



# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 10

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

DECEMBER 7, 2006

## Wendell Unanimous: Impeach Bush, Cheney

**BY JONATHAN VON RANSON** - The Town of Wendell spoke strongly to its representatives to Congress Wednesday night, December 6th to instruct them that President George W. Bush and Vice President Richard B. Cheney "warrant impeachment and trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States."

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Cheney, explained the purpose of the impeachment provision of the Constitution, touched on impeachment history, described the state of world opinion against the U.S., and urged moral considerations, and tactical ones.

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Gloria Kegeles reminded that, "Law is part punishment, part deterrence. If we don't proceed with impeachment, future presidents could take that as a message they could get away with whatever they want - and continue in same vein as Bush."

Robbie Leppzer, comparing the present era to the Watergate era, when Richard Nixon resigned rather than face impeachment, said Congress is "very reluctant to even talk about impeachment," despite Bush's "huge abuses of power." He said Congress is "in the process of shredding the Constitution [and] will not act decisively to stop this abuse of power unless we, the people, demand it." He said the Constitution is likewise "being abrogated by a President unwilling to act within the U.S. law and within human rights standards agreed to in international treaties, and certified by US law."

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**Dianna DeStefano, of Leverett, relaxes after her turn on the catwalk at the Lost and Found Fashion Show, Saturday, December 2nd**

PHOTO MARISOL DUPLISEA

## LAUNDROMAT FASHION SHOW WALKS THE EDGE

**BY AMY LAPRADE**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - Was it a surrealistic dream or did it actually happen in a sleepy, working class town called Turners Falls? Perhaps a collective hallucination? Any casual observer wandering past the laundromat on 3rd Street on December 2nd at 11 p.m., would have caught a glimpse of wild, glittery folks dressed in trash bag gowns sashaying along a makeshift runway above the washing machines.

The second annual lost and found laundromat fashion show, the brainchild of Chris Janke and Emily Brewster, owners of Suzee's Third Street Laundry took place in conjunction with the Open Studios and Downtown Walking Tour, where local artists opened their studios to the public, and put their talents on display.

**see FASHION pg 8**

## Northeast Biodiesel Expects \$650,000

**BY BETSY CALVERT**  
**GREENFIELD** - Northeast Biodiesel, the embryonic manufacturer planning to build in Greenfield's industrial park, expects to receive another \$650,000 in development money, this time from the state, via a community block grant to Greenfield.

That brings the level of critical investment so far to about \$2.8 million for the recycled vegetable oil project, in the works now for many years. Northeast reached its most difficult milestone of \$2 million in private investment in late September. The final phase of financing is now in the hands of the banks, said Northeast president Lawrence Union.

After years of fanfare, Northeast has been keeping a low profile the past year. Union said the company wanted to wait until it is ready to break ground for construction before issuing any more press announcements. Reports of incremental progress, however, show up in emails sent to supporters of the project's overarching organization, Co-op Power.

Ground breaking on the plant will occur the day after banks

make a commitment for the remaining capital, last estimated at \$4 million, Union said. Northeast is currently working with the Bank of Western Massachusetts and a small bank out of Tennessee.

Greenfield's grant administrator Steven Herzberg, two weeks ago shipped out a grant application to the state Department of Housing and Community Development for \$650,000 in block grant funds, which will represent the town's commitment to the biodiesel facility. Northeast and the Greenfield-based Franklin County Community Development Corporation originally approached the state about the grant. Town officials supported the application, which will not reduce any other block grant money to the town, Herzberg said.

"The project will bring both tax revenue and jobs to the town," he said. "Hopefully, the town is creating a niche for itself, with an alternative energy focus."

The problem is, the state will take many weeks to process the grant application and who knows how long before the check arrives. In the meantime, the banks were unwilling to process the loan until

all the money was lined up, Union said. So, to keep the banks moving, Northeast turned to a non-profit in California, the Rudolf Steiner Foundation, which finances socially responsible projects. The foundation has guaranteed the \$650,000 until the state supplies the grant funds.

Northeast plans to buy used vegetable oils from a large rendering company in Canada, which collects the oil from restaurants and other suppliers. The plant will then turn the oil into biodiesel, which can in turn be used almost interchangeably with diesel, or in a mixture with regular petroleum diesel. Biodiesel is less polluting the petroleum-based fuels, and of course, does not require petroleum production and prospecting.

The plant expects to start out with 25 employees producing 5 million gallons a year.

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

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### PET OF THE WEEK Swashbuckling Feline



#### Buck Rogers

Buck is a two-year-old male short hair cat in need of a good home. An olympian figure in the cat world, Buck Rogers is one muscular, athletic looking cat with an equally strong face. He has seriously debonaire steel grey fur and luminous yellow-green eyes. He loves to rub his head on you and he's as friendly and affectionate as he is handsome. For more information on adopting Buck Rogers, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

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### Headin' to the Library



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

**MONTAGUE CENTER-**  
Beth and Nathaniel Ross of Montague Center like to walk to the Montague Center Library with their little red wagon.

