - "We've got a 70-ton Mantis crane that just got trucked in," Henry Mulvey said. "We're going to use it to lift out rusted beams at the expansion joint up over the bike path. We're breaking up the concrete on the approach to the bridge [on the Turners side] and loading rubble onto local contractors' trucks to haul to Mitchell's gravel pit in Northfield."

Mulvey said SPS has hired local contractors including Mitchell, Renaissance Excavators, Kevin Trucking and Mackin to truck the rubble. They also employ police details from Gill, Montague, Greenfield and Irving. They are not

adverse to hiring local workers.

SPS is breaking up concrete on the approach with a breaker mounted on a Link Belt hydraulic excavator. A Kobelco excavator loaded the broken concrete onto a Renaissance tandem dump truck, while a Cat loader scooped rubble onto a Mitchell tractor trailer unit from a stockpile by the old police station, all destined for Mitchell's gravel pit.

By the time the Turners approach demolition is complete, a section on the underside of the Gill end of the bridge will be entirely shot blasted and primed. At that point, the painting crew will move further

see BRIDGE pg 4

Groundbreaking Biodiesel Plant



Twelve years ago, Tom Leue built the Homestead biodiesel factory in his Ashfield garage, paving the way for this week's groundbreaking of the 6,600 square foot Northeast Biodiesel production plant, which will produce 3.5 million gallons a year. He stands by his excavator, fueled with recycled grease biodiesel, on Tuesday.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GREENFIELD - A brass band and a biodiesel fueled backhoe led the procession to the groundbreaking for the Northeast Biodiesel plant at the Greenfield industrial park on Tuesday, August 3rd.

The brass band, from Southern Vermont, had the initials NOBBP embossed in gold on their caps, and audience members tried to puzzle out what those letters might stand for as they waited for the program to begin.

Turns out they stood for New Orleans Brass Band Project, but NO Buying British Petroleum might have been just as apt, considering the occasion.

"We are eager to start pro-

ducing biodiesel. In a matter of weeks, you'll see a building come up at this site. By late January, biodiesel will be ready for delivery," said Christian Lagier, Northeast Biodiesel board member.

Within a year, Northeast Biodiesel plans to produce 1.75 million gallons of biodiesel from recycled vegetable oil, shipped to the Greenfield plant from restaurant kitchens as far away as Montreal, Boston and New York. Grease rendered from animal fat will also be part of the fuel production mix. Six months after production begins, the company will expand by purchasing a second processor and double output to 3.5 million gallons a year. There will be

room to double plant capacity again, if market conditions allow, to 7 million gallons a year.

Biodiesel is a clean burning liquid fuel derived from vegetable oil or animal fat that can be used in any diesel engine or oil heat system.

Northeast Biodiesel, a Co-op Power company, has raised about \$2 million for the start-up from individual local investors and loan funds, said Co-op Power president Lynn Benander. The journey from business plan to groundbreaking took more than five years, Benander said, because banks were unwilling to lend during the economic contraction to an unproven business using unfamiliar technology.

Or as Greenfield mayor Bill Martin put it, quoting nay-sayers who doubted this day would ever come, "Who's going to buy gas from grease?"

Well, given that biodiesel made from waste grease reduces net life cycle greenhouse gas emissions by 86% compared to regular diesel fuel, according to Dwayne Breger, director of renewable energy for the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, Northeast Biodiesel believes its product will find a ready market.

Benander said Coop Power hopes to establish biodiesel buying groups around New

see BIODIESEL pg 5

Chevy - GMC Truck Meet Revives Memories of an Old Rivalry

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

WENDELL - There were a lot of interesting cars and trucks at the Chevy and GMC truck meet at the Wendell State Forest last weekend, including a nicely restored Nash 600, a futuristic GMC bus restored by Peter Pan, and an English Austin taxi cab with built in jacks able to pick up any or all four wheels at once. There were Army vehicles, a Red Cross Civil Defense Carryall and a number of restored pickup trucks.

The most striking thing about the Chevy GMC antique truck show was the absence of any vehicle older than 1935. William Hunting's 1928 Chevy platform truck was the only entry older than 1935 of the entire 90 entries.

The main explanation for the scarcity of older Chevrolet or GMC vehicles was the Fisher

bodies GMC used. They featured a wooden framework with sheet metal attached. The wood frame, even on the doors, gave the vehicles a good selling point. While Chevrolet salesmen did not mention the wood framing as part of their sales pitch, they did make a big deal about closing a door with solid "thunk," pointing out that Fords sounded tinny, which was true, giving rise to the nickname "Tin Lizzy."

Hunting's grandfather did a stellar job of restoring the wood frame on the 1928 Chevy truck. Wood frame kits are available, but the project of installing a wood frame entails stripping off the sheet metal, assembling the wood frame and reattaching the sheet metal. "It's a project and a half," one exhibitor said. "And it's more than I'd want to tackle."

Ed Ellis, of Montague, now

deceased, had a nice Chevy sedan of about 1929 vintage, but was afraid to drive it very much or very fast because the body was so rickety. And he didn't have the enthusiasm for wood frame restoration.

Fords, like the Model T that recently made a trip to California and back to North Carolina, are all metal, except for the fabric roof.

Henry Ford and Louis Chevrolet's lives were intertwined. Both were involved in racing, which was a great way to get a name in the automobile world, back then.

Henry Ford had little formal education but plenty of mechanical aptitude. He designed his first car in 1896 from the engine up, while working for Thomas Alva Edison. He built the entire car in a shed in his back yard, and went



Buick engine shoeborn into 1935 Chevy. The hand grenade hood ornament sums up the safety of pinning the pedal to the metal on this baby.

on to build two big race cars. While Louis Chevrolet drove his own race cars, Ford did not. He hired drivers like Barney Oldfield, who won against champion Alexander Winton by half a mile driving Ford's No. 999 race car.

Chevrolet was fearless, and a madman behind the wheel. He won a lot of races but spent a sum total of about three years recovering from his various accidents. His brother Gaston also drove a wild race and eventually paid

see TRUCK pg 11

PET OF THE WEEK**A Real Sweetheart****Daisy**

My name is Daisy and I'm a three-year-old female coonhound bluetick mix in need of a good home. You know what would make me happy? A family that I could call my own. Of course every dog wants that, but I really need some consistency in my life. Once I find the special person or family with whom I can form a real bond and build a relationship the world will not seem like such a scary place. Little kids are a bit too much for me, but older kids and adults are swell. I am a real sweetheart once I get to know you. If you think you have the home for me please take me for a walk. For more information on adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email: info@dphvs.org.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**Teens and Tweens Program**

On Wednesday, August 11th at 2:00 p.m. there will be a pizza and game program for teens and tweens. Bring some friends and a favorite game or use the library's board games. This is a

great time to meet new friends! Refreshments will be provided.

For more information, contact the Carnegie Library, 201 Avenue A., Turners Falls. 863-3214.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS**Two Upcoming Movies At The Library**

This month's Senior Movie, sponsored by the Wendell Council on Aging, will be *Secrets and Lies* (1995), directed by Mike Leigh and starring Brenda Blethyn and Marianne Jean-Baptiste on August 8th at 7:00 p.m. at the Wendell Free Library.

Secrets and Lies recounts the emotionally charged series of events that follow when a young black woman (Marianne Jean-Baptiste), who was adopted as a child, seeks out her birth parents and is reunited with her mother (Brenda Blethyn), who happens to be white. Kenneth Turan describes the film as "Breathtaking! Unforced, confident and completely involving" (*L.A. Times*) and John Anderson's *Newsday*

review called it "A masterpiece!"

Wendellites of all ages are welcome. This film is rated R, free admission (but seating is limited with priority to seniors).

The Alfred Hitchcock film, *The Birds*, is showing at the Wendell Free Library on Saturday, August 14th at 7:30 p.m. In this classic, wealthy socialite Melanie Daniels pursues a love interest to a Northern California town in order to reciprocate a practical joke, where she witnesses increasingly bizarre bird behavior, culminating in attacks on humans.

This film is rated PG-13. Admission is free (but seating is limited).

Montague Old Home Days: August 20th – 22nd ~ THE TRADITION CONTINUES ~

BY PEG BRIDGES - For 51 Years, the Montague Center Congregational Church has sponsored Montague Old Home Days. Old Home Days is a time for friends and families, near and far, to come together. This year, Old Home Days take place August 20th - 22nd.

There have been 51 years of

parades, raffles and craft booths, road races, vendors, and continuous music including fiddlers, blue grass, jazz and pop. Dance groups and bands entertain, while children's games and magic shows keep things lively.

The white elephant tables will be in the dining room of

the church for both Old Home Days and the Big Auction on Saturday, September 11th. No fair is complete without a food booth, fried dough and pizza.

The festivities culminate in a church service with special music and a guest speaker.

For more information, call 413-367-2061.

Performance of *Love Letters* at the Senior Center

BY ROBERTA POTTER

TURNERS FALLS - The Gill-Montague Council on Aging will present *Love Letters* at the Gill-Montague Senior Center on Monday, August 16th at 1:00 p.m. This Broadway hit by A.R. Gurney is a poignant and sweet look at life and love through the reading of letters by two old friends, Andrew Makepeace Ladd III and Melissa Gardner.

Andrew and Melissa's life-long correspondence begins in the World War II era with chil-

dren's birthday messages, thank you notes and summer camp post cards and continues through a lifetime of letters and deepening love.

Richard Clark and Dianne Giammarco star in the roles of Andrew and Melissa. Clark is an actor with over 30 years experience in New England regional theater, New York theater and television. His "Keeping History Alive" series brings historical figures such as Andrew Carnegie, Clarence Darrow,

Ernest Hemmingway and William Shakespeare back to life. He brought his solo Mark Twain performance to the senior center in 2008. Dianne Giammarco, another New England regional actor, has been performing with Clark for the last three years.

The play will be followed by an old fashioned ice cream social. Admission is free but seating is limited so please call the senior center at 863-9357 to reserve your seats.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – August 9th to 20th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Poet's Seat. For information or to make meal reservations, call (413) 863-9357. Call the senior center for information on any programs.

Mondays, August 9th, 16th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Knitting Group
Tuesdays, August 10th, 17th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
1:00 p.m. Canasta

Wednesdays, Aug. 11th, 18th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursdays, August 12th, 19th
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Fridays, August 13th, 20th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Scrabble
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

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

ical necessity.

Mondays, August 9th, 16th
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
12:00 noon Pitch
Tuesdays, August 10th, 17th
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesdays, Aug. 11th, 18th
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
12:30 p.m. Bingo
Thursdays, August 12th, 19th
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
Fridays, August 13th, 20th
9:00 a.m. Bowling
11:30 a.m. Lunch - Call the center for details.

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



Former Montague selectman Brad Councilman has not forgotten Turners Falls. He travels down from Winchester, NH on a regular basis to water and tend a planter in front of Power Town Apartments. Thanks, Brad!

Wendell Old Home Day August 21st

BY KAREN COPELAND - The date for Wendell Old Home Day is Saturday, August 21st, and as always, it promises to be a day full of good friends, great music and food, tag sales, kids games, pony rides and so much more. The day kicks off with the annual kids parade at 11:00 a.m., followed by a new and exciting international folk dance circle to include Celtic and Middle

Eastern folk dances, with live music. All are encouraged to join in. If you would like to be in the band - a rehearsal will take place at the library on Thursday, August 19th.

More music, beginning around 1:00 p.m., will feature Marsia Shuron-Harris and Mother Turtle, Danger Boy singing da blues (guess who that might be?), Annie Hassett and Bob Rosser, Julia Burrough and friends, Riddim Inc., Hillary and Richard Chase and friends, and more.

For more information, or to volunteer to help out, call (978) 544-7352 or send email to kckeepthebeat@yahoo.com.

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Local Briefs

JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG - Lake Pleasant artist, writer, and teacher Jan Atamian is exhibiting digital prints from her new book, *Songs of Lake Pleasant* at the Sunderland Public Library, located at 20 School Street. *Songs of Lake Pleasant* is a picture book celebration of the history and beauty of the lake, as well as the animals that live in this area of Western Massachusetts. The prints are on exhibit through August 31st.

The last of the **Common People** Concerts for the summer will be held Tuesday, August 10th, at 7:00 p.m. on the Gill Common. Chris Snow, singer and songwriter, will perform. Don't forget your lawn chair. (In case of rain the concert will be held at the Gill Congregational Church.)

The Community Health Center of Franklin County, in Montague City, will provide **free** health care information and **blood pressure checks** at the August 11th Great Falls Farmers Market on the corner of Avenue A and 2nd Street in Turners Falls, in celebration of National Health Week.

