



**SORRELL HATCH**  
Back on the Farm/ page 5



**AT THE READY IN GILL**  
Firefighter Deb Parker / page 8

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 11

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

DECEMBER 14, 2006

## Gill Unanimous: Smart Growth Bylaws Approved

**BY DAVID DETMOLD & P.H. CROSBY** - Nearly forty voters turned out at the Gill special town meeting on December 18th and acted unanimously to pass 'Smart Growth' zoning bylaws for the town. Voters credited the ease of the measure's passage to the careful, thorough process the planning board had followed, offering citizens numerous chances to get their questions and concerns about the bylaw changes addressed. The new bylaws set up a Village Commercial district along Route 2 and the southern end of Main Road, where town water and sewer is available for commercial and industrial growth, and traffic patterns favor retail stores. The new bylaws also set limits on the size of stores. Retail stores 2500 square feet or less are permitted by right in the new Village Commercial district, and by special permit elsewhere in town. (By comparison, the Gill

Store is about 1500 square feet.) Stores between 2500 and 10,000 square feet must obtain a special permit from the zoning board of appeals. Stores of this size are allowed by special permit only in the Village Commercial district. Stores larger than 10,000 square feet will not be

Stores larger than 10,000 square feet will not be allowed anywhere in town.

allowed anywhere in town. The new bylaws also allow so-called flag lots, with smaller frontage requirements (40 feet for residential use, 60 feet for commercial or mixed uses) to allow access to back lots which otherwise meet zoning requirements. Flag lots are permitted only in the Village Commercial district.

The new bylaws also see **ZONING** pg 10

## School Committee With Double Vision



**BY DAVID DETMOLD GILL - MONTAGUE** School officials wrestled with competing visions for elementary school configuration for the town of Montague on Tuesday night, December 12th, with the three Montague school principals taking a strong stand for "one school in two buildings" at the Turners Falls campus, and for closing the Montague Center School. The three men on the school committee: Richard Colton, Michael Langknecht, and Ted Castro-Santos held out for broad grade span schools at each end of town: one at Sheffield and one at Montague Center.

The schools' attorney, Fred Dupre, again played math tutor for the committee, reminding them according to the district agreement, "Eight votes," of the nine member committee, "are needed to close a school." But only a simple majority of a

quorum (as few as three votes) are needed to change the grade configuration within schools that remain open, Dupre said.

At the committee's November 28th meeting, Colton, Langknecht and Castro-Santos voted for broadening the grade span at Montague Center, keeping part of Hillcrest School open as an early childhood education center, and moving most of the students at Hillcrest into Sheffield to create a broad grade span school there.

In practical terms (since the entire school committee is likely to be present for the vote, raising the threshold for a simple majority to five) either proposal will need to gather two more votes to pass. After three hours of discussion on Tuesday, there was very little change in the basic math.

Sheffield principal Chip Wood got the meeting going saying, "I want

to acknowledge the dilemma and the amount of paradox that has been involved in the decision at the school committee and within the community for a number of years. As an educator, I have tried to look at it from an educational point of view, rather than a purely financial one."

Speaking as an educational leader, Wood said he favored a "one elementary school in two buildings" approach at Turners Falls, with either two side-by-side broad grade span schools (pre-K or K through 5) or a split grade span approach, similar to the current configuration at Hillcrest and Sheffield. Consolidating all Montague elementary students to these two school buildings would "allow for the growth of student population," with approximately 220 students in each building, in reasonable class sizes, and permit "optimum configuration

for creating community" for students in those schools.

"Hillcrest students would have regular access to Sheffield art rooms, auditorium, gymnasium, and library. The children would play together at recess. There would be one Montague elementary PTO, one Montague elementary student council, one faculty planning and carrying out school community events, and one after school program." Wood said arts, music and physical education would be provided equitably to all Montague elementary school students in the "one school" model. He also said that model would, "allow us to address MCAS in a more systematic way by two administrators with shared accountability." Wood said he liked the idea of renaming the two school buildings with one

see **SCHOOL** pg 11

## Rap Takes Center Stage at Swift River

**BY SARAH THAYER NEW SALEM** - Next week the 5th and 6th grade chorus at Swift River School will be performing *Jammin' Pam: A Celebration of the Seven Grades*, a 'raperetta' written and directed by local composer and music educator Edward Hines.

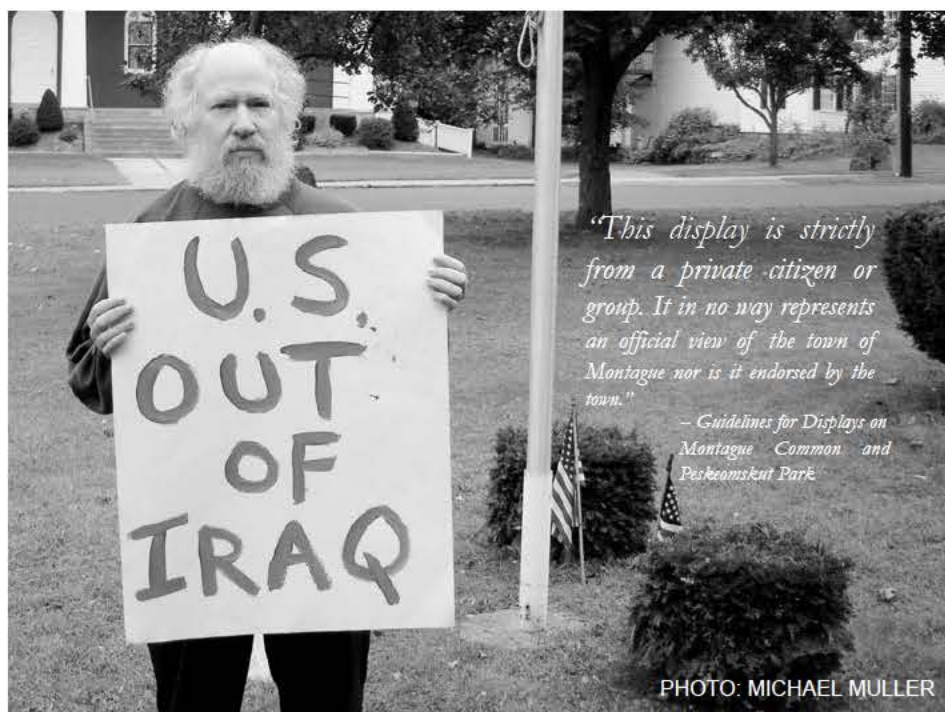
So what exactly is a raperetta? "It is an operetta comprised of contemporary rock and rap beats," explained Hines. He described *Jammin' Pam* as a "cele-

bration of school," that is sung from beginning to end. It will be performed Monday, December 18th at the Swift River School. There will be a 1:30 p.m. matinee and a 7:00 p.m. evening performance.

*Jammin' Pam* includes eleven songs that explore the seven grades of elementary school from a child's perspective. Pam, an elementary school student, loves riding her skateboard and

see **RAP** pg 16

## Montague Regulates Free Speech



Eric Chester, with a sign he hoped to place on the Montague common earlier this year.

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** "The challenge facing the selectboard," explained board member Allen Ross at the beginning of the public hearing on free speech on the town common in Montague Center and Peskeomskut Park in Turners Falls, "is to develop guidelines consistent with the First Amendment of the Constitution to allow freedom of expression and freedom of religion. That's basically it."

And, by the end of the meeting, that is basically what the selectboard accomplished. By a 2-0 see **MONTAGUE** pg 9

*"This display is strictly from a private citizen or group. It in no way represents an official view of the town of Montague nor is it endorsed by the town."*

*- Guidelines for Displays on Montague Common and Peskeomskut Park*

PHOTO: MICHAEL MULLER



**PET OF THE WEEK**

**Irresistible**



**Silvia**

Silvia is a two-year-old gray and white female cat in need of a good home. Silvia has a darling face and irresistible eyes of dark gold that contrast beautifully with her coat. This former stray is a very sweet and quiet cat who seems quite tolerant of handling. She's very pretty and soft and may be OK with gentle children over 5 yrs old. For more information, call the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

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**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**After School Students Learn about Pet Care**

BY LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS- Humane Educator Eden Schurlknight of the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society brought her dog Lorenzo to the Carnegie Library on Wednesday, December 6th as part of an educational program. The children from the Kids Place after school program enjoyed meeting the dog and discussing responsible pet ownership. The Kids Place program is run by the Montague Catholic Social Ministries. The



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

after school program has come regularly to the Carnegie Library on Wednesday afternoons for several years for programs involving books and activities.

**Music and Movement at the Library**



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

MONTAGUE CENTER- WIC Outreach Coordinator Jamie Bedard visited the Music and Movement program at the Montague Center Library on Thursday, December 7th. She gave out WIC slinkies to many happy children.

**FACES & PLACES**



PHOTO: JOSEPH A PARZYCKI

On Wednesday, volunteer Mary Reeder carries a floral bouquet off stage after receiving accolades for her part producing and co-directing the Gill Elementary all-school play, *Cindy Ella*. Put on at the Turners Falls High School auditorium, it was a Wild West adaptation of Cinderella, with Annie Oakley cast as the Fairy Godmother. Emily Samuels-French of Gill wrote the play, Court Dorsey co-directed. All the Gill elementary school children took part.

**Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week:**

- Grade 7  
Patrick Moretti
- Grade 8  
Kelsey O'Brien  
Dwane St. Marie

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**Holiday Fair a Big Success**

BY LINDA HICKMAN

WENDELL - The third annual Wendell Holiday Fair on December 9th and 10th was a wonderful place to buy beautiful and unique gifts. It was also a great kick-off to the holiday season and a wonderful opportunity for socializing. Over 25 artists and crafters sold a wide variety of products, including wildlife drawings, jewelry, wooden signs, pottery, Native American crafts, herbal products, hand blown and fused glass, silk scarves, hand crocheted hats and scarves, maple syrup, sheepskins, musical CDs and many other items. Local musicians played almost continuously throughout the weekend.

Jayne Rubenstein of Shutesbury won the Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse raffle. She received a gift basket of all Wendell items, including a Full Moon Coffeehouse hooded sweatshirt, Wendell and Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse t-shirts, a Deja Brew hat, an historic Wendell Cookbook, and a gift certificate to the Diemand



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

Jayne Rubenstein of Shutesbury won the gift basket prize for the Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse raffle held at the Wendell Holiday Fair on Sunday, December 10th. Melinda Godfrey of Wendell announced the winner and awarded the prize.