**Residents of Gill:**  
**Special Town Meeting**  
'Smart Growth Zoning'  
Revising zoning bylaws to create  
• Village commercial district  
• Limits on big retail stores  
• Flag lots  
• Conservation development  
**Dec 11th, 6:30 P.M.**  
**Town Hall**

### Tax Bills Mailed

Fiscal 2007 real estate and district tax bills were mailed December 4th, 2006. Also mailed were the personal property bills, according to tax collector Patricia Dion. Payment is due on or before January 5th, 2007. To obtain a receipted bill, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope and both copies of the bill with your payments. Any new owner not in receipt of a tax bill should contact the tax collectors office at 413-863-3200, ext. 202. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30.

Real estate abatement and exemption applications are available from the assessors' office. Abatement applications must be filed on or before January 5th, 2007.

For their convenience, town of Montague residents will now be able to pay all real estate, district and personal property bills online. To pay a bill online, have your bill(s) and checkbook in hand, and then go to [www.montague.net](http://www.montague.net) and click on departments, treasurer/collector, online bill payments, then complete each screen to process your payment. It's convenient, fast and secure.

### FACES & PLACES

High in the saddle, Chef Hilton Dottin rides the newly arrived cast iron rooster at Ristorante DiPaolo, as owner Denise DiPaolo looks on.

### Main Road in Gill Closed

The Gill selectboard has closed Main Road in Gill to thru traffic beginning Tuesday, December 5th, 2006 until further notice, to allow the Main Road reconstruction to continue from the North Cross Road intersection heading north to the town line. The detour will route traffic heading north out West Gill Road to Route 10 in Bernardston and traffic heading south will be detoured via the same route, to what is known as the Turners Falls Road on the Bernardston side of the detour

route. Any questions related to construction should be directed to highway superintendent Mick LaClaire at 413-863-2324.

**"During WWII our rations ran out and we begged Japanese kitchen workers for scraps."**  
From Local Color #8:  
Stories by Area Senior Citizens About Life as They Remember It.  
Available at Books n' More in Turners Falls and World Eye in Greenfield.  
[www.localcolormemoirs.com](http://www.localcolormemoirs.com)

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Possession of Coke on 2nd Street

**Thursday 11-30**  
12:26 a.m. Report of breaking and entering at a Marshall Street address. A 16-year-old juvenile male was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and disturbing the peace.  
3:15 p.m. Walk-in to station reported fraud at a 4th Street address. A case of identity theft is being investigated.  
8:17 p.m. Report of a fight near Subway on Avenue A. Two male subjects left before officer arrived.

**Friday 12-1**  
6:55 p.m. Report of a break-

**Saturday 12-2**  
7:34 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

**Sunday 12-3**  
2:46 p.m. Report of an animal complaint on Turnpike Road near the landfill. Dogs were acting aggressively. Referred to the Animal Control Officer.

**Monday 12-4**  
9:06 p.m. After serving a search warrant at [redacted], officers arrested [redacted] and charged him with possession of a class B drug, possession of cocaine with intent to distribute, and possession of a class D drug.

**Tuesday 12-5**  
12:56 a.m. Report of an unwanted person at a 2nd Street address. [redacted] was arrested and charged with trespassing.  
7:01 p.m. Report of an assault at a 4th Street address. Caller stated an unwanted female broke the door and assaulted resident. Under investigation.

### SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES December 11th - 15th

**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, 11th**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics  
1:00 p.m. Canasta

**Tuesday, 12th**  
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi  
**Wednesday, 13th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 14th**  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, 15th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. PACE Aerobics

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

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

**Monday, 11th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch  
**Tuesday, 12th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday, 13th**  
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing  
12 Noon Bingo  
**Thursday, 14th**  
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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**IMPEACH**

from page 1  
in Washington, and might backfire against progressives.

Neil Gomberg said he agreed with Schwartz about the kind of administration Bush and Cheney have led, but disagreed on impeachment. He said he felt "it's important to send a message," to let Washington know what people are feeling.

Impeachment of the two top leaders would help salvage the opinion of the rest of the world toward the U.S., according to John "Klondike" Koehler. As it is now, he said "Americans have a target on their back when they travel abroad."

Teri Koehler got applause for her role in initiating the petitioned article, and for saying when she began the effort she felt afraid, but was now glad. "I won't have to tell my grandchildren that, when my government was engaged in illegal war and genocide, I failed to act out of fear."

Lisa Hoag made the point that the people rule: "The Constitution is our Constitution."

Rosalie Rosser said she corresponds with people in many

countries, and is often asked "What's going on? I tell them 'I don't know. This is not the way I think'."



Paul Richmond speaks for impeachment at the Wendell town meeting.

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Joe Diemand described himself as a veteran who has "spent time in Middle East, and dealt with people from Afghanistan, Pakistan, India." He found those people aghast at what the U.S. is doing there.

Jim Slavos described the Bush administration's transgressions as "a lot more serious than sex in the Oval Office," and was happy the resolution "solved my original problem with impeachment" by including Cheney along with Bush.

Before the meeting started, Wendell's matriarch, Elsie

Diemand, age 90, was reportedly interviewed by the Channel 3 newsman. A bystander said she was asked if she was here to vote on impeachment, to which she declared she was. "I don't like what the President is doing," she said, "people dying, lots of our young men and women. We need to take care of our own shores, and they need to take care of theirs." After the meeting ended, Mrs. Diemand reportedly went with some other town meeting-goers to Deja Brew, the town's pub, had a celebratory cup of tea, and danced a bit.