The second week of August each year is dedicated to recognizing the service and contributions of Community, Migrant, Homeless and Public Housing Health Centers in providing

access to affordable, high quality, cost-effective health care to medically vulnerable and underserved people in the U.S. This year marks the 45th anniversary of the creation of the National Health Centers Program.

Ever walk through an old cemetery and look at the gravestones? Marie Ferre and Bob Drinkwater, of the **Association for Gravestone Studies**, will present a program at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, in Turners Falls on the gravestones found in our own neighborhoods, on Thursday, August 19th at 7 p.m.

For much of the past 40 years, historical archeologist Drinkwater has been recording, photographing and occasionally reporting on the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century gravestones and stonemasons of western Massachusetts. Marie Ferre is Archivist for the Association for Gravestone Studies, which promotes the conservation and study of American gravestones, through seminars, workshops, and tours.

Each third Thursday of the month, the Discovery Center offers a nature or science program free to the public.

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

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Usher Mill Demo Debated

BY BILL FRANKLIN - The cleanup of the former Usher Mill took precedence again at the July 29th meeting of the Erving selectboard.

The town is debating the future of the arson damaged Arch Street property, considering options for the asbestos contaminated site, from complete demolition of all existing structures to preservation of some of the early 20th century buildings.

Patriots Environmental, a Worcester salvage firm, is the present owner of the Usher Mill. But the firm is in violation of continued orders from county building inspector Jim Hawkins to clean up and secure the site.

As the town moves to take the cleanup of the property into its own hands, engineering consultants Tighe and Bond delivered an estimate termed an "opinion of probable costs" to the board, laying out the cost of the different options.

The cost of complete demolition and removal of the contaminated debris is expected to cost the town \$634,000. The cost of cleanup without demolishing the buildings will cost the town \$609,000, saving just \$25,000. This does not include the additional costs of cleanup within the remaining buildings; nor does it include the cost of any work necessary, such as putting a roof on the former boiler room building, to secure existing structures at the mill for potential future use.

The town has appropriated \$500,000 from its stabilization fund for cleaning up the Usher Mill site, intending to place a lien on the property.

"It's going to cost a lot more to save the buildings than to demolish them," said selectboard member James Hackett, "significantly more." Hackett added, "I'm in favor of taking the whole thing down — lock, stock and barrel — and green spacing the whole area, everything to the right when you go down Arch Street."

Selectboard member Eugene Klepaldo, acknowledging that some cleanup of the property needs to be accomplished soon, suggested the town "put it out to

RFP [request for proposals] to see what other options the town has before demolishing the existing buildings. "We need photos, maps and an artist's rendering of what it might look like," said Klepaldo.

"It's going to be a money pit until then," argued Hackett.

Former selectboard member Jeff Dubay continued presenting the argument in favor of preservation of at least some of the existing structures.

"This is millions of dollars of real estate we could get for next to nothing," said Dubay. "It adds value to our town. Erving has no place to grow. You could pass new zoning regulations and you would have the same potential as existing shops. Would you junk a 57 Corvette? No, you save it."

Hackett questioned the wisdom of "saving a building that we don't own."

Dubay asked how much it would cost to buy the building outright. No one had any figures on this.

Assistant assessor Jacquie Boyden raised another issue concerning the Usher property. "Because it's near the river," said Boyden, "it's worth saving the footprint of the building. Once it's gone, you won't be able to get permission to build on the site again."

This option would require leaving in place the foundation of the mill buildings with the prospect of redeveloping the same site in the future. Boyden also questioned what it would

cost to preserve the brick smoke stack.

The most pressing concern right now is safety, according to town administrative assistant Tom Sharp. "We know kids are going in there. It's a really bad situation."

In other matters, the selectboard voted to appoint Luke Hartnett to the position of Emergency Management Director for the town.

"Both he and the other applicant to the position, William Kardaropoli, had similar impressive skills and work experience," said Sharp. The deciding factor, he explained, was that Hartnett is an Erving resident.

Another position discussed by the selectboard is that of the "Clerk of Works" for the construction of the new senior center. The person hired would be responsible for looking after the town's interests at the job site, requiring the employee to be on site for approximately four hours per week to insure the contractors meet the terms of the contract and that materials used meet specifications.

Highway superintendent Paul Prest, who recently completed a similar job for the town on its wastewater treatment plant, is being considered for the job. The decision has been tabled until the board's next meeting.

The town will also be posting information about the state primary for governor and lieutenant governor to be held on Tuesday, September 14th at the town hall.

ALUMNI HOEDOWN

The First Annual Greenfield High School Hoedown for Classes of 1962 through 1965 will be held Saturday, September 4th, Labor Day Weekend at the Oak Ridge Golf Club on West Gill Road in Gill. Evening begins at 5:00 p.m. with cocktail hour followed by chicken barbecue with all the fixin's and live rockabilly music from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. with Jimi Star*. Tickets available at the Franklin County County Chamber of Commerce. Only 100 tickets available! For early reservation call (978) 544-2105.

ALUMNI GATHERING

The Second Annual Franklin County Technical School Alumni Gathering for Classes of 1977 through 2005 will be held Saturday, August 28th at Barton Cove in Gill from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Dinner will be served at 4:00 p.m. The fee is \$20 per person. For more information please email Sue Kelly at ravenwolf1965@yahoo.com or join the FCTS Alumni Association on Facebook or mail your name, address, phone and email address to: FCTS Alumni Association, P.O. Box 450, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

MONTAGUE OLD HOME DAYS

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 20th, 21st and 22nd

4 North Street, Montague Center

Events start Friday at 6:00 p.m. with live performances. Mug Race 5.5 mile road race or two mile mini race registration starts Saturday at 7:30 a.m. For event schedule and information go to Montaguechurch.org or call (413) 265-3013. *Crafters Wanted* - Please call (413) 367-2061. *Fall Auction* September 11th, 9:30 a.m., Donations being accepted now.

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Dance of the Fireflies

These days, with the Gill-Montague bridge under repair, sometimes it seems it might be easier to get across the river by ferry boat, or by some kind of boat. But whether you were anchored on dry land or floating on the river last Saturday night, you got a chance to see some of the most outlandish water craft imaginable when the Franklin County Boat Club sponsored the Christmas in July event, replete with outstanding fireworks over Barton Cove.

Boat owners spend long hours decking their craft out with innumerable holiday lights, so they shine brighter than the Griswold Family Christmas house in the famous National Lampoon movie.

This year, there were only eight entries, but each was a spectacle worth waiting for.

One boat resembled a giant Christmas tree, with strings of lights curving gracefully up to a beacon star atop the mast. Another pulled an incandescent red Santa on water skies, tethered by yet more strings of lights to a brilliantly lit motor boat.

A boat tricked out like a helicopter prowled the waters of the cove, as did another in shades of blue that seemed very like a whale. Another might have passed for the gingerbread house in Hansel and Gretel, had the holiday decking been gumdrops rather than winking, jewel-like lights.

How long has this odd tradition been going on each summer in Barton Cove? It's difficult to tell. The town of Montague's bicentennial "historical review and complete celebration program" of the events of June 6th - 13th, 1954 contain the following reference

to an illuminated boat parade on the river, sponsored by the Franklin County Boat Club. But whether this was already an annual tradition, or whether it was more lately revived and moved to the end of July to spare young eaglets in the nearby nest from having conniption fits under the "bombs bursting in air," others perhaps can say.

"A waterborne band concert by the Turners Falls Military Band, preceded by an illuminated boat display called 'the dance of the fireflies' by the Franklin County Boat Club, will take place Thursday evening at the boat club docks on the Connecticut River... Club members' craft will be illuminated with gaily colored Japanese lanterns and other lights, and the river bank will be appropriately decorated. The maneuverings of the lighted craft on the river promise to provide an intriguing pattern of interwoven lights."

That, they still do. As we watched, a boatload of spectators motored by on the far side of Barton Cove, calling gaily "Merry Christmas!" in thick Russian accents. As their craft came close, we could see only two or three broad shouldered men aboard with at least six or seven scantily clad young ladies climbing on their shoulders and pulling and tugging at their Santa hats. Soon, they tumbled one by one into the shallow waters of the Cove, still burbling and cooing merrily in their foreign tongue.

Turners is an unusual place, any time of year, and Riverside a close neighbor. Bridge or no bridge, events like Christmas in July bring us all together. Thanks to all hands on deck (or in the Cove) for keeping tradition alive.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Entering Montague

This letter is not to criticize or point fingers, but as a suggestion for the betterment of Turners Falls to become a Pioneer Valley visitor attraction.

Many visitors will be entering our town from Greenfield via the White Bridge due to the construction on the Gill-Montague Bridge.

There is no sign to designate the town or welcome visitors.

The White Bridge really needs to be cleaned of sand and trash.

We all want Turners Falls to succeed as a tourist attraction, so I am sure you all agree that every effort should be made to be a "welcoming" town.

- Peg Bridges
Montague Center

Millers Detour Creates Speeding Problems

The new detour through Millers Falls due to the work on the Gill-Montague Bridge has created speed problems along with the increase in traffic.

Last week two signs on my property, a house number sign, and an iron mailbox post were destroyed by an out of control vehicle.

The speeding in Millers Falls is taking place on East Main Street, Bridge Street and Millers

Falls Road. I realize the police cannot be in these areas at all times, but I would like to recommend a possible solution.

At one time I spoke with our police chief, Ray Zukowski, about the purchase of an electronic speed control sign that displays how fast a driver is going. We both agreed they would be too expensive for the town to purchase at this time. How about approaching the con-

tractor that is the recipient of the \$40 million bridge contract and inquiring as to whether or not they can put up the purchase price of the sign for the benefit of the town's safety? I believe the cost runs anywhere from \$5000 to \$15,000, depending on the model purchased.

Just a thought.

- Art Gilmore
Millers Falls

from BRIDGE page 1

toward the center of the span, and a section of bridge deck on the Gill side will be ready for dismantling, without disrupting the necessary negative air requirement of the shot blasting operation.

"On the actual bridge [as opposed to the approach] we'll saw cut the concrete in big

slabs," Mulvey said. "We'll only break enough concrete to expose the rebars, so we can cut them. Mimosa crewmen will install a second work platform ten feet below the deck with demolition blankets spread on top to catch any concrete pieces that may fall through."

The demo blankets are made of heavy canvas designed to gather up the concrete into a bundle to be hoisted out by crane and emptied into a dump truck for the trip to Mitchell's pit, along with the slabs of concrete deck for stockpiling. Later, SPS will move a breaker equipped excavator to the pit to break up the slabs and separate the rebars, Mulvey said. Mitchell's crusher will reduce the rubble into gravel sized pieces. The rebars are destined for recycling at WTE scrap yard in Greenfield.

"I can't give a firm date," Mulvey said, "but we'll be moving the air compressor and shot recycler up onto the bridge sometime soon."

Air hoses for the shot blasting have a limited length, and they are reaching their outer limit from the Riverside end.

"The sound of the air compressor and recycler should not be as noticeable," to Riverside neighbors from the bridge deck, Mulvey said.

The operative word is "should." But, even if the sound is not minimized, shot blasting is necessary to reveal flaws in the steel on a bridge long overdue for repair. (Painters did not even need to shotblast the beam pictured on page 1 to notice serious flaws.)

An observation expressed by many: "People have been squawking about the bridge

needing repair for years. Now, they're squawking about the noise."

To their credit, Mimosa has enclosed the compressor and draped it with sound absorbing blankets in an effort to muffle the noise of the big bore diesel engine and compressor.

To speed the work along, Mimosa will continue working 12 hour days, seven days a week.

Meanwhile, SPS has begun working a night crew under lights, and the bridge was closed this week in both directions from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. to accommodate the movement of the Mantis crane.

SPS started a night shift at midnight on August 2nd. Workers were cutting out rusted beams over the bike path at 2:45 a.m. on Tuesday morning. Graveyard shift gets a differential in their pay, so it might be a good time to apply for a job.

The preying Mantis removed beams bound for WTE as scrap. New beams won't be welded but bolted into place with high tensile strength bolts.

Superintendent Mulvey said adding the night crew will speed the job along and shorten the time people are inconvenienced by closing one lane of the bridge.

Pile Driving by Moonlight

Piles are keeping SPS workers up at night.

No, they don't need soothing lotion where the sun don't shine. "We're driving sheet piles to hold the gravel in place under the section of road that's still in use," Scott Vallis of SPS said. "We'll brace the piling back and remove the gravel so we can work on the abutment."