Farm. The Friends of the Meetinghouse raised about \$200 between the raffle and the sale of mulled cider and earrings and photo cards. Sharon Drumgool donated 47 pairs of earrings and 30 photo cards to be sold to benefit the Meetinghouse. The \$200 will go

towards paint for the front of the Meetinghouse and restoring the original stone steps.

Renovating the Meetinghouse is a work in progress, proceeding as funds are raised. Recently the foundation was repaired and the back of the building was painted.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES December 18th - 22nd**

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

**Monday, 18th**

- 10:15 a.m. Aerobics
- 11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics
- 1:00 p.m. Canasta

**Tuesday, 19th**

- 9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Wednesday, 20th**
- 10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
- 12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 21st**
- 1 p.m. Pitch
- Friday, 22nd**
- 10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
- 11 a.m. PACE Aerobics

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

Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

**Monday, 18th**

- 9:30 a.m. Exercise
- 9:45 a.m. Library
- 12 Noon Pitch
- Tuesday, 19th**
- 9 a.m. Aerobics
- 12:30 p.m. Painting
- Wednesday, 20th**
- 9:30 a.m. Line Dancing
- 12 Noon Bingo
- Thursday, 21st**
- 9 a.m. Aerobics
- 12:30 p.m. Shopping

**WENDELL Senior Center**, located in the town offices on Wendell Depot Rd. Call Kathy Swaim at 978 544-2020 for info, schedule of events or to coordinate transportation.

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# Girl Scouts Earn Safe Energy Badge

**SARA CAMPBELL ERVING** - Girls in Junior Girl Scout Troop 328 and Daisy Troop 135 were the first ever recipients of the new Clean Green Power patch program developed by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) in collaboration with Girl Scouts of Western Massachusetts. The patches were awarded earlier this fall.



PHOTO BY SARAH CAMPBELL

Girl Scouts and Daisy Troop members (left - right) Lea Sweeney, Carolyn Campbell, Elizabeth LaValley, Chloe Wells, Ella Worthington, Ravin Graves, Jovi Graves.

Explaining to the girls what the terms mean, NESEA offered the following definitions: "Clean means it adds little or no air, water or land pollution. Green generally means doing things and making things in ways that are friendlier for the natural environment. Power means it enables us to make electricity, stay warm, drive cars, and run machines that build things."

Examples of clean, green power include wind energy, solar energy, geothermal ener-

gy and others the girls learned about.

In order to earn this patch, girls must Learn, Discover, and Act. The older girls began by Learning about clean energy through related websites. They discovered a clean energy site when they visited the Energy Store on Miles Street in Greenfield. There they were regaled by descriptions of wind-up radios, LED light sources, super-insulated freez-

Sue Reyes of NESEA. Each member of Junior Troop 328 illustrated a page in a way that was meaningful to her. The girls then read the story aloud to their younger counterparts, and presented each of them with their own copy. A copy of the story was also presented to their school librarian, Mrs. Claire Hughes at Holy Trinity School in Greenfield. The troop includes Millers Falls residents Carolyn Campbell

ers, composting toilets, electric bicycles, and solar powered fountains.

The Action project the girls pursued was to create an illustrated book from the story "A Breath of Fresh Air" written by

and Bethany Zera, and Montague residents Laura and Katharine Averill.

This activity supports the Girl Scout Mission, which states Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and

character who make the world a better place.

**HOLIDAY GREETINGS**

Wishing our family and friends a wooly warm winter, and the very best wishes for a wonderful New Year.

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## High School Students Air News Show on MCTV

**BY ANNE HARDING TURNERS FALLS** - It was with great pleasure last week I discovered the pilot program of the Turners Falls High School *Weekly Review* aired on MCTV's Channel 17 on Tuesday, December 5th at 6:30 p.m. If you were fortunate enough to watch the show, you already know the co-hosts were TFHS students Aiden Verdery and Abby Daniel-Green. This week the hosts are Aiden Verdery and Veronica Santucci. Bravo!

The program is the product of a new class taught by Douglas Finn at the Turners Falls High School called News and Short Feature Production. Well-known in the local cable television world, Finn is a recent newcomer to the TFHS faculty.

The class began in mid-

September with students learning the basics of studio production and camera work. It wasn't long before they took their hands-on training to the school-at-large and began broadcasting school announcements over the in-house airwaves. That wasn't enough to satisfy their thirst for television, and now Gill, Erving and Montague cable subscribers can see the *Weekly Review* on MCTV's Channel 17.

In just a few months Finn's students have launched their public debut. This is no small undertaking. They've written the scripts, shot the video, anchored the program, and edited the footage. Their intent is to produce a weekly review of national and local news of interest to students and parents in the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Featuring 'news magazine'-

style articles, the co-hosts give us a recap of world and national news, local stories, school features and school announcements. The students spend the week researching material, preparing scripts, interviewing key people, and setting up the studio. There's a lot of work to be done before Friday's video session and the students in this small class have their work cut out for them.

Each week there will be several opportunities to view the program (the most recent edition will be aired again Friday, December 15th at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, December 16th at 8:30 a.m. Take the time to watch the show and congratulate the co-hosts, behind-the-scenes crew, and teacher if you see them around town. Keep up the good work!

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## Tracy Turn

BY DAVID KAYNOR

**MONTAGUE CENTER**

Tracy Turn died in her sleep on the morning of Tuesday, December 12th. She has been my neighbor for many years, and after innumerable occasions when she would wave, cheer, and lift my spirit as I passed her and Gary's house at the end of a run, my habits changed. Instead of sprinting by, I'd stop and chat. We'd talk about where I had just run; Tracy's running; running in general; goings-on in our lives, their kids' lives, and around the village. Tracy would josh me about being too much of a lay-abed to run with her in the early morning. When medical concerns forbade her from running, she'd tell me how much she missed it and how seeing me out on the roads made her sad and optimistic at the same time.

One element of the special bond between runners is an unspoken understanding of how the endorphin rush and image repair of the finishing sprint help us define ourselves. Maybe this is why I didn't join the chorus of voices urging her to abandon her plan to run in the 2003 Mug Race. I remember I had just finished an easy tune-up run and was walking up the sidewalk past their house. I hadn't seen her since before her and Gary's motorcycle - moose accident and the extensive rehabilitation it required. The first words she said to me were, "I'll be there Saturday morning."

I was already acquainted with Tracy's optimism and indomitable spirit, so I

wasn't greatly surprised. I did offer a few words of sage advice. "Pain isn't good; if anything hurts, hitch a ride."

She said, "Everybody says I'm crazy, but they just don't understand. I have to do this." And, "Don't worry, David... I'll make it."

We ran that Mug Race in terribly hot, humid conditions, and with each passing mile, my worry increased. Then at Mile 4, there was Gary, installed in a lawn chair wearing his neck brace, watching us come down the pitch by the Taylor Hill Road fork. He looked upbeat and confident. It gave me a feeling of both wonderment and reassurance.

I'll always treasure my memory of the moment when Tracy appeared at last on the School Street pitch. I literally jumped for joy. In spite of the heat, in spite of everything she'd been through, she actually picked up speed passing the school pond, waving ebulliently, covered with sweat, and grinning ear to ear. I cried. Then, I joined her for the final turn, accompanied her down Station Street, and veered off and left her to her own crossing of the finish line into the first of many happy (and relieved) hugs.

I stood by, feeling I had just been part of something powerful and maybe even miraculous. The final turn of the Mug Race course from School Street onto Station Street will always be Tracy's Turn for me.

That encounter with the resilience of the human spirit

# ONLY LOSERS CUT AND RUN.



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

WINNERS 'TRAIN AND WALK BACKWARDS'

became one of the high points of my life. The wonder and joy of her run inspired me to compose "Tracy's Turn." I think she only heard the tune once or twice, but

have been comfortable and fun, and yet, as it had many times before, my life would have seemed a little larger and richer for being in the presence of so

Haven, CT. She married Gary Turn in 1989 and they moved to Montague Center. There, Tracy accepted a position as an occupational therapist with Sundance Nursing and Rehabilitation, where she received an award in 2003 for Rehabilitation Manager of the year.

Tracy was a fitness buff - running, biking, skiing, practicing yoga, golfing and climbing Mt. Sugarloaf. She was also an enthusiastic fan at her husband's soccer games. Much of her attention was focused on her children's education and sporting activities. She received the Lew Roberts Memorial Award for the person with the most 'Heart' from America's Greatest Heart Run and Walk of Utica, NY. "Team Tracy Turn" was established in her honor for the American Heart Association.

Tracy leaves behind her husband Gary and three children, Kayleigh, Emmet and Will. Calling hours will be held Friday, December 15th from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Walker Funeral Home, 14 High Street, Greenfield. A memorial service will be conducted on Saturday, December 16th, at 1 p.m., the Reverend Jeffrey Lewis officiating, at the First Congregational Church of Montague Center, 4 North Street, Montague Center.



she expressed great amusement and delight that I had composed it, and that people all over the country had heard it played and heard the story behind it, and that it found its way into a number of musicians' repertoires and onto at least one recording.

The last time I saw Tracy was a few weeks ago when I was just finishing a run in front of their house. She called out, "Come over for a beer sometime!" I wanted to; I wished I had time. I'm sure we would have waxed rapturous about the beer, and we would have chatted on and on about the usual things. It would

great a spirit.

I've spent much of my life running by people. I'm so glad Gary and Tracy made me feel like stopping to chat. I'm deeply sad I won't see Tracy again, yet I'm profoundly thankful for the lift she gave to my own life.

*Editor's Note*

The Turn's friends and extended family have been gathering at her house over the past few days to give support and pay their respects. "I will have a lot to say about her sometime but right now it is just too soon," said one close friend. "My phone has been ringing off the hook with calls from all her friends."

Tracy was born September 28th, 1964 in Rome, NY, the daughter of Lester and Carol (LaPlante) Fallon. She graduated in 1983 from Holland Patent Central School and later received a bachelor's degree in Occupational Therapy from Quinnipiac College, in New



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**American Dead in Iraq**  
as of 12/13/06



## Sawmill River 10K Run

The 17th Annual Sawmill River 10K Run will take place Monday, Jan. 1st, 2007 at 10 a.m. The race will start and finish at the Montague Grange, Main Street, Montague Center. Registration begins at 9 a.m. Categories: Youth (18 years old & under), Open (19-39 years old), Master (40-49 years old), Senior (50-59 years old), Senior Plus (60+ years old). entry fee is \$15 (before race day) and \$20

(on race day). Enter online at RunReg.com. Winterwear to first 100 entrants; hot and cold refreshments; sanctioned by USA Track & Field. For more information, call Al Ross at (413) 367-2464. The race will benefit the Montague Grange; Montague Volunteer Fire Department; Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, and the Turners Falls High School Scholarship Fund.