Iraq War veteran Paul Richard, also interviewed at the hall by CBS before the meeting started, said he felt the impeachment resolution "was't the right thing to do, we need to support our troops." It wasn't clear if he stayed for the vote.

The action by the Wendell town meeting, which joins similar actions by Amherst and Brookline, will be viewed by some as radical. Gloria Kegeles spoke to that point: "Afterwards I wished I'd said that what we are doing is considered radical, left wing, but what Bush doing is radical. What we're doing is simply taking the procedures provided for us in our Constitution when someone does something radical, like what Bush and Cheney are doing."

**Corrections**

In last week's article titled "School Closing Decision Deferred," school committee chair Mary Kociela was misquoted, due to a reporting error. Kociela did not say, "For people who think we should not close *Montague Center*, I want to know how you plan to balance the budget." Her actual quote was, "For people who think we should not close a *school*, I want to know how you plan to balance the budget." We regret the error.

Also in last week's paper, an incorrect start time was given for the special town meeting in Gill for Smart Growth Zoning revisions, Dec. 11th. The meeting will start at 6:30 p.m., not 7.

**Mayhem in Cumberland Farms**

BY JEAN HEBDEN  
TURNERS FALLS - The Montague police are looking for a man accused of assaulting his ex-girlfriend. Robin Hoose, 43, of 69 Washington Street, Greenfield, allegedly jumped into the car of his 34-year-old ex-girlfriend as she left her job at the Farren Care Center around 11:30 p.m. Tuesday night, December 5th. He told her he needed her help and wanted her to give him money. The woman drove to the Cumberland Farms on Montague City Road, went inside the store and asked the clerk to call 911.

According to the police report, when Hoose followed her into the store, she ran to the women's bathroom and locked the door. Hoose ran to the bathroom door, smashed it and broke the casing, opened the door and assaulted the woman. He dragged her to the front of the store, but she broke free by removing her shirt. She then ran and locked herself in the

men's bathroom. Hoose attempted to open that door as well and broke the handle and lock, but did not get it open. He then exited the store, grabbing the woman's purse and car keys.

According to the report, Hoose left in the woman's car driving south away from the store. If and when he is appre-

hended, the Montague police say Hoose will be charged with domestic assault and battery, malicious destruction of property over \$250, operating with a suspended license, kidnapping, larceny of a motor vehicle, breaking and entering in the nighttime with intent to commit a felony, and unarmed robbery.

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Rozzlynn Scott  
**Grade 8**  
Nina Dodge

Join us at the  
**Montague Center Congregational Church**  
for a Holiday Musical featuring the

**MacDonald Family Singers**  
Sunday, December 17th at 4 p.m.  
Refreshments will be served  
Admission: Non-perishable foods such as soups, cereals, packaged meals and canned goods for everyday use, to be donated to the needy.  
The public is invited to a Holiday Musical Treat -- The Montague Center Congregational Church's gift to one and all, the multi-talented MacDonald Family Singers performing seasonal music and song.

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# The Montague Reporter

24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, Mass. 01376

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Arthur Evans

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Harry Brandt David Detmold

August, 2002

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et al.

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## A Hypothetical Budget Gap

BY JEFF SINGLETON

I am pretty upset that the decision about the future of our elementary schools is being framed by an \$800,000 budget gap that does not now exist.

We are all extremely concerned about the state of the school district budget. On the Montague finance committee, I have been dealing with this for nearly seven years. But I think advertising a huge budget gap right now contradicts what town and school officials have discussed at our joint fiscal collaboration meetings, as well as the elementary configuration process itself.

First of all, you cannot have a budget gap when you have no budget, no Chapter 70 estimate, no numbers for the departments on the town side. A gap between what and what? We were told at the last joint fiscal meeting that the school district estimates were very preliminary. I assumed the district did not want to advertise a big budget problem this early when we know so little. That was the policy last year and is one reason we have agreed to delay annual town meeting in Montague next year until June. Why suddenly publicize a big deficit in November? This does not create trust.

Secondly, placing the issue in the context of one year's budget problem does contradict the elementary decision-making process. The elementary configuration committee was established specifically to

put this decision in a broader context, including educational variables and the long-term budget problem. Budget issues were important but they were absolutely not the only or main reason we embarked on this process. And that is reflected in the report of the committee! Quite frankly, I think by emphasizing this year's hypothetical budget gap you are practically throwing the work of the committee out the window.

And does the size of this year's 'gap' really matter? What if the 'gap' were smaller, say \$300,000? Then some people would argue that most of the gap would be eliminated by closing a school or two so we should do it. Others would oppose that. What if the gap turns out to be bigger? We would still hear the same arguments.