Like the other night owl workers, Vallis wore a miner's light on his hard hat. Ever the gentleman, Vallis shut off the light when talking to me.

The 70-ton Mantis picked up

see BRIDGE page 5

BUBBA and CARMINE sages of Barton Cove

On a more domestic note ... "The New Digs"



DENIS BORDEAUX CARTOON

Turners Falls - Gill Bridge Song

By Rene Stone
Gill -
My name is Rene, Rene
I've walked my dog across the bridge you see,
But now it's only one way
In, for at least four years, O Gee!
And now you have to go up and around by Esleek Paper Mill,
And around about to get back to my home in Gill
But as my granddaughters,
Chloe and Mia, said to me
While driving home, "Gramma, it doesn't seem that long to me!"
"Oh, I guess. You're right. I'll stop my whining. Let's go to the Wagon Wheel;
Play some Pac Man, order food, sit down to a really good meal."
We say our prayers for the workers repairing the Turners Falls - Gill Bridge,
For they are a talented and nice Crew
We are very proud of you!

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 7/23/10



Note to Our Readers
The Montague Reporter is on its summer schedule, printing every other week. There will be no paper on August 12th or 26th. We return to weekly publication on September 2nd.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Bullying and Anaphylactic Shock

BY CARL LADD

GILL-MONTAGUE - As part of ensuring a school district that is socially safe for all our students, we are working to create a plan that will address the issue of bullying in our schools. While the incidents of reported bullying are low, we all know that bullying occurs. We need to work together - parents, students, schools, and communities - to combat it.

The Gill Montague Regional School District has adopted an anti-bullying policy that specifically targets cyber bullying (bullying acts that occur over the internet, on cell phones, etc.).

In addition to this policy, state law now requires each school district to put a plan in place to deal with bullying behaviors in the schools.

As part of this effort, and understanding we need to have broad parental and community support if we are going to be effective, we are creating an Anti-Bullying Task Force made up of parents, students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a plan. If you would be interested in serving on such a task force or would like more information, please call my office at 863-9324 or email cladd@gmrtd.org.

We are also concerned about the overall health of our students. One of the most controversial and difficult issues facing schools today concerns allergens such as peanuts and tree nuts and student reactions to them. We all probably know

children who have mild reactions to peanuts or other kinds of nuts that cause them to break out in a rash. However, we have children in our district who have extreme reactions to peanuts or other kinds of nuts that are actually life threatening. These are not over-reactive parents and hypochondriac children, but children with diagnosed allergies that cause anaphylaxis - a severe condition that constricts breathing and can be fatal. No matter how we may feel about our own children's rights to eat what they would like, I cannot imagine we would want to willingly place any child in danger of a fatal anaphylactic episode.

As part of the school district's overall effort to ensure the health and safety of all the children in the district, the school committee has formed a wellness committee charged with ensuring that the district complies with state and federal nutrition and physical fitness guidelines. The wellness committee has met to discuss the issue of peanuts and other tree nuts in our schools to determine what the final recommendation should be to the school committee in response to the health and safety concerns raised by the children in our district who have these severe reactions.

The wellness committee is proposing a Nut Safe schools environment for all the schools in the district. The committee is not proposing a Nut Free environment - that is both impossible and impractical. A Nut Safe schools protocol would include

strict guidelines on the use of peanuts and other tree nuts in all district schools to include what is offered and served in the cafeteria for breakfast, lunch, and snacks as well as what might potentially be brought into the schools for snacks and lunches.

We currently have a similar protocol in Sheffield and are considering expanding this, with some modifications, to include all the schools in the district.

We would like to provide an opportunity for parents and caregivers to hear more about this proposal, the reasons behind it, and possible food alternatives for the students at a Parent Forum to be held on Tuesday, August 10th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School Theater. We also welcome your feedback and suggestions at that time. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish further information prior to the meeting.

Carl Ladd is superintendent of the Gill-Montague schools.

PARENT FORUM
GILL-MONTAGUE
REGIONAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT
TO DISCUSS THE DISTRICT'S
PROPOSED
"NUT SAFE" FOOD POLICY
TUESDAY, AUGUST 10TH
6 P.M.
TURNERS FALLS HIGH
SCHOOL THEATER



The night shift cuts beams on the Turners bridge approach over the bike path.

BRIDGE from pg 4

sheet piles from a stack on a trailer pulled by a Mack tractor. The crane operator raised a 20 or 30 foot long pile to slide it into a groove in the existing pile just driven. The sheet pilings in place would have a zigzag pattern from a bird's eye view. Each sheet pile is about two feet wide.

On Tuesday night, SPS used a HPS 150 hydraulic vibratory hammer to try to drive the pilings. Trying was insufficient. The HPS 150 got a ride back to Taunton on Wednesday, and SPS is bringing his big brother HPS 260 to do the job.

The 150's operating hydraulic pressure is 2,500 pounds per square inch. Big brother 260 operates at about twice that pressure and is predicted to drive those babies down.

The purpose of driving sheet piling is to keep the approach roadway from collapsing into

the hole SPS needs to dig to expose the other side of the bridge abutment SPS repaired on the landward side of the bike path. A diesel driven hydraulic power unit supplies high pressure hydraulic oil to swing off centered weights back and forth inside a gear box, creating a strong vibrating force to drive the sheet piles into the ground with a chattering, staccato hammering.

While the rest of the people in Turners Falls were snug in their beds, these SPS workmen were hard at work through the night, so as to inconvenience people on both sides of the river as little as possible with this long overdue bridge work.

Sound like your kind of job? "We are a family owned business and have a good crew," Mulvey said, "but we're an equal opportunity employer, union or non-union, and anyone is welcome to apply for employment at our home office."



BIODIESEL from page 1

England, and Northeast Biodiesel plans to sell to conventional home heating companies to mix with regular diesel fuel, to reduce the ecologic impact of oil heat.

Martin said he hoped to see Greenfield's municipal fleet "such as it is" run on hometown biodiesel.

Lagier predicted the plant would create 30 - 40 jobs over time, and would pay \$45,000 in property taxes at the outset.

The Franklin Community Coop, which owns Green Fields Market in Greenfield and

McCuskers Market in Shelburne Falls, was an early investor in the biodiesel project, said coop co-manager John Eicholz. The food coop's board of directors invested \$25,000 in the grease to fuel project because the plant will be locally owned and majority controlled by Coop Power, a consumer energy coop. One of the international cooperative principals is for "co-ops to support other co-ops," Eicholz said.

Senator Stan Rosenberg called the groundbreaking ceremony, "a celebration of community cooperation, people working together,

the idea that we can have a Greener planet, and the idea that a small group of people can make a difference.

"Franklin County is the only county in Massachusetts that had an energy office 30 years ago," Rosenberg recalled. "Your county looked forward and saw we needed Green energy, and a respect for the land. Franklin County was one of the precursors in pushing the Commonwealth toward a respect for Mother Earth. You've built a vision based on a set of values, and put them into practice, and for that you all

ought to be congratulated."

After Breger mentioned that the Commonwealth had not been among the financial backers of the Northeast Biodiesel plant, Green Party gubernatorial hopeful Jill Stein called from the back of the crowd, "This should be the first thing the state throws its money behind."

Still, a certain amount of hard-earned satisfaction in raising the money locally was evident in Benander's closing remarks. "We'd like to be stewards of this plant for generations," she said, meaning the members of Coop

Power, (open to anyone with \$975 to invest; for more information on Coop Power, go to coop-power.coop). "We want to be a small commercial plant that pays workers well while doing something good for the environment."

Considering the 5 million barrels of crude oil that just fouled the ecologically sensitive waters of the Gulf of Mexico, the 5 million gallons of recycled grease fuel that will be produced in the Greenfield biodiesel plant in the first two years of operation is looking like a better investment every day.



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NOTES FROM WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Who's Minding the Money Managers in Town Hall?

BY KATIE NOLAN - At its July 21st meeting, the Wendell selectboard received reports from the money managers study committee and the energy committee, signed deeds correcting errors in a 1988 land transfer, and considered a census map that seems to show a Wendell Road, New Salem residence as located in Wendell.

Committee chair Dale Kowacki presented the money managers study committee report, which reviewed the performance of the town accountant, treasurer, town clerk, and tax collector and listed issues and recommendations for each office. Kowacki told the selectboard the committee found there was "no central focus" for overseeing these officials and departments. The study committee recommends establishing a supervision and support system for the town's money managers.

The committee considered several options for this role, including a finance director, the town coordinator in an expanded role, a personnel board, the selectboard, a money managers oversight committee, the finance committee, or the four town money managers as a group.

The study committee's top preferences for money manager oversight were a finance director or the town coordinator in an expanded role. Kowacki said the finance committee is "more an advisory committee," than a management committee, and therefore not suited to this role.

The study committee also researched the question of whether the four money manager positions should be converted from elected to appointed positions. Committee member Jen Gross organized a survey of 30 other towns to see how other towns select money managers. She found this to be a divisive issue in many towns. According to the study committee report, converting elected positions to appointed positions is not a "silver bullet" solution: there are many different ways to hold money managers accountable.

The selectboard members expressed appreciation for the study committee's work, with chair Christine Heard commenting, "It's an amazing and impressive report." Geoff Pooser called the report "staggeringly comprehensive." Dan Keller told the committee members, "Thank you. We will take up the challenge and get this thing rolling."

The energy committee, a new committee established at the June 15th town meeting, came to the selectboard to report on its activities to date and ask for guidance on the selectboard's expectations. Speaking for the committee, Laurie DiDonato told the selectboard the committee had sent a

letter to National Grid requesting town electricity use data, to be used for evaluating how to reduce the amount of energy used in town. She asked the selectboard what its priorities were. Heard told her, "Choose projects that interest the committee and are doable." Keller said, "Push ahead on your priorities and get back to us."

Attorney Sam Lovejoy, representing the Commonwealth, brought paperwork for the selectboard to sign to correct errors and confusion in the ownership of land on Lockes Village Road. In 1988, the town purchased the Wolfe property, which had been in the Chapter 61 forested lands conservation program. The land was bought from the town by the state Department of Fish and Game. A recent land survey done for Fish and Game found many errors in the 1988 survey conducted for the town. Because of inaccuracies in the survey and because no title search was conducted in 1988, it appeared one section of land could be claimed by one or more of the following: abutters Robert and Dierdre Cabral, abutter Deborah Nuttleman, the Department of Fish and Game, or the town.

Review of the property documents also found that at the time the land was placed under Chapter 61 conservation, Wendell's assessor drew a sketch map that excluded the pond on the property from Chapter 61 designation. Therefore, it appeared that Fish and Game owned the property and the dam on the pond, but not the pond. Neither Fish and Game nor the town wants to own the dam, because ownership would require inspection and maintenance. Fish and Game wants to own the pond because it is an important watershed resource. The Cabrals want to own the dam, and believed they did own it.

The selectboard signed a corrective deed, based on the current accurate land survey, signed a quit-claim deed recognizing that the Cabrals own the dam, and signed a relief deed, stating that the town does not claim the section of land with potential multiple ownership.

In another land question, the selectboard considered information from the New Salem selectboard about John Ryan's property on Wendell Road, New Salem, near Wendell's eastern border. The US 2010 Census sent all of the towns in the state maps showing town borders and asked the towns to review them. The New Salem selectboard's review found the census map shows the Wendell-New Salem town line as a straight line passing through Ryan's house, potentially making resi-

see WENDELL pg 10

NOTES FROM MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Route 63 Roadhouse to Reopen with New Owners



Jamie Snyder and Carol Cameron (rear) with new Rte. 63 Roadhouse owners Jessica Gershman and Robert Brownlee

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MILLERS FALLS - The Route 63 Roadhouse in Millers Falls has found new owners, and it will be reopening with a great double bill on the weekend of August 13th and 14th, when Tum It Loose and Evenspeak will be taking the stage.

Jessica Gershman and her partner Robert Brownlee will be taking over the management and ownership of the popular roadhouse; they are waiting for the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission in Boston to approve the all alcohol liquor license transfer from former owners Carol Cameron and Jamie Snyder.

The selectboard approved the license transfer on Monday night, August 2nd.

"We will be training [Gershman] in all aspects of running the business," Cameron told the board on Monday.

Gershman has lived in either Millers or Turners for the last ten years, and said she met her boyfriend, Brownlee, at the Roadhouse last year. When she heard the Roadhouse might be closing, she said, "The first thing that popped into my head was, 'Oh, I'm going to buy it.'"

Gershman said she has a business background as an officer manager and book-

keeper, while Brownlee will help with the maintenance end of the establishment. Gershman has enrolled in the Boston bartenders course.