# Cornell Grad Returns to Upinngil Farm

“Why be a farmer, Sorrel?” Asked that question, here is how Sorrel Hatch answered. “The connections to the community that my family’s Upinngil Farm has forged - not simply as a roadside produce stand, but by our numerous informal arrangements with the neighbors, the sharing of equipment and animals, the trading of goods - all these busy goings on around me throughout my childhood that I always took for granted - I now see them for what they truly are. I understand the value of these bonds and how important they are for healthy communities, healthy lands, and a healthy way of life.”

“In the fall, a class from the Gill Elementary School goes on a field trip. They take a walk in the woods behind the school and emerge, astonished and wide-eyed, in our Upinngil cow pasture. We might show them how a beehive works, how to milk a cow, or what it’s like to pick a pumpkin.”

“If the consumer could know the land, know the people, and understand the value of what they eat and the sweat that went into it... if they could feel attachment to and ownership for the soil, the water and the air that grew their food... it would profoundly change the way we produce food in this country.”

Many college graduates go off on an overseas adventure after commencement. Sorrel Lyman Hatch of Gill decided to follow a different path - on foot instead of in a jet. She hiked the Appalachian Trail, which stretches more than 2,100 miles from Maine to Georgia. After all, taking to the woods is a fitting way to celebrate her four years as a Henry David Thoreau Scholar at Cornell. Now, it’s back to work at Upinngil Farm.

This year, Sorrel received her bachelor’s degree in entomology - the study of insects - at Cornell University. Last summer, she joined the staff of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station. Her farming management experience was invaluable out in the test fields, where

experiments took place in managing the diamondback moth, a major agricultural pest. Earlier, she had carried out studies on another farm insect, the flea beetle. She reflects that her entomology classes “have given me a perspective on the natural world that broader environmental classes could not have: an intrinsic understanding of the minute and infinite complexities that govern the functional ability of all life on earth.”

While most Thoreau Scholar graduates pursue advanced studies, Sorrel has decided to join her

ditions while she was studying at Cornell’s School of Agriculture and Life Sciences. She sees Upinngil as building a community of those who appreciate locally grown food. Its many customers number schoolchildren, neighbors, tourists and fellow farmers who buy cucumbers for pickling, raw milk for cheese-making, maple syrup for pancakes, and self-picked berries for pies and jam.

Sorrel is frank in expressing her frustrations about commercial food production. “The distance and self-inflicted isolation that we have from our source of sustenance allow us a sense of detachment, apathy and lack of control. This sense permits us to unforgivably desecrate both the land we live on and the land we eat from, though we are careful to tread lightly where we vacation.” She is especially concerned about “the pesticide treadmill” and seeks to promote “a cleaner, more sustainable future.”

She concludes with her own credo. “Knowing the person who grows the food and the land it is grown on, is ultimately the only true safeguard. For me, perhaps the most healthy way of life of all will be as a farmer. Nothing makes me more alive than working with my hands, sweating under the sun, and knowing I have done something real and tangible and good at the end of every day.”

Nowadays, Sorrel is also delivering the *Montague Reporter* on a new driving route in Gill, where subscribers can now receive the newspaper at a reduced rate.

We’re glad to have you back, Sorrel.



Sorrel Hatch with a gallon of Upinngil milk

father in managing Upinngil Farm. Clifford Hatch is known in the Pioneer Valley region and beyond as an entrepreneur, teacher, and advocate of sustainability. He has drawn his daughter into Upinngil’s operations ever since her childhood. “I followed him through every farming enterprise since I was tall enough to grasp a hoe and old enough to tell one plant from another - endeavors where organic production was sometimes feasible and other times economically unreachable,” she said.

Sorrel gained a new appreciation for her family’s farming tra-

# Service with a Smile!

BY ANJA SCHUTZ  
NORTHAMPTON - Hadley-born and Northampton-based, Kathryn Service is proud to be named the *Montague Reporter’s* 550th subscriber. Why would someone downriver be so fascinated with Turners Falls? (To which we reply: who wouldn’t be!) Well, her husband is Turners Falls sculptor Tim DeChristopher, and Turners itself is an old rival from her high school volleyball days.



ANJA SCHUTZ PHOTO

Kathryn Service

Service appreciates dividing her time between Turners and Northampton, as “Turners is a hardworking town - a real town-like Northampton used to be.” An avid supporter of the arts, Service is a member of the Northampton Arts Council, and a past coordinator of Northampton First Night volunteers. She said she enjoys not only the beauty of the small town of Turners and its friendly residents, but also that so many artists are now establishing their visions here.

A nurse practitioner for the Department of Mental Retardation’s Franklin and Hampshire area office, Service spends much of her time making house calls in nearby communi-

ties. The *Montague Reporter* keeps her in touch with what’s going on locally. She calls it a “great little paper” and feels like it accurately represents and reaches out to the diverse communities in Turners Falls.

No good deed goes unpunished: Service subscribed to the paper while renewing her husband’s expired subscription. For being the 550th subscriber, Service not only wins notoriety, she will also pick up a \$55 dollar gift certificate from the paper, which she has chosen to spend at Ristorante DiPaolo, a popular choice.

Stay tuned next week to find out who our 575th subscriber will be!

## Prices Dropping for Many Montague Reporter Subscribers

Subscribers to the *Montague Reporter* living in Montague Center, Wendell and Gill are benefiting from newly created paper delivery routes.

Driving routes now exist in these towns will let subscribers receive the weekly paper for \$15 for 26 issues, a \$5 savings of the regular subscription price.

With a new walking route in Erving side and Millers Falls, readers there can now

subscribe to the newspaper for \$20 for a full year.

We now have paper routes in most of the population centers we serve. Our next goal is to establish a walking route in Montague City and perhaps a driving route in the area surrounding the Montague Plains.

Anyone interested in these routes should call the *Montague Reporter* at 863-8666 or email to: reporter@montaguema.net

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## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# More Main Road Complaints

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Fred, Marsha and Aaron Rutz came before the selectboard on December 11th with a complaint about trees cut down on their property, by F&J Construction, the contractors working for Mass Highway on the Main Road reconstruction project. The Rutzes were upset that full grown trees on their property were cut down without proper notification. Mass Highway has an easement on the property, and has authority to cut down trees for the Main Road project, but the Rutzes said they were told at the outset of the reconstruction work that no trees on their property would be cut down.

Also, the wood from the

felled trees was removed from the property, "which should not have happened," according to selectboard member Ann Banash.

"We need to fix this, now," said Banash. "Landowners have to be informed. As far as we heard originally, they were only going to cut down five trees in the whole project."

"And one of those is up by Mount Hermon Road," added highway superintendent Mick LaClaire.

### Business License in Question

Green River Power Sports has not paid \$150 in fines the town of Gill issued after police responded to false alarms at the Main Route business on numer-

ous occasions over the last year. Gill administrative assistant Deb Roussel said Green River Power Sports owner Steve Luzi failed to appear at a hearing on the matter the selectboard had called for the 11th, nor had he applied for a renewal of his Class I business license, which expires as of December 31st.

Board member Phil Maddern said, "We can't renew something they did not apply for." The board took no action on Luzi's license.

The board renewed annual liquor licenses for Oak Ridge Golf Club, Jan's Package Store, the Gill Store and the Schuetzen Verein, and noted a change of manager at the Schuetzen Verein. The new manager there is Jonathan Eggleston.

The board sent thank you letters to the Greenfield Farmers Exchange for donating wreaths for the front doors of town hall, and to Sudbury Nursery for two small evergreen trees now gracing the planters by the town hall steps. These small trees will eventually be replanted on either side of the sign in front of

the Highway Department.

Asked if they would eventually reach the height of the evergreen on the town common, board member Lee Stevens said, "Not while we're still here."

That tree was the gift of a local Girl Scout troop, but has grown so large it is hard to decorate with holiday lights, as it used to be at this season of the year.

The town signed a temporary lease agreement with the Northfield Mount Hermon School to allow the Gill recreation department to use the NMH pool and ice rink at no charge, with the town insuring the recreation programs.

### Assistant Treasurer Wanted

The board asked town treasurer Ronnie LaChance to designate and train an assistant to carry out her duties should she be out sick or on vacation. At the moment, LaChance has no one to fill in for her position, which includes making out town warrants and payroll.

The board reviewed a notice from the Department of Environmental Protection about

a leak of 25 gallons of dielectric mineral oil fluid from a Western Massachusetts Electric Company transformer at 1 Franklin Road. The leak potentially included polychlorinated biphenyls.

### Pisgah Mountain Road

The board decided to officially close Pisgah Mountain Road and the southern end of River Road for the winter, as usual, and turned down a request by Cowl's Lumber to allow the company, which owns land abutting Pisgah Mountain, to plow the road this winter to make it easier for their logging trucks and crew to get in and work the land. The board felt if the road were plowed, it would encourage other residents to use the road, leaving the town liable for icy conditions which can make those roads unsafe for winter travel. Cowl's may log the property, but will have to travel the roads at their own risk.

Property tax bills should be in the mail to Gill residents as of Thursday, December 14th, just in time for the holidays.