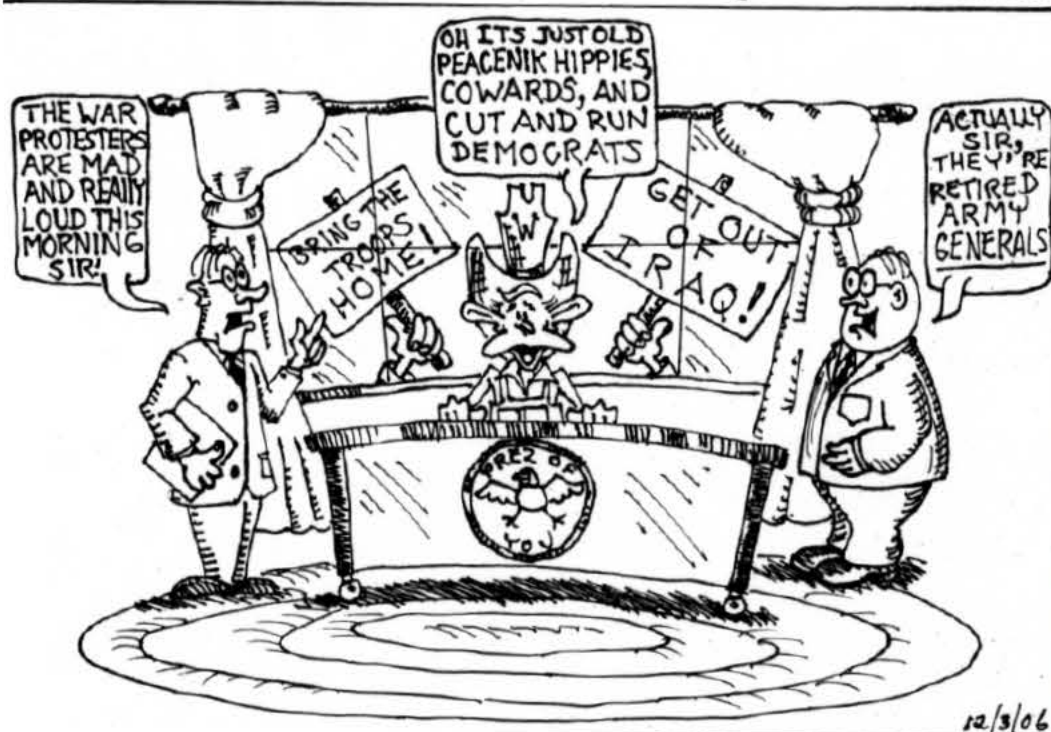
But the main problem is that advertising a huge gap creates panic and throws educational values out the window. You wind up closing two schools just to save a little budget money with no vision at all for the future of elementary education in the district. And in the end you do not solve the budget problem anyway. You finance a year's health care inflation and then the savings are gone with good schools closed forever.

Despite our budget problems, there is a positive, hopeful vision for the future of our elementary schools. The option of closing Hillcrest would cre-

see SCHOOL pg 5

## BORDEAUX WHINE

by denis bordeaux



DENIS BORDEAUX CARTOON

## Congratulations, Young & Adamites!

*Editor's note: In the crush of daily activity, we have let slide the popular contest where we recognized every 25th new subscriber with a gift certificate to one of our advertisers. As we count down towards our 600th subscriber (we're closer than you think!) in the waning weeks of '06, we'll also count backwards, and belatedly honor our 525th, 550th, and 575th subscribers. This week, we take note of the couple who moved to town in July and rocked the 'hood with their innovative "music" group, Fat Worm of Error.*



PHOTO: NEIL YOUNG

Fafner Adamites and Neil Young are the 525th subscribers.

### CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

**TURNERS FALLS** - Neil Young (not that Neil Young) and Fafner Adamites of Central Street became the 525th subscribers to the *Montague Reporter* when they plunked down their hard-earned cash for home delivery of the paper at Montague Old Home Days in late August. As a result, they have been awarded a \$52.50 gift certificate, which they have chosen to spend at the Ristorante DiPaolo. Good choice!

Young and Adamites moved to

Turners from Easthampton on July 15th this year. According to Young, the decision to relocate up the valley was easy.

"Hampshire County has become dead space. Turners is where it's happening." The *Reporter*, in fact, was an inspiration for their move here.

"We were house hunting, and stopped into the Shady Glen," recalled Young.

"We bought the paper and said to each other, 'if they have a paper like this, Turners has got to be good.' And it's only gotten better."

Both Young and Adamites

have day jobs at Hampshire College. But their real vocation is Art. Young is a drummer and tape collagist; Adamites is a photographer and visual artist. Their art was most recently on display at Suzee's fashion show, book deconstruction and music event last Saturday. Young manipulated a tape loop while rapping out a series of stories and commentary; Adamites was a contributor to the book project with a giant photo transfer of her own photographs. Look for them wherever the emergent art rock scene recrudesces.



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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Belated Thanks for the bellybowl

This is a letter we have been meaning to write since the *bellybowl* closed. We would like to belatedly thank Michelle, Elaine, Ollie, and all of the staff at the *bellybowl* for creating a wonderful place for people of all ages to have a good meal and enjoy art, music and fun. The *bellybowl* was such a warm and welcoming place for our local community, as well as for visitors to our village. We have countless fond memories of time spent in the restaurant, from seeing Ollie's latest costume to singing "I Got You Babe" at karaoke night, to



PHOTO BY LISA DAVOL

Elaine and Michelle Fournier-LeMay, owners of the late lamented *bellybowl* restaurant.

watching preschoolers dance to live bluegrass, to sitting on the patio and shooting the breeze with a certain cigar-smoking see LETTERS pg 5



**GUEST EDITORIALS**

# Stand for Excellence in Education and a Responsible School Budget

**BY PAUL KAUFMAN**  
**MONTAGUE CENTER** - In last week's front page story "School Closing Decision Deferred," Mary Kociela, chair of the GMSRD school committee is quoted as saying, "For people who think we should not close [a school], I want to know how you plan to balance the budget."