But business minded or no, she stressed the sentimental aspect of the Roadhouse when talking about her reasons for buying the bar.

"It's like a family. It's kind of like Cheers. Everyone knows your name. It's a great bunch of people. A great place to hang out and relax."

She said, "Definitely we'll keep the bands,

bring in some new ones. We have card night on Tuesday, and pool leagues several nights a week. Belle (one of the bartenders) will be staying on. Customers will notice very few changes."

Gershman said she did plan to advertise the upstairs banquet hall as a great gathering place for parties, and would push that end of the business more.

The selectboard wished her good business, and also welcomed another business owner to town, as Jay and Pam Kostanski received their approval to transfer the package store license from JayK's Liquors on Avenue A to Melissa Winters, owner of the Wine Rack in Greenfield.

Pam Kostanski assured the selectboard she planned to stay involved in tending the plantings around the liquor store, which have always drawn praise from passersby, and she also plans to continue working with the Montague Business Association.

Kostanski has been involved in the planning for the upcoming Block Party on Avenue A on August 14th, and in that capacity she told the selectboard the number of vendors had about doubled this year, from 22 to 42. Therefore, to accom-

see MONTAGUE pg 12

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

Postmaster Refers Vandalism of Mailboxes To Inspector

Friday, 7/9

10:38 p.m. Domestic problems at a Wendell Depot Road residence. Peace restored.

Saturday, 7/10

4:34 a.m. Report of a domestic dispute at a campsite on Rockwell Hill Road. Resolved on arrival.

2:13 p.m. Party reported his vehicle was hit in the Deja Brew

parking lot on 7/7 by an unknown person.

Sunday, 7/11

10:15 a.m. Unwanted persons at a Locke Hill Road residence. They were told to leave and did so.

Wednesday, 7/14

10:06 a.m. Uptown postmaster reported two rural route mailboxes vandalized overnight with

fireworks. Referred to Postal Inspections.

Thursday, 7/22

9:47 p.m. Intoxicated person claiming to be injured was removed from Ruggles Pond State property and transported to Baystage Franklin Medical Center via Orange ambulance.

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NOTES FROM LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Leverett Seeks to Bill for Rescue of Woman Trapped in Cave

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The town of Leverett will seek to charge people for their rescues, following a twelve hour effort to free a woman trapped in a cave in the Rattlesnake Gutter Conservation Area on July 19th.

Leverett volunteer firefighter Stewart Olson said 45 fire and rescue personnel from Leverett, Amherst, and surrounding towns, including a technical rescue team from Hopkinton, worked to eventually free Maya Hirsch, 25, who was visiting family in Leverett from her home in the Northwest when she went with them to explore a cave in the deep glacial ravine in the conservation area.

While spelunking, Hirsch slipped down a narrow passage to a lower chamber Olson said firefighters had not even known existed. But she was unable to free herself, due to a number of "pinch points" in the vertical passage, Olsen said, so family members called for help.

Rescue teams were able to lower food, a blanket, special

stone chisels, ear, eye and mouth protection to Hirsch, who worked to free herself by chipping away at the granite in the narrow points to allow her to squeeze through. Hirsch remained in good spirits and emerged from the cave shortly after 1 a.m. on July 20th.

Olson said the Leverett fire department spent \$277 at the Village Market food coop to feed the rescuers (the coop opened late that night to supply food for the crews), along with \$208 for rope, and \$95 - \$126 apiece for the two stone chisels, purchased at a late hour from Michael Mazur's Earthworks and from Patrice Luzi, a stonemason on Dudleyville Road. These costs are in addition to personnel costs associated with the twelve hour rescue effort, Olson said.

Rescue workers were hampered by rolling thunderstorms and a lack of cell phone coverage during the event.

The Leverett selectboard, meeting on July 27th, said they would consult with town attor-

ney Donna MacNicol to see what the relevant case law in Massachusetts might be, and whether the town is within its rights to bill Hirsch, and other people in need of rescuing in the future.

In other news, the board signed a \$4,900 contract with consultant Karen Sunnarborg to draft an affordable housing plan for the town, for the selectboard to review and implement. The board intends to use Community Preservation Act funds mandated to be set aside for affordable housing (10% of CPA funds, currently about \$70,000) to assist with mortgage buy-downs, accessibility retrofits of seniors' homes, and other such programs to make at least some homes in Leverett more affordable.

Sunnarborg warned the board, "It will take at least \$50,000 [per home] to make a mortgage buy-down program work in your market." She said zoning changes could be a powerful tool for Leverett to use to encourage the creation of affordable homes,

but selectboard chair Rich Brazeau predicted the planning board and zoning board would be averse to any such modifications to the town's bylaws.

"They wouldn't even discuss zoning changes to get Green Communities money," available to towns in the Commonwealth that allow by right siting of research or manufacturing facilities for green technology, Brazeau said.

Board member Julie Shively will attend an upcoming training night at the fire department to encourage the department to consider a recruitment program for younger members, to join the aging department.

The board agreed to pay D'Ann Kelyt \$17.50 an hour in her role as acting town clerk. Town clerk Lisa Stratford has been on extended medical leave all summer.

Returning to the topic of a dispute over the lack of notification of the sale of commercial gravel rights on land owned by Roberta Bryant on Long Plain Road, and

held under chapter 61-B (which prohibits commercial activity on the land in return for a 75% tax break), the board said once Bryant clears up the problem of lack of prior notification and pays back taxes on the five acres in question, she will still need to seek a special permit from the zoning board for a gravel operation to continue there.

The board said case law in Massachusetts allows for a grandfathered use (in this case a gravel pit) to apply only to the actual footprint of the land where the use in question had previously occurred. The board said aerial surveillance photos will show the previous extent of the gravel pit bordering Bryant's land, but that grandfathered use would not apply to Bryant's adjoining meadow.

The board is considering applying for U.S. Department of Agriculture funding to finance an extension of the Amherst town water line from Cushman north to Teewaddle Hill Road, to bring potable water to several homes that are affected by a plume of runoff from the town's former landfill. Brazeau estimated the construction could cost about \$1 million.

NOTES FROM GILL SELECTBOARD

Police Coverage at Issue in Gill

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Police coverage was on the minds of the Gill selectboard in more ways than one this week.

The board is concerned about whether the state police will be available to cover calls that come in when there is no Gill police officer on duty. And they are also concerned about more basic police coverage - namely the roof of the town's police station, which is leaking, and is now too old to be patched further.

"We had quite a flood last year," said board member Ann Banash. "Fortunately, it didn't reach the computers."

The board is considering scheduling a debt exclusion override vote to coincide with the state primary election on September 14th, to seek voter approval of borrowing between \$35,000 and \$125,000 to remove and replace the portion of the safety complex roof that is leaking. The flat part.

Town administrative assistant

Ray Purington will seek additional bids from roofing contractors. He said the wide price range from the companies he has already taken estimates from resulted from companies bidding variously to simply replace the flat roof with a new membrane roof, or bidding to reframe the roof to add pitched rafters before reroofing.

Meanwhile, on July 23rd, Gary McLaughlin, director of dispatch services for the Commonwealth wrote a memo to Shelburne Falls dispatch that read in part, "the current contingency plan involving the towns of Gill, Erving, Bernardston, and Northfield covering one another when available will remain in place until further notice in the interest of officer and public safety. State police resources are also available as always to augment resources when necessary."

This memo appeared to be in response to a prior memo from Gill police chief David Hastings, on July 14th, to Garrity, inform-

ing him, "Due to budgetary constraints and staffing issues, the Gill police department will be relying on emergency coverage from the Massachusetts state police to cover the town of Gill, when no Gill officer is available."

As the selectboard noted on August 2nd, the mutual aid agreements between the towns of Gill, Northfield, Erving and Bernardston are carefully written to allow for an officer in one town to call for mutual aid from an officer from a neighboring town (to call for back-up, essentially), but these mutual aid agreements do not call for officers to cover calls from a neighboring town when no officer is on duty there.

In a telephone interview on Tuesday, August 3rd, Hastings confirmed, "That is how those agreements are written."

But Garrity's boss, Major Mike Saltzman, deputy division commander of the Bureau of Administrative Services, the agency that administers the state police (and local towns') dispatch centers, such as the centers in

Northampton and Shelburne Falls, said on August 3rd, "We have been dispatching out of Shelburne Falls using a certain protocol. If there's a [local police] officer in the next town over, maybe a quarter of a mile away, he can provide a much more efficient response than a trooper 30 minutes away. That's the way it's been in the past."

Saltzman called this protocol, "a longstanding past practice," albeit an "informal" one.

But when asked who would be called on to cover Gill if a call came in when no Gill officer was on duty, Hastings said, "the state police."

This seemingly contradictory information caused the selectboard to scratch their heads a bit on Monday.

"I don't think anyone can presume another town will cover Gill when we don't have someone on." She cited liability as one concern, and which town would pay for such service. She added, "If we know state police aren't going to cover us, that's a whole 'nother issue."

The selectboard called for a

meeting with the four towns concerned to be set up, perhaps with state representative Chris Donelan in attendance, "sooner rather than later."

"Maybe some sort of regionalization agreement will come out of it," said board chair John Ward.

Saltzman said he had spoken with the police chiefs of Northfield, Erving, Bernardston and Gill before directing Garrity to send the memo of July 23rd, and said any change to dispatch protocol should follow from just

see Gill pg 11



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The Road Less Traveled

Picasso Likes What He Sees When He Looks at Degas!

RICHARD ANDERSEN & DIANE LYN MONTAGUE - "Picasso Looks at Degas," an exhibit of more than 100 works currently on display at the Clark Institute in Williamstown, took five years to organize, develop, install, and present. It is worth every minute.

When Pablo Picasso first saw Edgar Degas' work, sometime around 1900, he was all raw talent and burning potential. Degas, on the other hand, had already established his reputation as one of the great Impressionists. As he was wont to do with artists whose work

he admired, Picasso felt compelled to outdo Degas. What Picasso didn't realize at the time was that his competitor would eventually become an alter-ego.

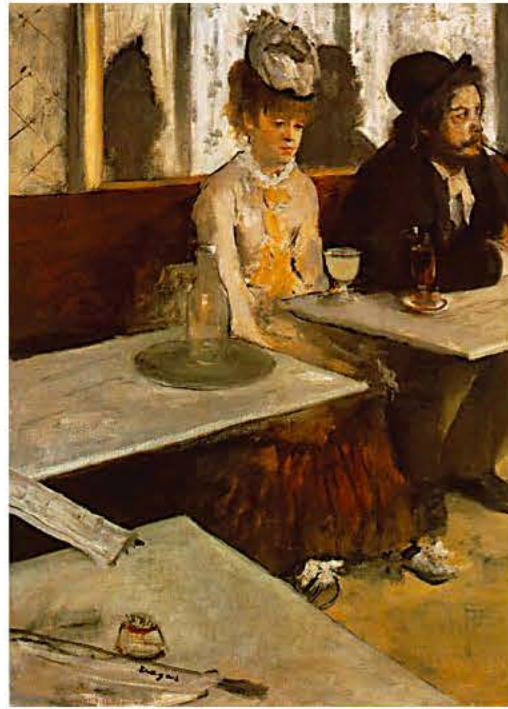
The exhibition is arranged in chronological order and seen through Picasso's eyes. We look at a drawing, painting, or sculpture by Degas and next to it the drawing, painting, or sculpture done in response by Picasso. What a key to understanding and appreciating the works of both artists!

And what works of art they are: Degas' *Woman Ironing*

(1876) and Picasso's *Woman Ironing* (1904); Degas' once scandalous, now iconic *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (1880) and Picasso's breakthrough into Cubism, *Standing Nude* (1907); Degas' soft red and pink *Nude Wringing Her Hair* (1892) and Picasso's hard blue and gray *Nude Wringing her Hair* (1952).

What's amazing, because it takes place before our very eyes, is the way Picasso's responses to Degas move through the years from competition to parody to homage. You can only imagine how many works are devoted to the study of ballet dancers. Picasso even married one: Olga Khokholova from the Ballet Russes.

By the end of his life, Picasso not only has a picture of



L'absinthe 1876 Oil on canvas, 92 x 68 cm by Degas Musee d'Orsay, Paris

years before his death, Picasso honors Degas with a serious portrait. How many times must he have wondered what he could have added to this painting had he known Degas as a person rather than through his art! Though they lived in the same Paris neighborhood for more than seventeen years, they never met.

Not to be missed no matter how far you have to drive: Degas' *In a Café (L'Absinthe)* from 1876. It's come all the way from the

Musee d'Orsay in Paris and will only be with us until September 12th.