## MCTV Schedule

### Channel 17: December 15th through December 21st

#### Friday, December 15

8:00 am Montague Update-Gina McNeely  
9:00 am Montague Selectboard 12/11  
11:00 am Surviving the Vernon Reactor #2  
12:00 am Farmers Market Concert: Stephanie Marshall  
6:00 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow # 22  
6:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review  
7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting 12/12

9:00 am The 2006 National Honor Society Induction  
10:00 am Brick House TV #5  
10:30 am Indian Reconciliation Ceremony  
11:00 am Family Friends  
5:30 pm This is Montague 1/20/04  
7:00 pm Montague Selectboard LIVE  
9:00 pm Montague/Greenfield Thanksgiving Day Football

#### Saturday, December 16

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #22  
8:30 am TFHS Weekly Review  
9:00 am GMRSD Meeting 12/12  
6:00 pm On the Table: Cooking with Michael Collins  
6:30 pm NASA Connect: World Space Congress  
7:00 pm The Well Being: Ergonomics  
8:00 pm The Cost of Freedom  
10:00 pm This is Montague 1/20/04

#### Tuesday, December 19

8:00 am This is Montague 1/20/04  
9:30 am TFHS-Gfld Turkey Day Game  
5:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review  
6:00 pm GMRSD Meeting Live  
10:00 pm The 2006 National Honor Society Induction

#### Wednesday, December 20

8:00 am TFHS Weekly Review  
8:30 am GMRSD Meeting 12/12  
12:30 pm The 2006 National Honor Society Induction  
6:00 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #22  
6:30 pm GED Connection #20  
7:00 pm The Well Being: Ergonomics  
8:00 p.m. TFHS-Gfld Turkey Day Game

#### Thursday, December 21

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #22  
8:30 am GED Connection #20  
9:00am The Well Being: Ergonomics  
10:00 am Montague/Greenfield Thanksgiving Day Football  
6:00 pm Peskeomskut Park Renovations  
7:00 pm Montague Selectboard 12/18  
9:00 pm Historical Society Annual Meeting  
10:00 pm Brick House TV #5  
10:30 pm 215th Mass Army Band

#### Sunday, December 17

8:00 am On the Table: Cooking with Michael Collins  
8:30 am NASA Connect: World Space Congress  
9:00 am The Well Being: Ergonomics  
10:00am The Cost of Freedom  
12:00 pm This is Montague 1/20/04  
6:00 pm Montague Update-Gina McNeely  
7:00 pm The 2006 National Honor Society Induction  
8:00 pm Brick House TV #5  
8:30 pm Indian Reconciliation Ceremony  
9:00 pm Family Friends

#### Monday, December 18

8:00 am Montague Update-Gina McNeely

## NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# Progress on Erving Senior Housing

BY DAVID DETMOLD - On December 4th, the selectboard reviewed progress of the Senior Housing committee, which has been meeting in recent months to develop plans to establish a senior housing complex on town-owned land near the Erving Elementary School. Joanie Bernstein from Rural Development Inc., who has been working with the group, has secured a \$7,000 grant to assist the group in developing the concept, and has brought in an architect to look over the lay of the land.

Acting on a proposal brought to the board by Diane Mero of Design for Energy Management, the board agreed to sign a contract with her consulting firm to manage the town's purchase of electricity

for municipal buildings. Mero projects savings for the town through her brokerage, and offers her services in exchange for 10% of total simple savings from the first year contract.

The board approved the sale of a used roadside mower to the town of Northfield for \$40,000. The town acquired the mower under terms of a lease agreement with WMECo, under which Erving served as the lead community in a five year multi-town lease agreement.

Selectboard member Jeff Dubay proposed holding a round table discussion with department heads about how the town should proceed to extend water and sewer lines to the villages of Farley and Erving Center. Currently, only Erving'side has access to town

water and sewer. Administrative coordinator Tom Sharp said the board was likely to take up Dubay's proposal after the '08 budget making season is complete.

On 12/11, Jay Rasku of the North Quabbin Partnership held an informal discussion with the board about the benefit of implementing the Community Preservation Act, a means of applying a surcharge of up to 3% on local property taxes in order to create a local community preservation fund and qualify for matching state funds. The funds could be used to preserve open space, historic buildings and landscapes, or create affordable housing. Rasku said more than 150 municipalities in Massachusetts have adopted the terms of the act.

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**NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

# Wendell Approves Bookkeeping Measures and Calls for Impeachment of the President

**BY JOSH HEINEMANN** - More than 50 residents attended Wendell's December 6th special town meeting, to consider ten warrant articles, ranging from routine bookkeeping measures to a unanimous decision to call for the impeachment of the President and Vice President of the United States. It was a typical agenda for Wendell.

The first nine articles dealt with regular town business and all were approved, with only a few dissenting votes through the warrant. In all, voters authorized the transfer of \$49,668.20 from the

Foundation Reserve Account, supplemental funds the town received from the state, which can be used as the town sees fit. Since Wendell lost out on a large amount of Payment in Lieu of Taxation (PILOT) money for state-owned land this fiscal year, the state was generous in sending so-called 'pothole funds' instead.

Article 1 allocated up to \$5,000 to pay for moving the World War I and II Memorials from in front of the library to a site on the common near the gazebo, and for installing two more memorials for Korean War veter-

ans and Viet Nam War veterans. The measure passed with one dissenting vote. Article 2 authorized paying up to \$5,000 for a new furnace for the town hall, which has not had adequate heat for some time. The new furnace was already in place. Selectboard member Dan Keller said the selectboard had already used emergency money to install the furnace, as townspeople might have noticed, because they were able to sit in the hall without heavy clothing. Article 3 authorized \$3,375 to pay for interest costs for the town's new fire truck.

Article 4 allowed the transfer of \$57,933 from insurance proceeds to the library construction account. The insurance money was granted for damage a summer tornado did to the new library construction.

Article 5 authorized up to \$4,500 to cover Wendell's share of a state Smart Growth grant for a consultant's work in creating a conservation bylaw and a subdivision bylaw. Wendell is paired with Pelham for this grant, and unless Pelham drops out of the project, Wendell's matching share will be \$3,000; the state's share is

\$30,000.

Article 6 authorized a payment of \$11,793.21 for highway work done under Chapter 90, for which the paperwork is unavailable. The bill needs to be paid.

Article 7 authorized \$17,000 to pay for tornado cleanup, so debris can be moved from the sides of the road where there the road crew normally plows snow. Article 8 authorized \$2400 to supplement the fire department, because its budget was used up dealing with aftermath of the tornado. Article 9 allowed Verizon and Massachusetts Electric Company to erect and maintain a pole and wires to supply electricity and electronic communication to the new town office building.

Article 10 instructed our senators and representatives in Congress to institute proceedings for the investigation of the activities of President George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney with the aim that they be

impeached and removed from office. It instructed the town clerk to certify a copy of the resolution passed containing the authorizing signature of the selectboard chair. There was an hour of discussion during which no one supported the President or Vice President.

One citizen thought impeachment, though deserved, was not the right choice politically. But others spoke of arrogance by the administration, of infringement of basic human rights provided in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, of erosion of the United States Constitution, of giving backbone to our representatives, of defending citizens freedom from searches without warrants, and from confinement without charge, of the damage done abroad to the image of America, now seen as an invader, and of Americans, increasingly unpopular around the world.

When the vote was called the article passed without dissent.



*Gloria Kegeles addresses Wendell Town Meeting.*

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG**

## Car vs. Deer

**Wednesday 12-6**

6:50 p.m. Report of an accident on Rt 63. Car vs deer. Damage under \$1,000.

6:55 p.m. Report of a lost dog around Gunn Street area. Unable to locate.

**Saturday 12-9**

6:30 p.m. Report of an

alarm sounding at a State Road address. Officer checked building. Shades drawn, no lights on inside, doors and windows secure.

**Monday 12-11**

3:46 p.m. Officer took a report about past dog attack on another dog.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG**

## Motor Vehicle Crashes into House

**Wednesday 12-6**

7:54 p.m. Assisted with disabled motorist on French King Highway.

**Thursday 12-7**

2:20 p.m. Assisted West Gill Road business with trespass issue.

3:29 p.m. Assisted with debris removal from roadway at Main Road and French King Highway.

**Friday 12-8**

11:15 p.m. Assisted Erving Police with warrant service

attempt.

**Saturday 12-9**

11:45 a.m. Received report from resident regarding illegally cut trees on Main Road.

12:15 p.m. Report of a stolen motor vehicle from Bickford Road, matter was actually civil in nature.

**Sunday 12-10**

1:35 a.m. Assisted Bernardston Police with OUI arrest on Northfield Road.

2:45 a.m. Assisted Bernardston Police with breath-

alyzer test and booking at station.

5:20 p.m. Assisted State Police with a motor vehicle that crashed into a house on Bald Mountain Road in Bernardston.

**Monday 12-11**

11:10 a.m. Assisted West Gill Road resident with VIN verification check.

**Tuesday 12-12**

12:57 p.m. Assisted Bernardston Police with unwanted subject.

**THE WENDELL POLICE LOG**

## One Car Accidents

**Thursday 11 - 30**

Officer Diemand escorted DSS representatives to a Lake Grove residence for a welfare check on children.

**Tuesday 12 - 6**

One car accident on Depot Road with no injuries.

One car accident on New Salem Road with no injuries.

One car accident on Mormon Hollow Road. One female passenger transported by Baystate Ambulance to Franklin Medical Center.

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# Gill Firefighter Ready for the Rescue

**KATHLEEN LITCHFIELD**

**GILL** - While she might not be climbing four flights of stairs in an air mask, hugging a water hose and rescuing people from tall burning buildings, Deb Parker is the volunteer firefighter you'll want to see when your nerves need as much calming as the rest of your body.

"If your car's upside down on Route 2 and you're trapped in there and your babies are trapped in there, you want me," said the 52-year-old Parker, one of twenty volunteer firefighters on the Gill fire department.

"I'm the one who'll climb in there with you and have all the basic medical rescue skills, and, I'm really good at emotional rescue. I'll be the one who's singing, 'Skidda-marink-a-dink' to your toddler and getting you to talk about your kids' day care while I'm maintaining your cervical spine so you don't get paralyzed while the guys are extricating you from your car," she said. "There's an enormously gentle, sturdy voice that you switch to. (I'm) used to connecting with people in a very fragile, vulnerable place."

Parker, who runs her own Greenfield-based grant writing and public relations business (Parker Communications), is new to the Gill fire department - she is actually still 'on probation,' or in training. She referred to the women firefighters of the Montague Center fire department as "real ones," but she is well on her way to becoming one of them, having recently re-certified as an emergency medical technician, serving as a member of the Franklin County Community Emergency

Response Team (CERT) and also on the town of Greenfield's emergency operations center.

"Being a woman in the fire service has changed dramatically over the last 30 years," said Parker, who was the only woman in her fire officers' school class in 1979. "Twenty years ago the fire service went to fires, rescued cats and sometimes pumped out basements. Now, eight out of ten calls will be medical in nature."

Last year, the Gill fire department responded to 200 calls, 70 percent of which were medical-related. Fifteen were actually fires (including cooking fires), three were cars on fire, six were brush fires and four were "illegal bums."

Parker, a native of Illinois who grew up on Boston's North Shore, lived in Hawley with her grandmother when she earned her first EMT certification at what was then Franklin County Public Hospital, in 1978. Two days later, she moved to the Gettysburg, PA area where she worked for a volunteer fire and ambulance company.

"I found it was all fascinating," she said. "They'd just come out with the 'jaws of life' then. Before that, they'd be using crowbars. I thought all the new technology was awesome."

Incessantly asking "why" and "how," she said, "the chief sent me off to fire officers school, and I loved it," she said, grinning broadly. "I learned the basic things that officers do, how to assess a scene and keep the most people safe."