I would like to question the appropriateness of that remark. To wit: by asking the anti-school-closing folks to spell out how they would solve the budget crunch, Kociela is implying that closing a school or schools would solve the crunch. And it obviously wouldn't.

The folks pushing hardest for closing one or two of our schools are not presenting those closings as part of a larger plan that addresses the budget problem and includes a positive vision going forward for our schools.

Look, I appreciate this is a tough, tough problem. I don't envy the school committee members. I know they are working hard on this, and doing their honest best. They are trying to keep everyone happy - which will be impossible. But all that being said, the committee chair challenging school advocates, parents and townspeople that their point of view is invalid unless they can do what the superintendent, school committee, selectboard and town meeting have been unable to do for years - namely figure out what to do to prevent the school budget from spiraling out of reach each year - well, that's just unreasonable. Perhaps her comment is nothing more than the voice of frustration. If so, I don't blame her.

Personally, if I were a member of the school committee, I would tell the Massachusetts Department of Education and

the Federal Department of Education to take their unfunded mandates and stick 'em where the sun don't shine. I would scale back SPED programs, federally mandated testing and state mandated testing programs, and all of the other stuff that has been mandated and not paid for and tell affected parents that, given budget constraints, the district can only do what it can do and if they don't like it they should get the state and federal governments to pay up. I'd tell the unions and the administrators all the way up to the superintendent that health care is on the table, like it or not, and that cuts in subsidies for health care are on the way. I'd take a look at retirement plans as well, and make sure they're in line with social security benefits all the rest of us suckers will have to live with.

I would hold a vision of educational excellence that included K-6 schools in Montague Center and Turners Falls and a regional middle/high school rivaling Amherst and Deerfield. I would stop rushing out to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars every few years to buy new teaching materials to teach to standardized tests that have never been proven to work. I would organize with educational leaders in surrounding cities and towns to fight for responsible leadership in Boston and Washington and if that meant calling for an organized 'disobedience' on special education and testing, then so be it.

For years, Boston and Washington have mandated increasingly expensive requirements in these areas and have left local property owners footing the bill. That is just wrong, and it probably could be challenged in court!

In my view, shutting down schools should be the last

option on the table, but it feels like it's the first and the only one folks are really talking about.

I'll be the first to admit I am not privy to the details of the school budget. I don't know how much is being spent on what. I don't know if our priorities are straight in the budget or if there's a lot of room for improvement. I don't know if adding a few more desks to each classroom would hurt students, and if so how much it would hurt them. I don't know if the superintendent has too big a staff or too small a staff (either could be part of the problem).

What I do know is the debate about the school budget has been going on for years and it will continue to go on even if we close two schools. That makes me feel as if, for some people, there is an agenda to close schools that is only tangent. Wendell Unanimous: Impeach Bush, Cheneyially related to the budget. That's what it feels like to me. I think voting to close one or two schools without having a larger plan for dealing with the budget is irresponsible. It'll be pretty near impossible to open Montague Center School once it's closed. What's the rush?

For the time being, I like the option that leaves MC school open as a K-6, utilizes part of Hillcrest as Pre-K and turns Sheffield into K-6. This leaves all of our future options open and saves a little money. It returns the district to K-6 schools (or K-5, okay, although I am not crazy about the idea of sending 6th graders to the junior high). As Montague's finance committee chair likes to say, this would be a win-win-win. Except, of course, for the rest of the \$800K.

## SCHOOL from previous page

ate three quality, small elementary schools with long grade spans (Sheffield, Gill and Montague Center). This configuration is consistent with the research, the report of the configuration committee and the choices parents make. It leaves room for students to join the district, rather than simply caving in to enrollment declines and school choice losses. There would still be a school in Turners Falls, so no part of the community would lose a school. Hillcrest could be a pre-K center, reflecting one of its strengths. The rest of the Hillcrest building would be available to satisfy town needs or future school demographic changes. Montague and Gill

would share a common vision in this option, unlike other options which create a double standard.

Not to repeat myself, but for me, the option of creating two K-5 or K-6 schools, one in Montague Center, one in Turners Falls, is a win-win-win. We would save some money but also do something positive for the future. I strongly feel this configuration would avoid more school choice losses and bring students back to the district.

What is the 'vision' for the other options? I am not hearing one. All I am hearing about is a hypothetical budget gap that is creating panic and causing us to lose sight of our core values.

*Jeff Singleton is chair of the Montague finance committee.*

## LETTERS from previous page

regular. We miss the Bowl and crew, and want to thank

Michelle, Elaine and Ollie for bringing their vision to Turners, if only for a brief time.