Detour to Bernardston Ongoing through August

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GREENFIELD - The reason for the 12 mile detour north to Bernardston to access the southbound lane on I-91 is that the overpass that carries Route 2 west over Country Club Road is crumbling. The expansion joints were strategically located over concrete beams supporting steel

girders holding up the bridge, making it convenient for road chemicals to drain onto them.

Warner Brothers' workers are chipping out concrete deteriorated by road chemicals draining down from the expansion joint. Warner Brothers is also repairing deteriorating columns holding up the deteriorated concrete beams.

The bridge was supported quite some time ago with cribbed up timbers, to add stability.

The reconstruction still has a lot of work on the agenda before the on-ramp can be reopened. The massive bridge, with eight four foot high I beam stringers, needs to be jacked up a quarter inch so that new concrete can be poured on the pier cap supporting the I beams, according to Warner Brothers superintendent Michael Eugin.

The concrete, deteriorated by road chemicals, needs to be jackhammered out. In order to jack up the tremendous weight of the bridge, Warner Brothers' crew must first drive steel piles to support four jacking pads for hydraulic jacks. The crew also need to put all new timber cribbing into place to hold the bridge up while reconditioning the concrete pier cap.

Up on top, the overpass deck was also crumbling. A new concrete deck is nearly completed, and new blacktop is in place on the roadway. Warner Brothers took a couple of inches of old asphalt paving off with a cold planer before resurfacing. The bridge deck has new 4,000 PSI high performance concrete in



Repair Work in progress over Country Club Road in Greenfield

place, but the crew still needs to jackhammer out diaphragms that tie the steel I beam stringers together at the expansion joint, Eugin said. The diaphragms are encased in concrete. Once the new diaphragms and expansion joint are installed and encased in concrete, the crew will have to remove the cribbing and replace concrete paving blocks protecting the slopes on either side of Country Club Road.

"It all takes time," superintendent Eugin said. "I don't want to give a definite date of completion, because there's so much to

do, plus cleanup."

A carpenter, who did not give his name, was not bashful about estimating a completion date. "You're looking at about another month, maybe more."

The only down side to reopening the ramp will be the cessation of state cash flow from tickets given out by state police lurking in the vicinity of tempting short cuts across the median strip to the south bound lane to circumvent the 12 mile round trip to Bernardston and back.

All good things come to an end.

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Local Nature Notes *August: Things to See, Hear, and Do*

BY JEN AUDLEY

TURNERS FALLS - In August, the moon wanes until August 9th, then waxes to full on August 24th.

Look for monarchs, which feed on flower nectar in their butterfly form, and munch on milkweed plants in their caterpillar form. If you are lucky and look very carefully, you might also see a monarch in one of its other forms on a milkweed plant: a green chrysalis with golden dots, or a teeny-tiny egg. Amazingly, many of the monarch butterflies we see here in the fall are en route to the west coast of Mexico! The journey may take several generations: the butterfly that emerges from a chrysalis in New England flies south, stopping to lay eggs on milkweed plants along the way. It may not make it the whole way, but the caterpillars that hatch from the eggs grow and pupate and then, as butterflies, fly further south, laying eggs along the way... and so on.

Queen Anne's lace, goldenrod, blue cornflowers, asters, and other wildflowers will be blooming along roadsides and fields. Ragweed is blooming now, too, triggering fall allergies for many people.

Goldfinches, nesting now, should be busy feeding babies soon. In a few weeks, look for the youngsters learning to fly. American goldfinches breed later than most of our resident birds. Unlike most songbirds, they eat

only seeds (no insects, no worms), and they breed at a time of year when seeds are abundant. Female goldfinches also use the downy fluff from thistles and milkweed to line their nests!

Jupiter, superbright and dominating the midnight sky at mid-month. The other planets you might see in August are Venus, Mars, and Saturn, all appearing low in the southwest sky around nightfall. You can tell planets from stars because planets usually don't seem to twinkle. That's because the planets in our solar system are much closer to us than any of the stars are (except the Sun!). The light we see reflected off the surface of planets gets to us more directly, passing through less 'space dust' along the way.

The Perseid meteor shower, which reaches its peak on the night of August 11-12. The sky will be dark because of the new moon, which should make it easier to see. Go out, let your eyes adjust to the dark, and look for shooting stars (as many as 60/hour!) in the northeastern sky.

Sunset, right now at about 8:00 p.m., and sunrise at about 5:40 a.m. Daylight hours are decreasing now by more than two

minutes each day!

Learn more:

Morning Nature Walks
Fridays and Sundays, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m.



In September, monarch butterflies sometimes congregate before taking off to spend winter on the west coast of Mexico.

Start your day off observing nature in Turners Falls! Learn about plants, animals, and mill town history while walking the Turners Falls bikepath. Meet your interpreter outside the main entrance to the Great Falls Discovery Center. For more information, call 413-863-3221 or visit www.greatfallsma.org.
Barton Cove Canoe Trip
Saturday, August 21, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 pm

Explore Barton Cove and the Connecticut River by canoe! Look for bald eagles soaring overhead and dragonflies skimming the water. Meander and relax while observing the diverse plant and animal species present on the river. There is limited space, so registration is required. Call the Great Falls Discovery Center at 413-863-3221.

The 28th Annual Connecticut River Valley Astronomer's Conjunction
August 21-22

Enjoy the camaraderie of amateur astronomers learning and observing together at Northfield Mountain. The weekend will be jam-packed full of slide presentations, talks, and night sky viewing through telescopes of all shapes and sizes. This year many presentations will have a moon-related theme. Ages 12 and up. For more info: check out the conjunction website at: www.philharrington.net/astroconjunction/. Registration deadline is August 14th.

Watershed Trees and Poets
Sunday, August 22, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 pm

Find out what Robert Frost

wrote about birches, what Emily Dickinson thought of apple trees, and how Wallace Stevens knows "a tree that bears / A semblance to the thing I have in mind." Come learn about the trees of the Connecticut River Watershed and the poets living here who have loved them. Consider ways to honor your own favorite tree friends through words and through conservation. At the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Jurassic Roadshow
Saturday, August 28, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 pm

Calling all fossil fanatics, rock hounds, and dinosaur diggers! Bring in your fossils and rocks - any kind, from anywhere and any era - for identification and admiration! Paleontologist Patrick Getty from the University of Connecticut will be on hand to examine your fossils and tell you something about how they were made and preserved. Geologist Steve Winters will help you to understand rock specimens you're curious about: what minerals they contain and what geological forces created them. Plus, local collector Ed Gregory will be exhibiting special items from his personal collection of dinosaur footprints and other local fossils, and the Discovery Center's own collection will be on display at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Diet of Worms



A Handful of Red Worms work the compost bin

BY JOSH

HEINEMANN

WENDELL - A

dozen people came to the Wendell Free Library on Tuesday evening, August 3rd, to learn about composting with worms.

Having red worms make compost, as Mary McBride said, is like having many mouths to feed. They take serious care, and if you want to go away for more than three days you have to

ask someone to come in and take care of your worms, keep them moist, and feed them.

Earthworms and red worms are not native to North America; both are imported. Earthworms eat soil and move material. Red worms eat leaves and vegetable matter and create compost.

To grow red worms, rip newspapers into strips, soak the strips in water and spread them loosely in the bottom of a plastic tub that has holes drilled in the sides and bottom. Sprinkle a small handful of sand over that and a similar amount of cornmeal and crushed eggshells, all of which the worms use to help grind the food, because they do not have teeth.

Put a few handfuls of worms

in the bin. Eat some watermelon, and cut the rind into one inch pieces, and tell the worms you saved the best part for them. Only give them a little watermelon rind to start off with, and do not overfeed them. Cover the food and worms with another layer of soaked and squeezed dry newspaper.

Feed the worms a handful of vegetable scraps with a pinch of cornmeal every two or three days in a different part of the bin on a rotating basis, and keep the top layer of newspaper damp like a wet sponge.

Tomatoes and onions and orange peels are too acid, pineapple has an enzyme that digests the worms, so avoid using pineapple scraps, and ani-

mal products are also not good for the worms.

Red worms thrive in temperatures between 55 to 77 degrees F; frost kills them.

One participant in the workshop said he kept worms over winter in a large outside bin. Perhaps they survived because the heat and insulation of the compost kept the temperature in the bin warm enough.

The worms will eat everything - including the newspaper that is their bedding - and in six months you can separate the worms by making fist size cones of compost, giving the worms time to hide at the bottom from the light, and removing the top to use as a good soil amendment.

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BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE -

With the town of Montague due to vote tonight for a second time on the Gill-Montague school budget, the school committee of the Gill-Montague Regional School District, meeting on July 27th, voted unanimously to reaffirm their previously approved operating budget of \$16,408,162.

Tonight, at a special town meeting with just one agenda item, town meeting members in Montague will act on the re-certified operating budget for the district schools. Gill has already

NOTES FROM GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Assessments Drop Slightly

approved the district's budget request.

In response to new information from the state, presented by the district's business manager, Lynn Bassett, the school committee agreed to adjust the assessment numbers presented to the towns. The latest budget shows a reduction of the overall town assessments by \$18,414.

The assessment on Montague would therefore drop from \$7,616,643 to \$7,601,608, a difference of \$15,035. The assessment for Gill would be reduced from \$1,410,359 to \$1,406,980, a difference of \$3,379.

Bassett said it was a good idea to be conservative in responding to the state numbers as they are always subject to change.

The Montague finance committee and selectboard have supported an "affordable assessment" they calculate the town can afford this year of \$7,230,327, leaving a \$371,000 gap between what the town boards consider affordable, and what the school committee maintains is the minimum amount it needs to operate the district schools.

Superintendent Carl Ladd informed the committee the state of Massachusetts, following the enactment of new legislation in

May, will establish an anti-bullying policy to apply to all school districts, but each district will be required to develop their own a plan to implement those policies.

Ladd said the district has already developed its own anti-bullying policy, including cyber-bullying, in anticipation of state legislation.

Russell Dupere, attorney for the school district, came to the meeting Tuesday night to explain recent changes in the state's open meeting law and answer any questions the members might have. He explained that some of the changes have to do with the fact that local district attorneys had been interpreting the laws differently in different districts, so now the state attorney general is the sole authority on open meeting law questions.

Dupere emphasized the importance of the rule prohibiting deliberation among members outside of public meetings. Emails between two members on a subject before the board has the potential to grow into serial emails, creating the equivalent of a discussion. All such emails are prohibited, Dupere said.

Committee members Jeff Singleton and Marje Levenson objected to the restrictions on

their ability to discuss matters outside of public meetings. Singleton said it violated the first amendment, his right to free speech.

Dupere explained the purpose of the restriction was to make sure all discussions on matters to be decided by a governing board are available to the public.

According to superintendent Ladd, the school nursing staff was stretched last year and used a significant number of substitute nurses, in part because one nurse was on leave for several months. Ladd said the needs of the students require more full time nursing staff. He suggested the committee use some of the money set aside in the budget for substitute nurses to pay for upgrading one half-time nurse presently on staff to a full time floater. This would allow continuity in the nursing staff serving the district, and would be cost neutral, Ladd said.

The committee voted unanimously to approve his request.

A motion presented by Michael Langknecht of Montague to form a subcommittee to study the issue of regionalization for the district was defeated 5-4. Asked if the committee could look into the matter without forming an official subcom-

mittee, attorney Dupere said it could be done informally. He said a study group, if formed, would not be like an official planning committee because it would just look into the matter and meet with other districts to explore possibilities for future action. Members of school committees throughout Franklin County have been meeting over the last year to discuss regionalization in a variety of venues.

Ladd said the committee needed to establish operational goals regarding how they could work together most effectively. Emily Monosson, chair noted, "Sometimes we don't speak nicely to each other." Jane Oakes of Gill said, "Seeing it step by step would promote better communication." Levenson said part of why there is disagreement on the committee is because they are dealing with very hard and contentious issues and making tough choices.

Members agreed to look at how they work together, interpersonal dialogue, and spending time to educate themselves. In a vote of 6 to 3 the committee agreed to set a separate meeting to spend two hours discussing setting goals for themselves. This meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 10th, at Turners Falls High School at 7 p m.



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WENDELL from pg 6
dents of the house Wendellites. Traditionally, both Wendell and New Salem have considered the border to follow the curve of Wendell Road and have considered residents of Ryan's house as New Salem residents. The New Salem selectboard will pursue the border question with the state and the Census Bureau and will keep the Wendell selectboard informed.