Shortly after her training, Parker became the first female volunteer firefighter in Castleton, VT,



Deb Parker at the Gill Fire Department

LITCHFIELD PHOTO

an experience that was as challenging to her gender as the work was to her body.

In general, she said, 20 or 30 years ago there was more hardcore ribbing and a very macho and sometimes sexist environment within fire departments. "For a woman to try and come in was laughable and even frightening to the men," who depend upon each other to save their lives, she said. "For every probationary firefighter there's a period where you have to prove yourself." This was even harder for a woman, Parker said.

"First of all, the gear you wear, and the air pack alone, are incredibly heavy. It's multi-layered to keep you safe and it's even heavier when it's wet. You not only have to walk around with all this excess weight, but do things that require endurance and agility." The gear is also sometimes too large for women, who tend to have smaller frames than men, Parker said.

"Full turnout, including the

self-contained breathing apparatus, can add anywhere from 65 to 85 pounds, depending on size of your air tank and what you carry in your pockets," she said.

After several years in Vermont, Parker moved to Greenfield. She was re-invigorated about firefighting two years ago, after writing a grant for Franklin County Home Care providing free smoke alarm installation for 7,000 local senior citizens. While her EMT certification had long lapsed, her enthusiasm for educating about fire safety and helping others experienced a huge resurgence.

"I loved it and I learned that I'm a great educator. I felt that if I could do anything for a living, it would use all of me - my EMT training, my firefighting knowledge, the ability to be funny, to get people laughing..." she said.

She called the state fire academy, and with her 16-year-old daughter Molly's encouragement, (Molly said, "You just have to

pass, you don't have to get an 'A' on the difficult tests," and "Just please don't die before I get married.") Parker laughed, "I decided to go for it."

In addition to her standard fire academy training, Parker is also trained in "firefighter rehabilitation," a newly created position that many fire departments are implementing. After 20 minutes of active or rescue work, where they may be exposed to intense heat (up to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit), a toxic atmosphere or simply a terrifying environment, firefighters are required to take a break. Parker sets up chairs, tents, fans, snacks, clothing changes, cold water or hot cocoa depending on the weather, and takes their pulse and respiration rate. Three minutes later, she takes it again to be sure it has drastically decreased before "clearing" a fire fighter to return to active work.

"(Volunteer firefighting work) is really interesting. I'm a really smart lady and I'm easily bored. And I think you'll find that for men and women (firefighters) alike, they're smart, they like to be challenged intellectually and physically, and they want to be in control of life as much as possible."

"They're always learning new things and exercising control over chaos. And they really have a deep need to help people," she said, all things she finds true of herself.

Recently, Parker struggled with a very heavy air pack and for just a second questioned whether she could still be a firefighter after her 30-year hiatus. She shared the wise words of Chief Greene of the Montague Center Fire Department, who encourages her to succeed.

"He said, 'Look, you don't have to be everything to be a good firefighter. There are firefighters who don't do ladders who are the best pump operators in the world. Everybody has their place. You do what you do.' Having that acknowledgement made all the difference in the world," said Parker.

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**MONTAGUE**  
continued from pg 1

vote, with board chair Patricia Pruitt out of town to care for her ailing mother, the board adopted guidelines allowing groups or individuals to "place objects on the Montague town common and on Peskeomskut Park for a period of no longer than 21 days." The first group to fill out a permit to place such an object on the Montague town common was the Firemen's Relief Association, and they filled out the paperwork before the meeting even ended, to erect their traditional crèche.

The guidelines specify the group or individual responsible for a display must include a disclaimer sign, not greater than four square feet in area, stating, "This display is strictly from a private citizen or group. It in no way represents an official view of the town of Montague, nor is it endorsed by the town."

Not content with that, the town's attorney recommended the town also include a permanent sign with a general disclaimer on both the Montague common and the Turners park. The attorney will supply language for that sign shortly. The board approved this stipulation too.

The town may turn down a request for a permit to place a display on the town common or park if the board determines the event is "of such nature or duration that it cannot reasonably be accommodated in the area applied for," or if the event "presents a clear and present danger to the public health and safety," or if it is in conflict with the schedule of another event or display, or with a public celebration of the town.

The hearing drew a sizable turnout of interested residents from every part of town, some of whom commented on the proposal.

Art Gilmore, chair of the Trustees of the Soldiers Memorial, wanted to know how the new regulations would apply to the veterans memorial on Avenue A.

Frank Abbondanzio said, "The war memorial site is exempt; we're not designating it as a public forum."

Gilmore asked, "Could we stop any demonstration that took place on the war memorial? Could we call the police?"

"That site should not be under the selectboard's discretion," said Abbondanzio. "It should be entirely under the trustees'." Gilmore suggested the town might want to deed the land on which the memorial sits to the trustees, who used to own the land where the World War I memorial stood across from town hall, and who apparently own a square plot of land under the flag pole on the Montague town common.

Ross said, "A war memorial is obviously a stimulant for pro or anti-war sentiment. If people want to express their feeling pro or con about war at the memorial, they should have an option to do that. But not in a way that jeopardizes the actual property, the flags or the memorials."

"We have no objection to them being on the sidewalk," said Gilmore.

Back to the discussion of the two spots being designated by the board as 'public forums,' the town common and Peskeomskut Park, building inspector David Jensen asked, "I assume you are excluding commercial signs."

The board said yes, they were

excluding commercial signs. They also decided to exclude campaign signs, by a separate motion, reviving a dormant policy of the selectboard to disallow political campaign signs from all town owned properties (including the triangle at the junction of Turners Falls Road and Millers Falls Road, for example, and other town-owned land where campaign signs - including signs in support of various selectboard candidates - have appeared in recent years).

Michael Mackin said, "You're opening up a Pandora's Box. Once you start listing what can and can't be done, the list just grows and grows."

Regarding a separate application for public assembly or demonstration, a reporter asked, since use of public property has to be 'content neutral' in order to pass constitutional muster, then, "Why do you have 'Subject of Demonstration' on the form?"

Board member Pat Allen replied, "We have to know what it's about, so we can talk about it. What if it's hazardous to public safety?"

Martha Edwards said, "You don't want a Woodstock."

Jensen said, "It seems the only thing driving this [new policy] is the placing of creches on public property. Is this a convoluted way of creating a policy to legitimize a crèche?"

Abbondanzio said, "If after a year it results in something you don't like, you can change it, or abandon it."

Another reporter asked whether spontaneous demonstrations would be prohibited in the public parks and common, if the organizers failed to take a permit beforehand. Peg Bridges suggested, "Say the war ended overnight." The board said they

would take a lenient view of such gatherings, but if they repeated week after week the organizers would be asked to take out a permit.

After the meeting, Bill Aubrey recalled that Fred Lawrence, a Montague Center volunteer firefighter, and George Lombard, a member of the firefighters' prudential committee were the ones who constructed the first crèche on the Montague common. "They designed the figures and cut them out. Fred had a little shop in his cellar, and so did George. The firemen made the crèche itself. We got slabs, made the sides, put greenery on top and hay bales inside. We had a lot of fun doing it."

Aubrey said the crèche brings a spirit of Christmas to the village center. "It's the Christmas story. It's something for the kids."

Fred Lawrence's daughter, Ann Fisk, said the Firemen's Relief Association has put the crèche up each year since she was a little girl, and probably started the tradition in the 60s. She said the Congregational Church had offered use of their side lawn, but the Firemen's Relief Association "really wants to keep it on the common, because it's for everyone. If it's on the church lawn, it looks like it's just for one denomination."

She said one of the members of the church, who has a daughter serving in Iraq, felt the request by Montague Center resident Eric Chester, (who earlier this year sparked the town's review of its policy for use of public space when he asked to put a permanent sign on the Montague common calling for the US to remove its troops from Iraq) was also an appropriate use of the common. "It's a demon-

stration for peace, after all," Fisk said.

Under the terms of the newly adopted policy, both the crèche and Chester's sign may be placed on the Montague common for 21 days, Allen said. Fisk said the crèche would go up sometime this weekend, and would not be up for a full three weeks this year. Chester is in London this week, but his partner, Susan Dorazio, said, "He's a bulldog. He'll be there with a sign."



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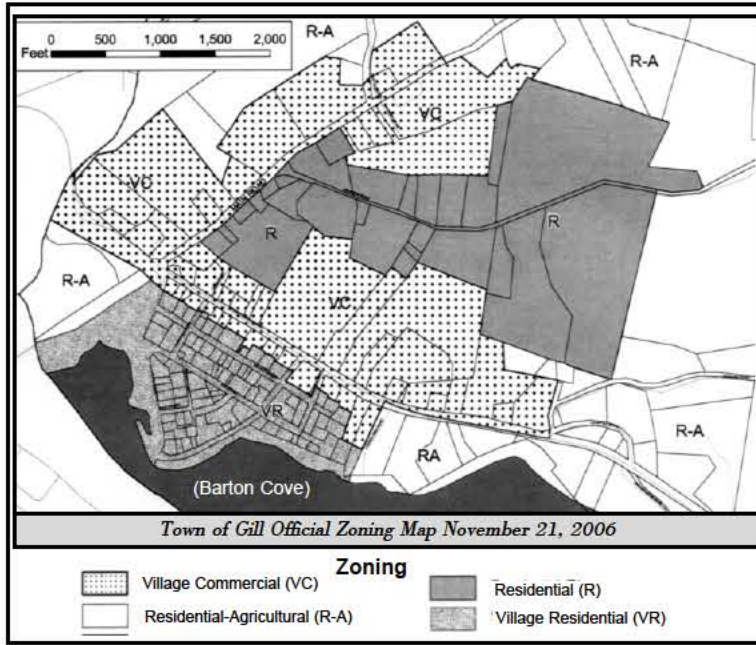
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**ZONING**  
continued from pg 1

establish procedures for developers to preserve open space through the use of a conservation development, which would allow single or two-family homes to be constructed on lots as small as half an acre in a subdivision of at least ten acres, provided 35% of the land in the area proposed for development is permanently preserved as open space, or common land. The preserved land may be used for passive recreation, conservation, or agricultural purposes. This procedure can also be adopted on parcels of not less than eight acres with adequate frontage on an existing road.

Planning board member Tim Storrow said over the past year an ad hoc committee of between 20 to 40 community members drafted the new bylaws, with the help of land use planners from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. The FRCOG



planners' involvement was paid for with the help of a \$12,400 grant from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, matched by \$2,200 of in-kind services from the town. The group held two public hearings on the bylaw changes prior to Monday's special town meeting, and sent the draft bylaws to every

resident in town with the Gill newsletter.