- Sita Lang & Anne Jemas  
 Turners Falls

## The Weekly Standard

I have been so impressed with the paper that I compare other weeklies to it and they all fall short (especially my local paper: the Cambridge

Chronicle). You perform a real service to the community. Congratulations!

Grenelle Scott -  
 Cambridge, MA

## Happy Holidays from a Chip off the Old Block

I am sitting here with not too much to do so I came up with the wild idea of sending you people in my old hometown, best wishes for the Holidays and a Great New

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# Mexico in Transition

BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

**TURNERS FALLS** - On a hot July day in 1963, in the small town in Mexico in which I was then living, I had an opportunity to shake hands with Mexican president Adolfo Lopez Mateos. He had come to Piedras Negras to inaugurate some sort of water project that was supposed to supply our town with running water for more than a few hours a day. Since Mexicans love parades, the local authorities of his party, Mexico's longtime governing party, the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), managed to get Lopez Mateos to walk down a few blocks of dusty streets, glad handing the residents. Within an hour or so the president was gone, and despite his visit, we still only had water running out of the tap in the middle of the night.

No one was terribly surprised that nothing came of the promises. No one really expected the Mexican government would ever make good on what they swore to do. Or as one old man in the crowd muttered, "*¿Cómo que Partido Revolucionario? Mas cómo partido reaccionario. Necesitamos una verdadera revolución.*" (What kind of revolutionary party? It's more like a reactionary party. We need a real revolution.)

The Mexican people are no longer so content simply to mutter about forsaken promises and the need for revolution. On January 1st 1994, a real revolution began in the state of Chiapas when the EZLN (the Zapatistas) rose up in armed struggle against the government; six years ago the Mexican people voted out the PRI that had controlled Mexico for 71 years. And the movement for radical change has continued apace. Early last summer, the teachers in Oaxaca went on strike, paralyzing the capital city with an encampment in the

main square. In July came the national elections. Despite substantial leads in the polls in the run-up to election day, the leftist candidate Manuel Lopez Obrador of the PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) came out slightly behind Felipe Calderón, the standard-bearer of the governing right-wing PAN (National Action Party).

Immediately, the PRD supporters took to the streets to denounce the results as fraud, forcing a partial recount. For most of the summer Mexico City was the scene of protests, often with more than a million in the streets. After a recount of less than 10 percent of the ballots (and not, by any means, ballots in the most questionable sectors), the election tribunal rather predictably ruled that Calderón was the winner by less than one-half of one percent of the total vote.

For the Bush folks, who had assisted Calderón, the deal was done. But Mexicans are not as complacent as Americans, and the struggle has continued. In fact, a large segment of Mexican society has refused to accept the outcome of the presidential election. In November, Lopez Obrador was inaugurated as the "people's president" in a mock ceremony that drew hundreds of thousands of supporters, covered live on television. And then, on December 1st, the day Calderón himself was supposed to take office, more protests erupted. This time the protests were not only in the streets of Mexico City, where over a hundred thousand marched, but also within the Chamber of Deputies where the hand-over of power was to take place.

Leftists barricaded the door-



An agent of the Presidential State Office confronts a legislator body-to-body to prevent the PRD deputies from taking the rostrum.

ways in an attempt to keep Calderón and his distinguished visitors, including Bush senior and the King of Spain, from entering. Calderón's cadre blocked the other doors in an attempt to prevent more PRD members from entering. Fistfights broke out. Finally, amid a throng of security personnel, Calderon and his visitors entered. Over the catcalls and whistles and denunciations that erupted from the PRD deputies, Calderón was sworn in. Within four minutes of entering the chamber, Calderon

and his guests exited.

So what's next for Mexico? This is the question everyone in the country is asking. Without a mandate, without a majority (although the PAN has attracted PRI allies), and with a widespread sentiment that the election was stolen, can Calderon really govern? The answer is, perhaps.

Calderón is not nearly as arrogant as the Bush/Cheney crew, who despite stealing at least one if not two elections totally ignored the opposition. Already the new president has pledged to adopt two of the PRD's major campaign promises: free health care for all children in Mexico and a reduction in the president's own salary and those of other top government officials.

Calderón is well aware that he must embrace at least some of the PRD proposals, and has proposed an ongoing dialogue

with his opponents. For his part, Lopez Obrador continues to call on his supporters to "rescue" Mexico. But his focus, he now says, is on advancing the PRD cause, in Congress and at the state and local level.

This seems a smart move on the part of both leaders. The PRD already controls the governments of six states, and since 1997 has governed the 20 million citizens of Mexico City. In Congress, the PAN still has a slight majority of both senators and deputies. In the Chamber of Deputies, the PAN has 206 seats and the PRD has 160, out of a total of 500. The PAN counts 52 senators to the PRD's 36, out of 128 total.

Clearly, Mexico is changing. No longer do the Mexican people believe they have to accept what comes, or does not come, from their leaders. They fully expect that Lopez Obrador and his PRD followers will be true to their promise to keep the pressure on Calderón to create opportunity for all Mexicans. U.S. Democrats ought to take note.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

### Man in Roadway, All OK

#### Wednesday 11-29

12:10 p.m. Trespassing issues on Ben Hale Road. Officer sent, under investigation.

4:50 p.m. Report of a larceny from a Main Road business, under investigation.