Pooser said he had attended the July 13th board of health meeting regarding Jonathan and Susan von Ranson's non-electric apartment application. He noted as new information that the 2008 Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act may allow regulators to consider effects on climate change in making decisions Heard said that she read in a newspaper account that the selectboard supports the von Ranson's project. (In the *Montague Reporter*, VIII #40, Board of Health Considers

Non-Electric Apartment Application: "The selectboard has written a letter in support, and hundreds of Wendell residents have signed a letter in favor of the von Ranson's simple living effort.") Heard said that the selectboard letter was carefully worded to be supportive in general of efforts to reduce climate change but was "neutral" about the specific von Ranson project. She added that the selectboard "didn't want to support the project and have that support used before another board."

The selectboard's letter, from September of 2009, read in part:

"We are concerned that the existing building code legally obliges home owners to increase their ecological footprint. Not only is this contrary to the principles that our community holds dear, but it also seems to be lacking in common sense, given the current global energy crisis, glob-

al warming and other issues of sustainability.


"While we understand and acknowledge the legal challenges involved in this situation, there is precedent in municipalities that include Amish communities. In those communities, they honor the spirit of the building code, but they allow exceptions when warranted. This approach seems to appropriately balance State concerns about community health and safety with respect for the individual's right to live a simpler lifestyle."

Rich Malewski of National Grid and Harry Williston of the highway commission attended the pole hearing for three new poles proposed for Mormon Hollow Road near Farley Road. Malewski said a transmission line had sagged into a distribution line in that area, and National Grid wants to relocate the distribution line to make it safer. Williston

asked that the poles be kept as far from the road as possible. The selectboard approved the installation of the poles.

The selectboard members signed a letter to representative Stephen Kulik about proposed wind turbine siting legislation. In the letter, the selectboard said it was not opposed to wind turbines or alternative energy, but did oppose the loss of local control in the legislation.

Siemens Building Technologies conducted a free energy audit for town buildings. Their report expressed concerns about the heater in the basement of the senior center and the heating units in the town garage.


The selectboard picked low bidder Orange Oil to supply the town with heating oil vendor for this fiscal year, and Dennis Hudson as painting contractor for the interior of town hall. 

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TRUCK from pg 1

with his life for his daring.

Louis Chevrolet and Henry Ford were friendly rivals. Chevrolet designed special high compression cylinder heads to soup up Model T engines. He also designed a smooth running six cylinder counterbalanced engine and the first midfloor gearshift for a luxury automobile named Chevrolet.

Meanwhile, Model T Fords had a four cylinder engine without counterbalancing, and a two speed planetary transmission, which is the basis of modern day automatic planetary transmissions. The mechanical Model T planetary transmission left much to be desired with only two speeds.

The first big Chevrolets sold for \$2,150, at a time when wage earners made \$600 a year. Chevrolet earned \$1.3 million on a sale of 16,000 cars. Clearly it was a rich man's toy.

Meanwhile, William Durant began producing six cylinder Durant cars in that high price range. Later, Durant bought Star, a cheaper four cylinder car to compete with the Model T. Star used an off-the-shelf multi-purpose Continental engine.

I once owned a portable welder powered by a Continental engine from a Star, and I still

have the radiator with the Star nameplate on the shell. The stock crash of 1929 brought down the Star automobile, as well as the Durant line.

After his auto venture collapsed, Durant worked for Buick and was able to cobble together several companies - Buick, Chevrolet, Oakland, Oldsmobile, Pontiac, and the body manufacturer Fisher - into the General Motors Company, or GMC.

GMC trucks used automobile engines and components from other cars in the GMC line-up. Some pickup trucks had Pontiac or Oldsmobile engines, or whatever overstock of engines were available, leading to the derogatory remark that GMC stood for General Mess of Crap, because you needed to look under the hood to learn what kind of engine was in the truck. The pickup trucks had the same Fisher bodies as Chevrolet with the same wood frame, prone to getting rickety and rotting.

Louis and Gaston Chevrolet went on to design and produce an efficient aircraft engine. They were joined by Glenn Martin but lost out to Martin in the stock crash of 1929. In 1934 Louis Chevrolet joined Chevrolet Motor Company as a consultant. He'd gained nothing but fame for having a car named in his honor, but at least he had a job. He died

of a stroke in 1938, and was elected to the Automotive Hall of Fame in 1969. Lots of fame but not much fortune.

My first car was a 1931 Chevrolet Cabriolet convertible. With the top down, the wind shield could be tilted forward, flat, like early Jeeps, giving a breezy ride which was very appealing to my immature brain. The engine was a six cylinder with a splash oil system. An oil pump supplied oil to troughs about an inch wide across the oil pan. Little scoops on the end of each cylinder rod scooped oil from the trough to haphazardly lubricate the poured Babbitt bearings and splash oil onto the piston and wrist pin, as opposed to Ford V-8 engines with a pressurized oil system and replaceable bearing inserts.

During the war, I ran it on kerosene and moth balls.

My Chevy topped out at about 50 miles per hour going full throttle downhill with a tail wind, accompanied by a terrible cacophony of bearings rapping and tappets tapping. My father's Ford V-8 would smoothly go 75 miles per hour in second gear, as I found out one night when I checked out the popular rumor.

Connecting rod bearings and wrist pins knocking accompanied by tappets tapping were common Chevy noises. The anemic oil pump didn't deliver enough oil to the rocker arms of the overhead valve system, resulting in a constant need to adjust tappets. My Chevy was no exception. Ford V-8 engines, which made their debut in 1932, had no adjustment after assembly at the factory by

machining the valve stems to the proper clearance. Ford V-8 engines never seemed to need to have valves ground or tappet clearance adjusted, owing to the metal alloy and heat treating. The early Ford V-8's had terribly restricted intake manifolds and gave poor gas mileage and most of them developed into oil burners. Fords had a strong X frame and rust resistant fenders as opposed to mid-30s Chevrolets that seemed to have fenders made of painted cardboard.

Alloy steel in Fords began when Henry Ford once saw a French race car that had crashed and noted that the car's components were thin but strong. He discovered they were made from vanadium steel alloy, nearly three times stronger than ordinary steel. He hired a metallurgist and at one time had 27 different steel alloys in the Model T, making them spindly, light and tough.

The king pins holding front wheels to the axles on Model T cars are pencil sized 9/16" bolts. The sheet metal is a copper alloy, making them rust resistant. With no wood frames to rot out as in Fisher bodies, old Fords are common at antique car shows.

Henry Ford went from making expensive cars to making the Model T affordable for the working man. In the panic of 1907, the cheaper Model T saved the day. Ford kept dropping the price from \$825 for a four cylinder 20 horsepower car in 1908 to \$99 in 1914, earning Ford \$25 million in profit and 48% of market share. He wasn't stingy with pay. He offered five dollars a day and profit sharing at a time when

wage earners got five dollars a week.

Ford wanted his workers to be able to afford to buy a Ford car. But woe to the guy who bought a Chevy. Ford patrolled the company parking lot. If he found a Chevrolet, the owner's days at Ford Motor Company were over.

In the mid 1920s, Model Ts cost \$290 and were offered in any color you wanted as long as it was black. Chevy offered a stick shift and a range of colors, taking sales away from Ford. The solid sounding "thunk" of the wood framed door also helped sales.

In October of 1927 Ford stopped Model T production. The 19-year run of Model T's unchanged model was over, only surpassed by Rolls Royce by one year.

The Model A was an excellent car with a floor shift transmission see TRUCK page 13

GILL from page 7

such a meeting, "so everyone will be on the same understanding of how the changes will be implemented." Saltzman said the head of a local dispatch center would facilitate that meeting, once it is set up.

Hastings said the towns of Northfield and Bernardston are already in discussion about working out a formula to respond to calls in the neighboring towns when no officer is on duty there.

In other news, the town is close to getting enough informational surveys on household income returned from Riverside residents in order to qualify for possible community development block grant funding to replace pumps and other aging equipment at the Riverside Water District's pump house.

Purington said 100 forms had been returned to date, and a min-

imum of 107 are needed (90% of residents in the district must return the surveys to qualify). Judging from the surveys already returned, Purington said Riverside will fit solidly within the income eligibility guidelines.

"We're trying to save each one of those 120 people some money," noted selectboard chair John Ward, who has been pounding the pavement (and more than a few doors) to drum up the last few survey responses.

The board approved spending \$1500 for the highway department to purchase a used tow behind leaf blower, to clear the banks of gravel roads before grading. Board members felt the town would soon enough save back that amount on gravel, which otherwise gets scraped off the road sides with the leaves as the roads are being graded.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Vandalism and Larceny Reports

- Monday, 7/19**
10:35 a.m. Report of vandalism on Boyle Road.
- Wednesday, 7/21**
11:20 a.m. Report of verbal dispute at French King Highway business.
- Sunday, 7/25**
4:10 p.m. Report of vandalism on Highland Road.
- Monday, 7/26**
1:31 p.m. Report of speeding vehicle complaint on Franklin Road.
- Thursday, 7/29**
7:31 p.m. Restraining order issued on Ben Hale Road.
- 11:31 p.m.** Larceny report on Route 10.
- Sunday, 8/1**
12:33 p.m. Report of vandalism on Oak Street. Advised it was a Civil matter.
- 3:31 p.m.** Assisted Erving police department with a domestic violence investigation.
- Monday, 8/2**
5:10 p.m. Identity theft report from French King Highway resident.
- 5:50 p.m.** Animal complaint on West Gill Road.
- Tuesday, 8/3**
7:25 a.m. Report of bear complaint on Main Road.
- 1:20 p.m.** Report of past larceny on Center Road. Subjects identified.

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Grant Funds Support Educational Park Programs



Campers from Montague Parks and Recreation's summer playground program look on as curriculum specialist Margo Russell demonstrates the Japanese art of Suminagashi.

BY ANA KNIAZEVA
TURNERS FALLS - If you have wandered down to Unity Park on either a Tuesday or a Thursday this summer, you have probably seen children participating in group-learning activities and playing games. This fun and educational opportunity for the children of Turners Falls and the surrounding areas exists thanks to competitive grants earned by the Montague Parks and Recreation Department provided by the Jessie B. Cox Foundation.

"This is our second year being awarded this grant," said Jon Dobosz, director of Parks and Recreation. "The program is part of the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative and we are following the curricula of the Boston Children's Museum [ages 5-8] and Design Squad [9-12]." Both programs are oriented towards science and engineering but also have a literacy component. This is important, as, according to Dobosz, "Kids lose math and literacy during the summer."

The program has been running from June 29th and will continue until August 12th.

Two grants of \$4000 were awarded to Montague Parks and Recreation for this summer program - one for the 5-8 age group and one for the 9-12 age group. These provide funds for supplies, scholarships and even field trips, such as the one to the Seymour Planetarium at the Springfield Museum, which occurred during Space Week - the week of July 20th. During this week, the 9-12 age group even built their own moon rover.

The grants also provide funding for a program specialist, Margo Russell, who supervises the activities. During Cultural Week (the week of July 27th) she intended "to tell stories from Japan, make origami and solve tangrams [a kind of Japanese puzzle] with the younger group and make paper towers with the older group, who tend to do more scientific things."

The week of August 2nd - 6th was Nature Week, and Rae Griffiths, the owner and educator of Teaching Creatures taught Animal Defense Courses. She brought an African Pygmy Hedgehog, a Leopard Gecko and

a snake. With such a wide array of exciting and educational activities on offer for children, it's good to know Dobosz plans to apply for the grant again next year. "Sustainability is the key," he said, "but we do not want to do the exact same thing year after year, so we would do a different program, not the Boston Children's Museum and Design Squad curricula again."

The Montague Parks and Recreation Department has, however, recently missed out on a \$640,000 community development block grant to fund Phase I of improvements to Unity Park. "We are currently waiting for scoring and comments," Dobosz said. "We are hoping to reapply relatively soon, because the community wants it."

On Wednesday, August 4th, town manager Frank Abbondanzio said the town would appeal to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to fully fund the first phase of the park improvement plan.

MONTAGUE from pg 6
 moderate a proposal from the Great Falls Sk8 Park committee to hold a skate boarding contest as part of the event, the planners suggested setting up the skaters on the section of 4th Street abutting Avenue A on the south side, since there was no more room on the Avenue itself.

The selectboard approved the plan, contingent on police chief Ray Zukowski signing off on it, and the skate park committee providing a sign cautioning participants to skate at their own risk. Hay bale barricades were also stipulated.

The selectboard approved a request from wastewater treatment plant supervisor Bob Trombley to spend \$960,000 to install a Fournier dewatering press at the plant, to reduce the amount of water in sludge being trucked over the road from Montague's sewage treatment plant, saving the town about \$100,000 annually.