Allan Adie asked if the planning board was unanimous in its recommendations, to which Storrow replied there were differences of opinions among the board but, "We all felt pretty good about the outcome."

"Gill is changing. The area around us is changing. We try to keep up and adapt." He cited the outsized resources of 'Big Box' retailers compared to small retail outlets and country stores, and said, "Under our current bylaws, there is no limit. You could build a five-acre store in town if you wanted to." On the subject of drive through versus sit-down restaurants, or automatic teller machines, "our bylaws are silent." (Under the revised

bylaws, drive-through restaurants are prohibited; automatic teller machines are allowed by special permit in the Village Commercial district only.)

Storrow said the committee's goal was to "promote economic growth in balance with the protection of rural character of Gill."

Peggy Sloan, director of land use and planning for the FRCOG, said inns and bed and breakfasts would be permitted by right in the Village Commercial district, and by special permit in other parts of town. Three-family homes would require a special permit, and four-to eight-unit houses would require special permits everywhere in town but the Village Residential area of Riverside, where they would be prohibited. "There is not enough parking available in the residential district of Riverside; it is already too built up," said Sloan.

Prior to the vote, some asked why open space couldn't be preserved by simply requiring larger house lots, five acres or more. Storrow pointed out that would have the effect of preventing people with lower incomes from buying and building in Gill, contrary to the committee's intent.

Another question concerned the boundaries of the Village Commercial district expanding beyond Route 2, up both sides of Main Road past the intersection of West Gill Road. Would this

open the door to invite sprawl? Sloan pointed out that under the town's existing bylaws, unchecked development could happen just about anywhere in town. The new bylaws identify and encourage growth in the most suitable area for commercial and industrial development.

In other business, the meeting easily passed Article 2, to create mutual aid plans for the board of health and highway department with other towns, in order to receive federal emergency funds in the event of natural disasters or emergencies.

Article 3, transferring \$3,300 from free cash to purchase accounting software for the board of assessors passed with one dissenting vote. Article 4, transferring \$2,700 from free cash to the board of assessors for interim valuation adjustment services, also passed, after some discussion as to why this sum was not included in the assessors '07 budget proposal.

Article V, to transfer \$2,200 from the sale of cemetery lots to the Gill Center cemetery, in order to provide an updated inventory and map of sites, names, and lots including historical plots and their owners, passed unanimously.

Under Article VI, the town accepted the donation of a truck and rescue boat from the Gill Fireman's Association, to be used by town personnel for training, rescue, and firefighting.

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**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Vandalism at Food City**

Thursday 12-7

3:34 p.m. Report of a disturbance at a 4th Street address. Caller reports being harassed by a group of kids. Officer spoke with youngsters and sent them on their way.

Friday 12-8

4:52 p.m. Report of an accident on Avenue A in front of St Kaz. A pedestrian was hit by a car. Minor injuries reported. Subject transported to FMC.

11:30 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a domestic disturbance at 3rd Street address. Summons issued.

Saturday 12-9

2:01 p.m. Report of a safety hazard at Cumberland Farms on Montague City Road. Caller reports small child not properly restrained in motor vehicle. Gone on arrival.

Monday 12-11

11:29 a.m. Report of a larceny at Montague Center School. A cell phone was stolen from the nurses office. Report taken.

9:58 p.m. Caller from G Street reports downstairs neighbors causing a disturbance. Argument over a parking space. Officer

quieted situation down.

Tuesday 12-12

2:17 a.m. Walk-in to station reported vandalism at Food City. Someone used a shopping cart to smash the window in the exit door. No entry made. Under investigation.

6:41 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Turnpike Road address.

[Redacted], was arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery, intimidation of a witness, and malicious destruction of property over \$250.



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**SCHOOL**  
continued from pg 1

name, perhaps "the Montague Elementary School."

Christine Jutres, who has been the principal of Hillcrest School for many years, and this year assumed a half-time role as principal of Montague Center School as well, said, "Chip and I have been working together to forge a stronger educational facility between Sheffield and Hillcrest anyway. We have long considered the pros of a joint PTO and school council." Jutres pointed out that Hillcrest has a grant funded Reading First program, with specially trained teachers available to students who require focused help to improve reading ability, something presently lacking at Montague Center, where that program was pioneered for the district. "It's a constant struggle in my heart not to have programs available at the other school [Montague Center] for students who could benefit

from them."

Colton got into a bit of a sparring match with Jutres about how the Montague Center school came to lose its federal Title 1 status, disqualifying it for Reading First funding. According to Colton, the GMRSD administrators made a decision for financial reasons three years ago to no longer bus students from Turners Falls to the Montague Center School. As faculty member Nancy Daniel-Green pointed out, schools qualify for Title 1 funding based on the income level of the school population. Colton said when the decision was made to no longer bus lower income Turners Falls students to Montague Center, the school lost Title 1 funding and reading specialists.

From the audience, Martha Edwards called on the administration to resume bussing students from Turners Falls to Montague Center, "to balance the income level there."

After Jutres advocated for closing Montague Center

School, Colton asked her to "Speak in your other administrative role," as principal of Montague Center. She demurred. "Is there an administrator present to speak for Montague Center School?" Colton demanded.

"I think I did," replied Jutres, firmly.

Upper school principal Jeff Kenney buttressed the elementary principals' recommendation, saying he was excited about the consolidation plan Wood and Jutres presented. "In their plan there is a coming together." Kenney said it took kids from all over town only a few days to make the adjustment to attending school together at Great Falls Middle School, and that one of the strengths of the middle school was the diversity of its student population. He foresaw a similar ease of adjustment and resulting strength of diversity in the elementary school model outlined by Wood and Jutres.

Castro-Santos asked, "Where does that leave Gill?"

He wanted to know if the administrators thought the small school model in Gill suffers the same programmatic drawbacks Jutres pointed to at

"We're talking about how to put together the best monster we can out of these various pieces."

- Mike Langknecht speaking at the December 12th school committee meeting

Montague Center.

Superintendent Sue Gee responded. "Gill has a computer lab. It has a library. Gill has all the services they need to have, because the students [according to district agreement] cannot come to another school."

Although in November the committee found most support (6 votes to 2, with Castro-Santos abstaining) for a plan to close Montague Center School, create a pre-K through K model at Hillcrest, and send all Montague 1st through 5th graders to Sheffield, that plan seemed to quickly fall from favor on Tuesday after the principals spoke.

Next, Gee gave an update on the projected \$800,000 'budget gap' that has been overshadowing the school closing debate all year. She did not back away from the numbers in those projections; in fact she upped the ante on the district's anticipated shortfall in the towns' ability to meet a level service school budget next year, increasing the number to \$969,152. Gee said that number is "very preliminary," but added the GMRSD will have to solidify budget numbers within six weeks. "Our first (Fiscal '08) budget is due on January 31st."

Following the meeting, Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton said, "I think it is inappropriate to estimate a budget gap when the school committee hasn't even looked at a budget yet. They have a basic oversight function."

Gee broke down the schools' operating budget into its component parts, so the committee could begin to focus on ways to cut it. Figures compiled by the superintendent suggest the district can hope to save at most \$160,000 a year by closing a

school.

Gee said teacher salaries comprise 29% of the GMRSD operating budget (\$5,053,590); staff salaries for library, guidance, psychologists, nurses and substitutes cost \$979,021; para-professionals cost \$768,464; administrators: \$660,890, managers and tech staff: \$224,283; secretaries and clerks: \$407,528; out of district placements for special education students cost roughly \$1 million (5.6% of the entire budget), charter and school choice expenses cost \$820,000. The costs of health benefits and other insurance for the school district and its employees equals more than 20% of the budget, Gee said, pegging those steadily rising fixed costs and entitlements at \$3,637,930. She ran down the remaining costs. Debt: (8.5% of the budget) at \$1,510,000; maintenance, heat and utilities (8% of the budget) at \$1,417,829, athletics: \$148,866, general supplies at 2% (\$350,000) and staff development, textbooks and technology, combined, at 1% of the budget, or \$184,818.

School committee chair Mary Kociela said she had heard criticism the committee was being too influenced by financial considerations in their decision making process on school closing. While Kociela stressed the importance of the committee's fiduciary role, "It is not less visionary to be fiscally responsible," she also sought to highlight the points on which the models under discussion for reconfiguring Montague elementary schools fit the committee's stated educational goals for the district, including broader grade spans, and room to grow the district.

Following a lengthy back and forth in which school committee members repeated or elaborated on positions they had already staked out in November, Ted Castro-Santos took the podium to lay out a broad defense of a position to not only keep Montague Center open, but for the school committee and the town to embark on a capital project to upgrade and expand that school. He used a Powerpoint presentation with maps and graphs to illustrate his argument.

Castro-Santos based his argument on school choice, which he said could work to the district's advantage if it were to capitalize on the strengths of Montague Center School, both

see SCHOOL pg 12

# Milk Bottles of Gill

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - Local historian Edwin Potter, who collects Franklin County milk bottles, knows of at least six dairy farms in Gill that had their names embossed on milk bottles. There may have been more. The Mount Hermon School also had their own milk bottles. The oldest of the three styles of bottles from Mount Hermon in Potter's collection was manufactured before 1910 by the Thatcher Glass Manufacturing Co.

According to Potter, "Bottles from the Eddy Farm are frequently found. This farm was located on Main Road, and is now operated by the family of Allen Flagg. Malcolm and Luther Eddy with their father produced and sold milk to the Greenfield Dairy."

Potter continued, "It is rumored the Eddys felt the dairy plant was not paying them enough for their milk. Taking matters into their own hands, they decided to bottle their own milk. After they purchased the bottles and caps, the Greenfield Dairy came through with more money, so they never used the new bottles."

At different periods of time, two farmers owned the farm where the Oak Ridge Golf Course is now located. P.J. Brozowski operated the farm in the 1920s, J. Baranowski farmed it in the 30s and 40s. Some of the land was used to grow tobacco.

Potter also has in his collection a set of bottles in half pints, pints, and quarts embossed, "Boyle, Gill, Mass." Glen Boyle farmed on Cross Road. Later in life, he wrote articles for the *Greenfield Recorder*. According to the marks on these bottles, they were manufactured in the 1930s.

Potter said, "Another bottle I have in my collection is embossed, 'Oakdale Farm, Raw Milk, John Silva, Gill, Mass.'" This farm was located on Route 2, and is now owned and operated by Jake Giknis.