#### Thursday 11-30

9:48 p.m. Report of two male subjects fighting in the area of the French King Bridge. Unable to locate in area.

10:10 p.m. Arrested [redacted], charged with OUI on French King Highway

#### Friday 12-01

2:45 p.m. Report of male subject lying on side of roadway on West Gill Road near South Cross Road. Subject found. No problems.

7:35 p.m. Report of live power wires down across West Gill Road near Franklin Road; fire department responded.

#### Saturday 12-02

10:15 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with intoxicated subject on West Mountain Road.

#### Sunday 12-03

12:15 a.m. Report of loose cow on West Gill Road, near golf course. Unable to locate same.

#### Monday 12-04

11:20 a.m. Report of minor motor vehicle accident at intersection of West Gill Road and Franklin Road. Under investigation.

6:01 p.m. Medical call on Boyle Road, responded with BHA and Gill EMS. No transport.

#### Tuesday 12-05

3:15 p.m. Assisted state police with medical emergency on Northfield Road in Bernardston.

5:45 p.m. Walk-in report at station of criminal harassment complaint. Report taken.

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# Thirteen a Lucky Number for TFHS

## National Honor Society Inductees

BY ALI URBAN

Thirteen Turners Falls High School students were inducted into the George F. Wrightson Chapter of the



National Honor Society at a ceremony in the TFHS theater November 30th. Parents, friends, relatives and teachers gathered to recognize the selected juniors and seniors for their academic achievement and community involvement.

To be inducted, juniors must achieve a grade point average of 3.7 while seniors need a 3.5. Students then fill out an application listing their co-curricular activities, leadership positions, service and community activities, work experience, recognition and awards. A faculty selection committee reviews the applications and makes its decision.

Selection is based on students' scholarship, service, leadership and character. NHS officers highlighted these qualities with a candle-lighting ceremony at the induction, explaining their importance within the

membership.

Ernest Brown of the Montague Elks made a special address to the members. He encouraged students to get involved in their community, saying NHS and civic organizations are good vehicles to help better the community.

"While you're here (in high school) and when you go to college, please look outside to get involved in whatever community you're in," he said. "The help you can give to others will definitely be the greatest feeling of gratification you'll ever have in your life."

New members were presented with membership pins and certificates of membership by GMRSD superintendent Sue Gee and TFHS principal Jeff Kenney. The new members also signed the membership book, which contains signatures of earlier members dating from



PHOTO BY ALI URBAN

Thirteen Turners Falls High School students were inducted into the National Honor Society on Nov. 30th.

1975. It was interesting for students to find the signatures of parents, siblings and friends from years past.

During his remarks, Kenney acknowledged parents, grandparents, teachers, friends and mentors because their support "has been important, and it shows here." He added, "This is a step along the way. I know the contributions you have yet to make will be as wonderful as the contributions you've already made."

Community involvement remains important after members are inducted. The George F.

Wrightson Chapter of the National Honor Society has been active in such projects as Christmas caroling at local nursing homes and selling flowers to raise money for cancer research.

Gee also spoke to the students. She praised their attributes, calling them resourceful problem solvers and promoters of school activities, who share a positive attitude about life, uphold principles of morality and ethics and show courtesy and respect for others. She added the inductees have "already been quite powerful in their community," and reminded

them "knowledge is the key to accomplishment in life."

Gill-Montague Regional School Committee chair Mary Kociela recognized that the students' achievement has not come easily because of the high standards for academic excellence, community service and co-curricular activity. She advised them to "drink in the grandeur of the evening" and what they have accomplished to get to this point.

The new members of the George F. Wrightson Chapter of the National Honor Society are seniors Laura Babij and Christopher Sicard, and juniors Alix Ackerman, Abbey Daniel-Green, Amanda Golembeski, Samuel Johnson, Stephanie Joly, Kayla Pecor, Molly Perry, Alexander Tufano, Alice Urban, Gina Varuzzo and Katlyn Vear.

## GMEF Awards Grants for School Initiatives

**GILL-MONTAGUE** - At the Tuesday, November 14th meeting, the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee announced the following Gill-Montague Education Fund grants for the following curriculum enhancement initiatives, totaling \$5,426.96:

**Betsy Burnham** - "Science Alive!" \$790 - First and second graders at Hillcrest School will work with the Hitchcock Center for the Environment.

**Kelly Chase** - "Lego Mindstorms Robotics Inventions" \$1,000 - Grades 5 and 6 will use iMac computer to build and showcase inventions.

**Yanik Nichols** - "Les Ecuries de Joesphine dinner in Paris" \$675 - Students will enjoy French dinner and shows during trip to Paris (they fundraised for the trip themselves).

**Jeff Lord** - "Roman Legionary - Legion III Cyrenaica" \$200 - Roman Legionary re-enactor from the Higgins Armory Museum will perform for 51 Latin and humanities class students.

**Christopher Klosson** - "Tapping into Music" \$484.96 TFHS Alternative Learning Program will use two guitars and a portable electronic keyboard to

promote education and social skills.

**Christine Jutres and Lori Saylor** - "Quilt Chronicles" \$477 - K-2 Hillcrest students, who are studying quilting over two years, will take a field trip to Brattleboro Museum quilt exhibitions.