Trombley said at present, sludge being trucked from the Montague plant is approximately 4 1/2 to 5 percent solids. After the

dewatering press is installed, in about nine months, the percentage of solids in the sludge should top off at between 35% - 40%.

Camp Dresser McKee's Paul Gilbert, the town's consultant on the \$6.7 million, four year sewer improvement projects that reduced combined sewage overflow, improved fire and electrical code compliance in the operations building, and now will add dewatering equipment at the wastewater treatment facility, said when this last phase of construction is complete, even if the \$96,235 set aside for contingencies is expended, the town should still have \$48,500 remaining in unspent funds.

Trombley said if the contingency fund is not expended, he hoped to combine that with the remaining \$48,500 to be able to afford a new roof on the 1960s era operations building.

In other news, the board approved a request by town planner Walter Ramsey to participate in a sustainable communities planning grant being applied for through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, which

could give Montague \$85,000 to spend over three years to "connect residents and visitors to arts and cultural organizations in downtown Turners Falls, and tie together various initiatives in the downtown," like the bike path, the reuse of the Strathmore, a Native American cultural center, and the reuse of underutilized space in downtown.

The board approved plans by Michael Muller to promote a soapbox derby on Sunday, September 19th (the date advanced by one day to avoid conflicting with Yom Kippur) on the Unity Street - First Street hill, pending proof of insurance.

Hay bales will also be involved in this event.

Muller said professional car mechanics will be on hand to check the safety of all soapbox derby entries, and style judges will appraise the unique qualities of the gravity powered cars. Kids, teen and adult categories are available. For more info go to: www.MontagueSoapboxRaces.com.

Muller said more applicants to participate in the soapbox derby

race have come in so far from other towns than from Montague itself. "Come on, Montague! Don't be left on the starting line."

Historical commission chair Mary Melonis updated the selectboard on the activities of her organization, which include maintaining historical artifacts of all five villages in the second floor of the Montague Grange. Melonis hopes to have docu-

ments of historical interest scanned and available on the town's website soon. She made a plea for people to consider donating items of interest to the commission when cleaning out heirlooms from family homes, and for volunteers to join the commission and assist them in their work. For more info: contact Melonis via the link on www.montaguema.net.

30th Montague Mug Race

By Ann Fisk - Saturday, August 21st, at 8:30 a.m. will mark the 30th time runners have taken to the hills of Montague Center to compete in the Mug Race. The course was laid out by Al Ross as part of his healthy routine of daily living. The route had to be altered for several years after The Flood wiped out part of Old Sunderland Road, but veteran runners insisted it return to the original course once the road was repaired.

The race begins at the Common, with a blast from Lenny Wonsey's canon. Be forewarned, he packs it with black powder and newspaper which

rains confetti. Even the runners are jolted by the blast!

The runners head south and then up and over Taylor Hill. The course brings them down School Street, passed the now dried up pond, and finishes on Station Street near the ballfield. The course is 5.5 miles long and has four water stops. Prizes are awarded to winners in all categories. Six years ago we added the Mini Mug Race which is 2 miles long.

Entry forms are available at Montague Center post office, library, the parks and rec, or contact: shollow@crocker.com.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. *Is there a magic bullet for back pain? I could use one.*

There is no magic bullet for everyone. However, like millions of people who suffer back pain, I rely on the methods developed by Robin McKenzie, a physiotherapist in New Zealand. Because back problems are almost universal, I'm going to do two columns on McKenzie.

When I was 30 years old, I strained my lower back carrying bundles of newspapers. With a week of bed rest, I got better. A few years later, I reached for a backhand on the tennis court and ended up in bed again.

Subsequently, a series of injuries gave me stiffness and

localized pain. Then the sciatica kicked in; a toothache-like pain started running down my left buttock to my ankle. This was a sign that my injuries had earned me a bulging lumbar disc.

I went to a chiropractor and his treatments seemed to work, but I suspect that resting had more to do with my recovery than the treatments.

After additional sieges of pain, I went to a physiatrist and several physical therapists. Again, after many sessions, I got better but wasn't sure why.

Then, a therapist loaned me a copy of a book: *Treat Your Own Back* by Robin McKenzie. Since then, I have not been to any type of healthcare professional for help.

The best way to explain McKenzie's system is to let you hear it in his own words. Below is an eye-opening excerpt from his book, "Treat Your Own Back."

"In about 1956, in my clinic in Wellington, New Zealand, I observed by chance a remarkable

event which has changed worldwide the nature of treatment administered for the alleviation of back pain. This serendipitous event led to the development of the theories and practice that have now become the hallmark of the McKenzie methods for the diagnosis and treatment of common painful back problems.

"The chance observation arose from a sudden change in the condition of a patient whom we will call Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith had pain to the right of his low back, extending into the buttock and thigh as far as his knee. He had undergone the conventional treatment considered suitable for back pain in that era. After three weeks of heat and ultrasound his condition had not improved. He had difficulty standing upright, he could bend forward, but could not bend backward.

"I told him to undress and lie face down on the treatment table, the end of which had been raised for a previous patient. Without adjusting the table, and unnoticed

by any of the clinical staff, he lay face down with his back arched and overstretched for some five minutes.

"When I returned in order to commence his treatment, I was extremely concerned to find him lying in what, at the time, was considered to be a most damaging position. On enquiring as to his welfare, I was astounded to hear him say that this was the best he had been in three weeks. All pain had disappeared from his leg. Furthermore, the pain in the back had moved from the right side to the centre. In addition, he found he could now bend backward without having severe pain.

"When Mr. Smith arose from the treatment table, he could stand upright and he remained improved with no recurrence of leg pain. I placed him in the same position the following day, and this resulted in complete resolution of the remaining symptoms.

"The important point to remember about all this is that as Mr. Smith lay in this position, his

pain changed location and moved from the leg and right side of his back to the centre point just at the waistline. The movement of pain from the leg or buttocks to the middle of the back is now known worldwide as the 'centralisation phenomenon.'

"We now know that when pain moves, as it did in the case of Mr. Smith, our chances of helping you with the methods described in this book are very good indeed."

Thanks to the chance observation with Mr. Smith, the McKenzie system is now provided worldwide by thousands of physiotherapists, doctors and chiropractors treating patients with back pain.

For more information, go to: www.mckenziemdt.org/

[In my next column, we'll discuss the McKenzie techniques.]

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

TRUCK from pg 11

and a dependable engine with great lugging power. When the road off the White Bridge went up Canada Hill, a Model A needed to slow way down to make the turn, but could still chug all the way up Canada Hill in high gear.

Farmers would plow fields with a plow towed by a Model A car. You could doll up a Model A with a range of colors, even two tone, body stripes, tinted windshields, wind deflectors, chrome radiator grille and thermometer radiator cap.

Chevy introduced "knee-action" in the mid 30s. A coil spring and shock absorber were enclosed in a cast-iron housing, while other cars used mundane leaf springs. Knee-action gave a nice ride but soon the front wheels splayed out and the housing cracked. There was no fix except to replace the entire front axle assembly, which was prohibitively expensive. Chevy soon deep-sixed the knee-action system, and none mourned its passing.

At one time, there were two Chevrolet models, standard or

deluxe. Now, there are as many Chevy models as the entire GMC lineup had in the old days. That's true of all car manufacturers. It would be nice to be able to recognize the make and model of a car and to be able to work on them yourself. Now you need a code reader, computer and clairvoyance to even figure out what ails the darn thing, and a contortionist to fix it.

Maybe having to replace a wooden frame once in a while wouldn't be so bad after all.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG
Assault Investigated

Friday, 7/23
6:30 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operation of a motor vehicle after revocation of insurance and without insurance.

Saturday, 7/24
2:15 a.m. Report of assault and battery. Victim at Baystate Franklin Medical Center. Report

taken. Under investigation.

Sunday, 7/25
8:30 a.m. Report of loose dog on North Street. Spoke with owner and advised of leash laws.

Monday, 7/26
8:50 p.m. Report of male subject needing assistance on Old State Road. Transported same to Baystate Franklin Medical

Center.
Thursday, 7/29
3:45 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration and without insurance.

Saturday, 7/31
1:25 a.m. Arrested [redacted] for third offense operating under the influence of alcohol, marked lane violations and failure to wear seatbelt.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Thefts, Disturbances, Narcotics Violation

Tuesday, 7/20
5:48 p.m. Report of motor vehicle theft on Hillside Road.

5:55 p.m. Burglary / breaking and entering on G Street. Investigated.

Wednesday, 7/21
9:14 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Randall Wood Drive. Investigated.

Thursday, 7/22
10:04 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] for second

offense of driving while intoxicated, leaving the scene of property damage, and marked lane violations on Greenfield Road.

Saturday, 7/24
10:52 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Woodland Drive. Peace restored.

Sunday, 7/25
4:52 p.m. Fight on Avenue A at Third Street. Investigated.

11:32 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Fifth Street. Services rendered.

Monday, 7/26
12:16 p.m. Narcotics violation on L Street. Referred to an officer.

3:09 p.m. Domestic disturbance on East Main Street in Millers Falls. Peace restored.

Thursday, 7/29
7:18 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Fifteenth Street. Peace restored.

Friday, 7/30
12:40 p.m. Harassment (letters) on O Street. Investigated.

1:13 p.m. Unwanted person on Fourth Street. Peace

restored.
Sunday, 8/1
11:16 a.m. Burglary at NM pump station gate house. Report taken.

11:06 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs, operating to endanger, speeding, and failure to operate a motor vehicle within marked lanes.

Monday, 8/2
9:20 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Vladish Avenue. Investigated.

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GO GREEN FAMILY

Episode 20: Placing Bets

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON

MONTAGUE CENTER - Rita Tinker loaded the dishwasher with fierce determination, doing her best to avoid her husband Billy's disapproving look. "Let's make a bet," Rita said. "If it's more efficient to hand wash all these dishes, I swear I'll volunteer to do them by hand for the next month. What are you willing to put on the table if you lose?"

"If I'm wrong, I'll build you that china cabinet you've been asking for," Billy offered. "But I won't be. You'll see that this

Go Green Family Contestants' Electricity Consumption at start of the Electricity Challenge (14 cents /kwh)

	Monthly Usage	Charge
Bartletts	2,300 kwh	\$322
Tinkers	1,100 kwh	\$154
Robin-Levines	450 kwh	\$63

dishwasher is using more electricity - it's just common sense."

"I know I'm right!" Rita countered. "Let's call up the Massachusetts Sustainable Energy Society and see what they say."

The next day, Rita had an answer. "I hate to say I told you so... but I told you so," she announced smugly. Referring to notes she'd written on a pad of paper, she read: "There's a study done by scientists at the

University of Bonn that shows that dishwashers, especially the newer ones built after 1994, use half the energy and one-sixth the water used when hand washing the same set of dirty dishes."

"I guess I'm building that china cabinet," Billy said sheepishly.

Meanwhile, Ruby and Alex Tinker were both parked in front of an oscillating fan watching American Idol on TV in the living room. When Alex's Dumpster Diver ringtone announced an incoming call, he quickly hopped into the hallway. Ruby didn't exactly mean to spy on her brother, but Alex's "How's it goin', Dragonfly?" greeting caught her interest. The hallway mirror showed he was running his hand through his hair and smiling that goofy smile - sure signs that he was talking to Jayden Bartlett.

"What do you mean, it's a

guerilla installation?" Alex said. "So, what - he hooked up the wires for the PV system himself? Sure, it sounds illegal, plus I guess dangerous." And then, "Oh, I get it - he doesn't want anyone to know - yeah, like, the judges might find out."

It was sounding to Ruby like Jayden's father was cheating. She had been so sure her family was going to win the competition this time - it just wasn't fair! Someone should make sure they got caught! What was it called when you left a message without identifying yourself? An anonymous tip...

Which family do you think deserves to win this challenge? Cast your vote at www.montaguema.net and read the August 19th issue to find out whom the judges selected.

Continued next week

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Farm Hosts Walk in the Woods with Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

GILL-Saturday, August 7th, from 9 a.m. to noon, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust will join author Brian Donahue at Bascom Hollow Farm to offer a walk around the farm.

Donahue co-owns the farm with his wife Faith Rand and with Tom Chalmers and Joan Meyer. Mount Grace worked with both

couples to protect the farm, which has 163 acres of fields, pasture and woodlands, in 2007. Donahue, the author of *Reclaiming the Commons: Community Farms and Forests in a Small New England Town*, is a professor of environmental studies at Brandeis. His tour will focus on how the farm manages

its woodlands, including sugar maples and an ongoing timber harvest.