Potter has one more Gill milk bottle in his collection. "This bottle is embossed 'T. P. Czarnecki, Bros. Co. Gill, Mass.'" This farm was located at the end of River Road. According to the late Roswell Warren, the farm was operated by Tony and his brother Paul during the Prohibition



PHOTO BY ANJA SCHUTZ

*This milk bottle, from the collection of Edwin Potter of Turners Falls, was manufactured in 1911 by the Thatcher Mfg. Co. of Elmira, NY. It was used to bottle milk by the Mount Hermon School Dairy.*

days of the 1920s. They made some of the best liquor for miles around. Potter added, "I have often wondered if the milk bottles were always filled with milk when they were delivered."

Potter, who lives on Millers Falls Road in Turners Falls, said he would welcome any comments, or news of any other named milk bottles from Gill. He can be reached at 863-4288.

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## FINDING BALANCE

# Laughter Does a Body Good

BY JENNY CHAPIN

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - Navajos have a tradition called the Laughing Party, honoring a newborn's first laugh, usually at around six weeks old. The person who makes the baby laugh first plays an important role in the child's life.

Laughter relates to making and strengthening human connections. People laugh when they're comfortable with one another, laughing creates a bond, and bonding promotes further comfort, and trust. Laughter facilitates social cooperation, as smiling and laughing show that we feel good and also influences the behavior of others towards us. The sounds of laughter communicate playfulness, not hostility.

Studies have shown that people are 30 times more likely to laugh in social settings than when they are alone (and without pseudo-social stimuli like

television). The reason laughter can be contagious has roots in the neurological mechanism of laugh detection. Dr. Robert Provine, a leading researcher on the science of laughter, theorizes that humans have an auditory laugh detector, a neural circuit in the brain that responds exclusively to laughter. Once triggered, the laugh detector activates a laugh generator, a neural circuit that causes us to produce laughter.

Researchers posit that the first human laughter may have begun as a gesture of shared relief at the passing of danger. The relaxation that results from a bout of laughter inhibits the biological fight-or-flight response. Laughter may have then evolved to change the behavior of others; for example, in an embarrassing or threatening situation, laughter may serve as a conciliatory gesture or as a way to deflect anger, and if the threatening



person joins in, the risk of confrontation may lessen.

Humor is one specialized way to evoke laughter, but most laughter doesn't follow jokes. Provine's research has involved eavesdropping on people in public places, where he found that maybe one of ten laughter episodes followed anything resembling a joke. Instead, laughter typically followed utterances like, "Well, gotta go," or "Where'd you get that shirt?" Laughter can be generated simply by delight, and enjoyment of the company of others.

Although humans are not the only species that laughs, we are the only one to laugh in our particular way, with all the gestures and sounds. The

*Encyclopedia Britannica* describes human laughter as our bodies performing "rhythmic, vocalized, expiratory and involuntary actions." From sedate giggles to boisterous guffaws, laughter engages muscles of the diaphragm, abdomen, lungs, face, legs and back.

The ability to laugh helps those coping with illness and life stresses. Research suggests that laughter can bring balance to the immune system, which helps us fight off disease.

By reducing levels of certain stress hormones, laughter provides a safety valve that shuts off the flow of stress hormones and the fight-or-flight compounds that swing into action in our bodies when we experience stress, anger or hostility. These stress hormones suppress the immune system, increase the number of blood platelets (which can cause obstructions in arteries) and

raise blood pressure.

Laughing lowers blood pressure, and increases blood flow and oxygenation of the blood, which assists healing. It increases natural killer cells that destroy tumors and viruses; gamma-interferon, a disease-fighting protein; T-cells, which are a major part of the immune response; and B-cells, which make disease-destroying antibodies.

People often store negative emotions, such as anger, sadness and fear, rather than expressing them. When negative emotions are held inside, they can cause biochemical changes that can affect our bodies negatively. Laughter provides a way for these emotions to be harmlessly released.

*Jenny Chapin is an acupuncturist, bodyworker, and yoga teacher in Greenfield. Suggest a topic or question for her column at [jjchapin@crocker.com](mailto:jjchapin@crocker.com).*

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

## Diagnostic Imaging

BY FRED CICETTI

**LEONIA, NJ** - Q. *What's the difference between a CAT scan and an MRI?*

The CAT scan, MRI and others are known as diagnostic-imaging tests. Let's go over the common ones.

### X-ray

One of the oldest forms of medical imaging, an X-ray examination uses electromagnetic radiation to make pictures.

An X-ray machine passes a beam through your body and records an image digitally or on film. Body tissues produce different results. Tissues show up in shades of gray. Bones look white. Lungs that contain air appear dark.

Sometimes you take a contrast medium such as barium and iodine to outline an area of your body. This medium may be injected, swallowed or taken as an enema. The contrast medium appears opaque on X-ray film, providing clear images of structures such as your digestive tract or blood vessels.

### CT scan

Computed tomography, known as a CT scan or CAT scan, uses X-rays and computers to produce precise images of cross-sections of the body. It is much more revealing than a conventional X-ray.

A CT scan employs a doughnut-shaped machine called a gantry. The patient lies on a table inside the gantry while an X-ray tube rotates around the patient's body sending radiation through it. Detectors measure the exiting radiation and convert it into electrical signals.

A computer gathers the electrical signals and assigns them a color based upon signal intensity. The computer then assembles the images and displays them on a computer monitor. Some CT scans require a contrast medium.

### MRI

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) uses a magnetic field and radio waves, instead of X-rays, to create pictures of cross sections. In many cases, MRI gives more information than a CT scan or other types of diagnostic



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

imaging. Sometimes contrast agents are used to enhance the images.

Most MRI machines are large cylinders. Inside the machine, the human body produces very faint signals in response to radio waves. These signals are detected by the MRI machine. A computer then interprets the signals and produces a three-dimensional representation of your body. Any cross-section can be extracted from this representation.

There are MRI machines that are open on all sides. These newer open MRI scanning systems are useful for the claustro-

phobic, obese or anyone who feels uncomfortable about lying inside a cylinder.

The MRI often helps with the diagnosis of central nervous system disorders such as multiple sclerosis, because it produces such high-resolution images of the brain and spinal cord.

### Nuclear Imaging

Nuclear imaging detects radiation from the body after a radiopharmaceutical agent or tracer is either injected or taken orally. The images are recorded on computer and on film.

While other imaging methods assess how the organs look, nuclear imaging shows how organs work. For example, nuclear imaging can analyze blood flow to and from the heart.

Nuclear imaging provides information that other imaging techniques cannot produce.

When undergoing a nuclear-imaging exam, the patient lies on a table under a special camera that takes a series of pictures. A computer connected to the camera detects the radiation coming from the body organ

being examined and makes a series of images.

### Ultrasound

Ultrasound examination, also called diagnostic medical sonography, uses high-frequency sound waves beyond the range of the human ear to produce precise images of structures within your body.

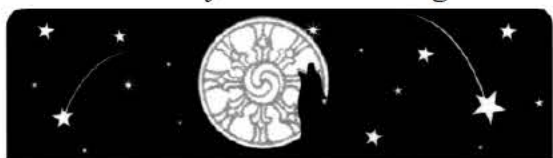
Ultrasound imaging is based on the principles of sonar used by ships to detect underwater objects and by bats to catch flying insects.

During an ultrasound, a technician presses a hand-held transducer against your skin. The transducer generates and then receives reflected high frequency sound waves from your body. However, some ultrasounds are done inside your body.

Information about your body is sent from the transducer to a computer. The computer then composes images based on this data.

*If you have a question, please write to [fredcicetti@gmail.com](mailto:fredcicetti@gmail.com).*

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# Jep's Place: Hope, Faith and Other Disasters Part XIV

## Sweet Potatoes

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - One day when Pa was at work, Ma bustled about in the kitchen with a happy look on her face. I saw something that looked like cooked squash sitting in a bowl.

"What's that?" I asked.  
 "Get away from there, that's sweet potato for Johnny."

I'd never tasted sweet potato. We never grew anything but white potatoes. Ma must have sneaked the sweet potatoes by Pa when she went into the store to buy groceries at the First National.

He usually sat waiting in the car while she shopped. He

kept control of the money, even when only Ma was working. He might have been especially overbearing that day.

Ma went in the front door of the First National. I followed. She zipped out the rear door of the store, slipped in the back door of the adjoining tavern, slapped money on the bar. The bartender quickly poured her a shot of liquor; she tossed it down and hurried back into the store to finish shopping. She dutifully deposited the change into Pa's outstretched hand. She seemed calmer and at peace, with a bit of a smug smile on her face and the sweet potatoes tucked away in

the grocery bag after her quick trip to the tavern.

I pestered for a taste until she gave me a spoonful, to get rid of me.

"Yuk." I said. "That tastes like someone dumped sugar into mashed potatoes."

"Good! Because there's only enough for Johnny."

Ma continued bustling around the kitchen, eyes shining bright and a contented smile on her face.

"Johnny is coming home from the CCC," she said, as though she could hardly believe it. Just talking about Johnny coming home made Ma happy.

Johnny was good to me and came to my defense one day, when the girls teased me when I had an accident on the way to the outhouse. I was sad when he left home.

Even after Johnny froze his ears walking the six miles from school, Pa still did not

transport the kids, though he was paid a stipend to do so. All three of them were Ma's kids from her first marriage. Pa worked the swing shift, the time didn't come right for him to transport them, he was sleeping, or gas cost money. He reasoned that if he could walk across Poland to come to America, they could walk to high school.

Pa had already taken his daughter Helen out of school to work in the onion fields, and later got her a housekeeping job. Walter and Stanley, Pa's boys by his first wife, had already quit school at about age 13, so they were spared the walk. By the time Mary, John, and Elisabeth trudged the six miles through snow-clogged roads to get to school, they often shivered so much the teachers would let them stand by a radiator to thaw out until their hands stopped shaking.

Mary didn't have any overshoes. She wore a pair of men's rubber barn boots. When she got in sight of school, she put on her shoes and hid the boots in a snow bank, ashamed to be seen wearing them. After school let out, she'd hang back until the other school kids had gone along, so they wouldn't see her uncover the boots to put them on for the long walk home.

When Mary quit, Pa got her a job taking care of a grocer's kids and doing the housework in their apartment over the store and working part-time in the store. Johnny quit next, and without him to walk with her, Bessie quit, too. Pa got her a job as housekeeper and nanny for three dollars a week. Pa came around on payday to collect her wages. However, it wasn't unusual, back then, for working children to give part of their pay to their parents. Here they gave it all.

--to be continued next week

**Christmas is Coming!**  
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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Moss Hollow*; rock and roll! 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH**  
Concert at The Bookmill: Same Old Blues, local trio plays raggy country blues of the 1920's-30's: 8:30 - 11:30 p.m.