The farm currently produces honey and pork, and the owners plan to add production of grass-fed beef, lamb and poultry, as well as eggs, maple syrup and forest products. The walk is part of Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust's Local Farms - Local Food Summer Hike Series, a five-week series of

events that highlight Mount Grace's work protecting farms in Western Massachusetts and the North Quabbin region.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact David Kotker at (978) 248-2055, extension 19 or email kotker@mountgrace.org.

For a full listing of the event series please visit the website mountgrace.org/news.html#events.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

Metal Theft Investigation Results In Arrest

Thursday, 7/1
 11:30 a.m. Report of illegal trash dumping at the Leverett Transfer Station. Under investigation.

Friday, 7/9
 8:05 a.m. Leverett Fire Department reported a catalytic converter stolen off of a scrap vehicle used by them for extrication practice while the vehicle was parked at the Public Safety Complex. Under investigation.

11:15 a.m. Resident of Hemenway Road reported approximately 200 pounds of scrap copper pipe, scrap aluminum, and two aluminum truck tire rims stolen from his garage. Under investigation.

Friday, 7/16
 3:15 p.m. Operator reported erratic vehicle operating in the area of Cushman Road and Teawaddle Hill Road. Officer checked the area. Vehicle gone on arrival. Plate number provided was incorrect.

Tuesday, 7/20
 6:15 p.m. Conducted traffic control and site security for Leverett Fire and numerous other Fire Departments while they conducted a rescue of a woman stuck in a cave in Rattlesnake Gutter.

Wednesday, 7/21
 12:45 p.m. Upon completion of investigation arrested

Warrant for larceny from a building, two counts of receiving stolen property over \$250 subsequent offenses. Truck rims from 7/9/2010 theft recovered.

Thursday, 7/29
 9:00 a.m. Officer found a tree down on power lines on Old Mill Yard Road. WMECO notified.

Saturday, 7/31
 11:49 a.m. Traffic stop on Long Plain Road. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating without a license and failure to attach front license plate.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



FRIDAY, AUGUST 6th
The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *First Friday DJ Nite w/ Ansel & Co.* 7:30 p.m.

At the Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: traditional and contemporary Celtic and Folk artist **Ronald Meck**. Performing with his son and fiddler **Adrian Meck**, 8 p.m.. The show is for all ages, \$5.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Hobson's Razor**, Rock-Reggae-Funk with **Dan Putnam and Friends**, 9 to 11 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Hilltop Steppers, World/ Reggae*, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *A Ghost Quartet*, Jazzy Blues with a taste of fist fight swing, 9 to 11 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Zydeco Connection*, 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 8th
The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT KARAOKE*, 8 p.m. No cover.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Nobodys Fat*, 7 p.m.

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Hillary Graves and Kevin Smith, the Yankee Doodle Dandies perform at the Great Falls Coffeehouse on Friday, August 13, 7 p.m. In the historic Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

MONDAY, AUGUST 9th
The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Fear and Loathing In Las Vegas* on the big screen, 9:30 p.m. free.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Free Range*. Classic rock and dance music with **Betsy, Mark and Bruce**, 8 to 10 p.m.

The Massachusetts Teat Party hosts guests **Sally Fallon Morell**, of the **Weston A. Price Foundation**, and **Pete Kennedy**, of the **Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund**, for an evening of celebration at **Cook Farm, Hadley**. Cheese-tasting and a cash ice cream bar. 6:30 p.m. \$50 Donation. Proceeds go to **NOFA/Massachusetts Raw Milk Network**. Info: **Winton Pitcoff**, winton@nofamass.org, or **NOFA/Mass office**: (978) 355-2853.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 13th
The Yankee Doodle Dandies perform at the **Great Falls Coffeehouse**, 7 p.m. Singer/guitarist **Hillary Graves** and tuba player **Kevin Smith** perform Americana with historical insight into American heritage music. Includes contemporary and children's music with sing-alongs, dancing, and what-have-you. Doors open at 6:30 pm - coffee & homemade baked goods will be available. Suggested donation \$6 - \$12, free for children. (413) 863-3221.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Chris Scanlon and The Original Cowards and Frost Heaves**, 9:30 p.m. \$3 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Richard Chase Group**, acoustic driven originals, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14th
Turners Falls Block Party! 2 to 8 p.m.

Avenue A, Turners Falls. Music + Food + Artists + Neighbors = Fun. More info p.16.

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: **Ruby and Curly**, 2 to 4 p.m. **Ruby's Complaint** kicks off the afternoon for **Curly Fingers Dupree** and guest, **Scott Kuzmeskus**.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Post-block party blowout: *Primate Fiasco & Ghost Quartet!* \$5 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Burrie & Friends*, acoustic originals, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15th
The Dysfunctional Family Jazz Band featuring **Patty Carpenter** benefit concert and potluck picnic. Album release: *Come Over*. At the **Organ Barn**, Tree Frog Farm, Guilford, VT. 3 p.m. Proceeds go to

Vermont Citizens Awareness Network (VCAN) Spoken word sections and narrative with **Verandah Porche**, a musical ramble and a dance concert. Opening: *The Sun Dogs*. \$15 advance, \$20 day of. www.djfbmusic.com/cdrelease. (413) 625-6177 or P. O. Box 83, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *An Irish Session* hosted by **Amanda Bernhard** & **Jonathan Hohl Kennedy**. 8 to 10 p.m.

MONDAY, AUGUST 16th
The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *B-I-N-G-O*, 8 p.m. no cover.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18th
At the **Discovery Center**, Turners Falls: *Trash to Treasures!* Come make fun newspaper necklaces/bracelets and learn about recycling. Ages 4 to 9 years old. 2 to 3:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Quizmastah Chad's Quisnite Quiz!** 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Wailin' Dave Robinson & Tommy Filault*, Blues based

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES

Friday & Saturday August 13th & 14th ON THE TOWN

Fabulous, exuberant, innovative musical! **Gene Kelly** and **Frank Sinatra**. 1949. Color. PG. 98 min.

Music 1/2 hour before the movie **Fri. Straight From the Heart Quartet** - woman's acappella four-part harmony **Sat. Abdul Baki & family** - reggae

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There's No Way To Tell From The First Kiss

Save the date for this performance by Paul Richmond, Suzy Polucci and Moonlight Davis at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls, September 24th & 25th. A benefit for The Montague Reporter!

roots music, 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, AUGUST 20th TO 22nd
Montague Old Home Days, Montague Center. Info. www.montaguema.net.

ONGOING
Appalachian Families and Faces, 1971-1975, a photographic exhibit at the **Gallery at Hallmark** by **Vern McClish**. Documentary photographs on display through **September 5th**.

Gallery 38, Avenue A, Turners Falls, next to the **Great Falls Discovery Center**. **Deerfield Valley Art Assoc.**, Summer Fun exhibit & sale through Aug. Open Wed., Fri. & Sat. 1 to 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS
Great Falls Farmers Market. On the lawn near the **Discovery Center**, Avenue A, Turners Falls. 2 to 6 p.m. Rain or shine every Wednesday.

FRIDAYS & SUNDAYS
Early Morning Nature Walk beginning at the **Great Falls Discovery Center**, Turners Falls. Start your day off right, observing nature! Leisurely explore level paved bike trails and village sidewalks. Meet outside the main entrance of the **Discovery Center**, 8 a.m. Continues Fridays through July.

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.
Hot Spot Teen Center is in **The Brick House**
24 Third Street, Turners Falls, 01376

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- 1. THE OTHER GUYS**
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DAILY 12:00 2:15 4:30 7:00 9:20
- 2. CATS AND DOGS: KITTY GALORE (3D)**
PG in DTS sound
DAILY 12:00 2:15 4:30 7:00 9:20
- 3. DESPICABLE ME (3D)** PG
DAILY 12:00 2:15 4:30 7:00 9:20
- 4. CHARLIE ST. CLOUD** PG13
DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:45 9:15
- 5. SALT** PG13
DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:45 9:15
- 6. DINNER FOR SCHUMUCKS** PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
- 7. INCEPTION** PG13 DTS sound
DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30

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TALKING PICTURES

The Sperm Donor Cometh



1 eagle = The Pits 4 eagles = The Heights

BY TODD DETMOLD

CHICAGO - Only one of many successes onscreen in *The Kids Are All Right* is the portrayal of a Hispanic gardener. In even the most highbrow family dramas, a three-scene throwaway supporting character like Luis might all too easily get left in the realm of the underwritten. This is not to say that Luis, who is accused of having a drug problem after an allergy-induced sneeze, is not a stereotype: in fact, all of the characters here are stereotypes. What writer-director Lisa Cholodenko carries out is the neat trick of imbuing them with a refreshing self-awareness. Luis chuckles at his fate and comes out cleaner than most of the major characters. He just likes

the flowers.

Luis is contracted by Jules (Julianne Moore) to assist in her fledgling landscape design business. As half of a middle-aged lesbian couple with two kids, Jules is starting to feel restless after 18 years of motherhood without anything approaching a career. Her partner Nic (Annette Bening) is a doctor, and the one who pays for their lovely house and all the expensive wine they drink.

This feeling of housewife-neglect is just one facet of the couple's simmering malaise. As their two kids struggle with adolescence, a craving for 'normalcy' has eroded the family's foundation. They have an 18-year-old perfect-angel daughter who has



Still of Julianne Moore, Annette Bening, Mark Ruffalo and Mia Wasikowska in *The Kids Are All Right*

just graduated as valedictorian of her high school and a 15-year-old son who feels a need for a father figure. In turn, the two kids go behind their moms' backs to seek out the man whose sperm donation brought them into existence.

The donor is Paul, a naïve man's man with a touch of gray played by Mark Ruffalo. Before getting contacted by the children he didn't know he had, Paul was coasting through life as a successful restaurateur and purveyor of organic produce. He has a lot of casual sex and leaves several buttons undone. If he sounds like a cocksure stereotype of effortless sexuality and a predestined 'no-man-is-an-island' growth arc, he is. His son, upon meeting him, refers to his new father as "kinda into himself."

Jules is a "depressed, middle-aged lesbian," her son Laser (namesake never explained) is a "sensitive jock type," Joni (named after Mitchell) "got all A's and got into every school," Nic is a "control freak" and Paul

is a "doer, not a learner." They're all familiar characters. Paul's entrance forces the foursome to reassess their already fragile union, and what's so fun is watching the awkward friction and identity crises between these five strangers who all want to be a family together.

The movie works through two simple, distinct qualities: the script is tight and funny, full of forward momentum, and the actors are all dynamite. Whenever it seems like Ruffalo is starting to steal the show - Paul's role is to be distractingly charismatic - Cholodenko carefully assigns equal screentime to the other four. It's an ensemble piece where when characters bicker, it's impossible to take sides. We want them to get along.

This is where the movie starts to get surprising. As Paul, despite his own and everyone else's better intentions, starts taking up the mantle of fatherhood - he imparts social advice for his kids and parenting advice for the moms - it becomes clear that these char-

acters have painted themselves into a corner. The inciting incident was born of Laser's desire for paternal normalcy and quickly this idea festers inside the other characters. But there isn't room for three parents in a 'normal' family and somebody is going to have to lose.

It's not long before an overwhelming sadness takes over. Even as the movie is consistently hilarious, mining laughs from awkward discussions of sexuality and from the minutiae of home life, all five gradually become aware they will be victims of their own desires. The characters win you over by being funny and warm and then screw you by being human. At one point, a character loses control and goes off on a rant about self-absorbed, eco-friendly, organic food-eaters, even as she orders another bottle of a specific favored wine. There is another winking moment where one of the moms describes lesbian porn as fallacious, because it usually involves two straight actresses faking it.

It's a self-aware picture about self-aware characters going out of their way to fit their circular selves into square spaces. Ultimately moving and incisive in its glances into both middle age and adolescence, *The Kids Are All Right* is an exquisite, eloquent drama that's as true to itself as it is to its audience. It's an increasingly rare commodity in our self-important arthouse multiplexes - you get the impression everyone on screen would love this movie. The film is an exercise in honesty, a pure delight.

Turners Falls Block Party

EVENTS INCLUDE:

- Fabrication Fashion Show
- Music Make-your-own T-shirts
- Fashion vendors Parade
- Food vendors Artists booths
- Kids activities M.C. Monte Belmonte

BANDS INCLUDE:

- Primate Fiasco Naia Kete
- Shokazoba Ghost Quartet
- Heather Maloney
- The Junkyard Dog
- Dakota Roberts
- Owiehops

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