John Coster and Katherine First at the Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett Town Hall, Leverett. Coster's songs blended with some extraordinary tunes from the Celtic and North American tradition uniquely performed with harmonica, violin, guitar and keyboards. Katherine First: a violinist with a repertoire of traditional tunes and studied with notable fiddlers, including the great Liz Carrol. \$12/\$10 seniors. Info. 548-9394. 8 p.m.

Make-it-yourself Family Craft Fair at the Montague Grange. Guided craft activities for all ages to make great gifts: jewelry, gnomes, ornaments, picture frames, keepsake boxes, beeswax candles and more. Cost: \$1-5 per craft activity, proceeds to benefit the Grange and Heifer International. 1 to 4 p.m.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Catamount*, classic rock & roll. 9:30 p.m.

Five Rivers Council monthly planning meeting, downtown campus, Greenfield Community College, 9:30-am - noon. Free and open to the general public. For further information, call Daniel Brown at (413) 624-5597

**FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH - 17TH**  
"The Ja'Duke Holiday Spectacular" will be performed on Friday and Saturday, at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$10 12/under and 65/over. Tickets can be reserved by calling the Shea

Theater at (413) 863-2281 x2. More info: [www.jaduke.com](http://www.jaduke.com).

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH**  
MacDonald Family Singers at the Montague Center Congregational Church for a Holiday Musical Concert and carol sing. Refreshments will be served. Admission: non-perishable foods to be donated to the needy. 4 p.m.

Stories for the dark time of year, storytellers Tim Van Egmond,

either producing their own show or participating in someone else's please come by. At the studio: 34 2nd Street, Turners Falls.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20TH**  
Free Lecture Series by Dr. Maiella, Naturopathic Doctor. Held at Green Fields Market, Greenfield. December 20th topic: Menopause. 6:30 p.m. For more information call (413) 230-4462 or [www.valleynaturopathicfamilymedicine.com](http://www.valleynaturopathicfamilymedicine.com)



*Trumpeter Swan in Acrylic*  
Areny McCann of St. Joseph, Minnesota, was judged the top painting among the 51 state winners in the 2003 Federal Duck Stamp Contest. McCann's painting became the 2001-02 Federal Junior Duck Stamp.  
View the Junior Duck Stamp artwork from Massachusetts students grades K - 12 at The Discovery Center, until December 23rd. The first place design from the national contest is used to create a Junior Duck Stamp for the next year.  
Perhaps this year's winner will be among them!

Karen Chase, Norah Dooley, and Rona Leventhal. Held at Green Fields Market, Greenfield from 2 to 4 p.m. FREE.

**THROUGH SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17TH**  
Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Photographer/digital print artist John Paul Caponigro.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19TH**  
MCTV Producers Meeting 7 - 8:30 p.m. Everyone interested in

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22ND**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, Holiday House Party with *Love Bomb!* 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23RD**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls,

Open Mic Fiddle Tune Swap at Deja Brew, Wendell. 8 to 10 p.m., no cover.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Ottomatic Slim*, rockin' blues, great harp, 8-11 p.m. No cover.

Ray Mason at Deja Brew, Wendell. 8 to 10 p.m., no cover.

*Free Radicals*, rock and roll! 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 13TH**  
Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Celebrate the First Year Anniversary with *Face to Face: Portraits from Fifty Years*, photographs by Douglas Kirkland. 1- 7 p.m. reception, exhibition, live music and hors d'oeuvres. 7:15 - 8:45 p.m. artist's talk & refreshments.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST**  
Montague Grange Family Dance Simple dances with easy instruction geared for little feet. Lots of fun, humor and some singing games too. Great for 3-11 yr olds, and their parents. Chase the Winter Blues away with Laughing Folk Music and a Fun Caller. 4 to 5:30 p.m.

The Shea Theater New Year's Eve Event! This is the fourth "Comedy at the Shea" show. Some proceeds will benefit the Turners Falls RiverCulture Project, which intends to seek a license from the selectboard to serve beer and wine in the lobby before the show. Material will be appropriate for adults. For more information, call the Shea 863-2281, or [www.thesheacomedy.com](http://www.thesheacomedy.com). Show begins at 8 p.m.

Ready or Not Here it comes Happy New Year's Dinner Presented by Our Lady of Peace Church. Ring in the New Year with a lovely meal (prime rib) prepared by Chef Tom Mimitz. Also includes entertainment (the Fabulous Maurices), door prizes

and raffles. Held in St. Kaz Hall located at corner of Avenue A & Seventh Street in Turners Falls. 5:30 p.m. Reservations: 863-2585

Annual Starry, Starry Night An evening extravaganza-musicians and performers of all kinds, in various venues around Orange Center, plus special events that change from year to year and fireworks along the Millers River. Come welcome the New Year!

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5. **UNACCOMPANIED MINORS PG**  
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6. **THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS**  
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**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH**  
Nature Craft: Learn about items from nature that can be used in art projects and make your own creation! Open to all. 10 a.m.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH**  
Learn how to flyfish with instruction from published flyfishing expert, Bob Sousa 1- 3 p.m.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22ND**  
Bird Bingo! Join Refuge staff for an interactive game that will help your child learn about birds. 11 a.m.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23RD**  
Bird ID Walk along Power Canal Join Refuge staff for a walk along the power canal and learn to identify our wintering local birds. Free and open to the public. 11 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27TH**  
Friends Coffeehouse Series: Montague Community Band. Doors open at 6:30pm, concert begins at 7 p.m. Join the Friends and celebrate the sounds of the season and the coming New Year! Favorite band classics played by this 25 piece band, comprised of trombones, trumpets, clarinets, tubas, sax and more! Coffee & refreshments for sale. \$5 - \$10 donation at the door.

**THURSDAY & FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28TH - 29TH**  
Nature Programming 10 a.m. & 2 p.m. Nature Programming for Families. Journey through the Connecticut River Watershed and discover special features of the region. Each program includes hands on activities for young visitors, their friends and family. Four Programs. Free.

**ON DISPLAY THROUGH DECEMBER 23RD**  
Junior Duck Stamp artwork from Massachusetts students grades K - 12. The first place design from the national contest is used to create a Junior Duck Stamp for the following year. Proceeds from the sale of Junior Duck Stamp support conservation education, and provide awards and scholarships for students, teachers, and schools.

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## OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

## Trekking with Papa Noel

BY FLORE

MONTAGUE CENTER - Here is the time I like best...

Night has covered the Earth; things move at a slower space. It gives one time to concentrate! Plus, after all, I have been trekking along the byways and highways of our villages these last few days, catching sight of so many Papa Noels.

Wouldn't you say, at this time of year particularly, the streets are flourishing with all kinds of 'Kitsch Art'?

What is Kitsch Art? An assemblage of material that normally would be put to use for its original function, but has been transposed to another use.

So many households have caught the holiday decorating bug, that walking and looking becomes an every day ritual!

We realize what a fertile

imagination can create during this special solstice season, especially when the decorations are homemade.

We also notice a lot of store bought gimmicks, power blown merry-go-rounds, unfortunate Santas undulating on the front lawns.

How about an interview with those great, well known characters?

You read me right! Yes, *Pere Noel*, (the French equivalent of Santa Claus) those ensconced, hold your breath, in our very neighborhood!

I trekked along with them, from Turners Falls, to Greenfield and back to Montague again to check out how things were.

While everyone thinks the *Pere Noels* are busy in their atelier concocting presents, up at the North Pole, I have

news. No longer...

"First," they confided, "with the global warming, how could anybody in their right mind stand watching the ice melting? It is so sad.

"How could our team of reindeers work there?"

"We're looking for a home," seems to sing the wandering and wondering Bears' Family, next to the Freedom Bank, on Montague City Road.

Or how about that other Father Christmas, already flat on the ground, *depassé par les événements!* (Can't cope with coming events!)

But cometh the night...

Light sparkles from the houses' windows to our hearts!

Doesn't that remind us of childhood reveries?

Of snows of yesteryear?

*The bear family on Montague City Road seems to sing of Home, Sweet Home for Christmas*



PHOTOS BY FLORE

*Holiday Reindeer in Montague Center*



A potter's Pere Noel



Exhausted from Mushing o'er Snowless Lawns

## RAP

continued from pg 1

going to school; she already knows she wants to earn her Ph.D. In the opening number, Pam sings about her love for school and sings, "My buds and I are going to tell you the story of the seven grades!"

Different characters follow with raps representing each grade. The show's climactic scene comes when an older student, Mr. Long Bored, complains about going to school, ("They Call Me Long Bored") and then steals Pam's skateboard. The kids look to their principal to save the day ("Principal Jones Save our

School"). She does; a lesson is learned and everyone lives happily ever after.

The students have been preparing for the performance since late September, according to Nate, a 6th grader who is part of Two-Rap-Da-Two, singing "Whattaya' Like to Do Rap." Andrew, also in 6th grade says he has been practicing for half an hour every night in recent weeks in addition to the scheduled Monday and Friday chorus rehearsals. He is preparing for his part in Four Rappers, who sing "I Need a Test."

"This [type of production] builds confidence and gives kids a moment of stardom, but it is also hard, hard work," said

Hines. *Jammin' Pam* has been performed once before, in 2002, by students at the Sunderland Elementary School, where Hines also teaches. Asked why at Swift River, why now, Hines replied, "This was the moment. It struck me as I was working with this group: they've got it; these kids are rappers."

Hines has obviously shared his confidence with the students. Andrew smiled as he said, "Mr. Hines chose to do it with us because a lot of kids in 5th and 6th grades like rap, and he thought we would be good at it."

Swift River, a small, rural, public elementary school serving the communities of Wendell and New Salem, has held onto

its art, music and physical education programs despite budget strains. "Projects like this allow children to really shine. We are so fortunate to have staff members willing to work so hard, to give so much to support the students," said Swift River principal Sheila Hunter.

The halls of the school are full of the vibrant sounds of upbeat singing during the Monday and Friday chorus rehearsals.

Fifth and sixth graders will be singing side by side in this production. Andrew commented, "It is pretty fun to be with the 5th graders because you don't usually see them except at recess and lunch."

"We are doing a lot more with multi-age grouping," said Hunter. The matinee performance will be attended by the whole school. Older students will sit alongside their younger reading buddies, as they do at the weekly community sing and monthly community sharings. "We're really mixing it up this year. It makes for great performances and great audiences," Hunter observed.

It is clear from talking with students and staff at Swift River that the lessons learned by those participating in and attending Monday's performances will extend far beyond the moment of the raperetta.

MQ

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