**Diane Hirtle** - "Because they Asked" \$300 - TFHS Librarian will provide reading material based on her tracking of student requests.

**Vickie Healy** - "SADD Chapter for TFHS" \$1,000 - Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter will be re-started by TFHS nurse.

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# FASHION continued from pg 1

Janke and Brewster first conceived of the idea of a fashion show last year, using the clothes left behind by the laundromat's patrons. This year, once again, Janke gave a grab bag of clothes over to local designers, and asked them to create their own line of hot couture, to be modeled by friends.

In order to boost the town's gathering artistic momentum, Janke decided the fashion show should happen on the same weekend as the Art Walk. "Me and my friends thought it would be a good idea to merge the events, since my establishment has a perfect room in the back for an art gallery, as well as live performances." Janke charged ten dollars per ticket for the event, but the 80-person capacity hall was sold out before the tickets officially went on sale, the Monday before the show. You had to know somebody to get in.

The night began around 8:30 with a slew of bands and performance art. Neil Young (not

that Neil Young) performed a solo act, with an explorative sound, called Bomptreb. Jeremy Latch of Moscow Mule also performed, with haunting keyboards and a crooning tenor. Coco Akula Schatchtl, from Moscow Mule, added to the tonal smorgasbord. A scatological comedy skit, written and performed by George Myers and Ben Hersey, followed, called *Episode 7*.

At 10 p.m. Evolution Revolution, a six-piece band from Troy, NY took over the space with their introverted groove rock: Jason Martin, lead guitar and vocals, Jenn MacArron, bass and vocals, Jessie Pellerin, clarinet and vocals, Jessica Shaver, saxophone and vocals, Ross Goldstein, keyboards, and Aaron Smith, percussion, took the oddly contoured back room by storm. They were dressed in outlandish stage attire consisting of various animal masks, tails and creature features, and they gave an exceptional performance of bluesy glam-funk with overtones of early seventies glitter. Evolution

Revolution displays a rock star aesthetic reminiscent of old-school showmanship, especially MacArron, the bass player, wearing Brian Ferry flared slacks and wide lapels. While hiding behind her chicken mask, she displayed a juicy charisma rarely seen on stage these days.

While the bands played on, fashion designers, Anja Schutz, Sarah Pruitt, Rachel Teumin, and Anne Harding scurried around, getting their models gussied up amongst the dusty pipes and heating ducts in the laundromat basement.

At eleven o'clock, folks gathered around the washing machines and dryers. All eyes see **FASHION** pg 8

**RIGHT: Cheri Monnette  
BELOW:**

1. Mariaelena Garcia
2. Lea Donnan
3. Matthew Latkiewicz
4. Anja Schutz
5. Charlotte Spatcher
6. Ilse Damkoehler
7. Dianna DeStefano
8. Anna Benoit



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**FASHION**

continued from pg 8

were fixed on the runway, while models sporting attire that varied from comfy and casual - something one might slip into after a swim at the beach - to dresses fit for a drag queen's ball, climbed the short flight of stairs to the spotlight track.

Jamie Berger was MC for the event, while his dog Bo took a trip down the runway with model Dianna DeStefano, clad in a kimono wrap with a draw string skirt, a slightly more sophisticated look than the preceding model, Molly Simpson, who sported a punk rock take on a jungle woman outfit, barely covering her ass.

A bevy of bodies sashayed and undulated under the glaring stage lights, while house music pulsed over the sound system, and the audience itself, decked to the nines, looked on in awe.



Laundromat Owner Chris Janke

The first four models, represented by Harding, wore outfits constructed from Terri cloth bath towels coupled with what looked like denim, and deemed perfect for a stroll through a gentle summer rain.

The next four models were

represented by Schutz, and wore skimpy skirts and dresses with a sort of new wave, post punk Flash Dance vibe, that looked like they might have been work T-shirts at an early point in their careers.

The music kicked up a notch as four or five more models strutted their stuff for the cameras, each sporting a Pruitt creation, consisting of evening wear constructed from fabric and clear garbage bags, shellacked with glitter. Loud, aggressive cheers flooded the laundromat as one model performed a seductive wiggle for her audience, her hair glowing like a garland in Times Square.

The last cluster of models sauntered out wearing Teumim togs. Matthew Latkiewicz did a little dance in a costume that teetered between a jailbird suit and a Victorian-era gent's bathing costume, constructed out of stretchy striped pajamas. He carried barbells made from balloons.

Around midnight, all the models and fashion designers gathered on the runway, to take their final turn before an enthusiastic audience, then segued to a late night dance spree, where all guests were welcome to join. The last pedestrians straggled by and peered through the fogged pane glass windows of the laundromat, and vowed to drink less next time.

**MCTV Praised, Criticized**

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - With Chris Sawyer-Laucanno delivering the cable advisory committee's third quarterly report to the Montague selectboard on the progress of the town's cable television station, his wife Patricia Pruitt, another avowed supporter of MCTV wielding the gavel, and erstwhile MCTV opponent Allen Ross on vacation, it fell to board member Pat Allen to provide a healthy dose of criticism of the local access station's performance to date. (Full disclosure, this reporter could easily be counted among MCTV's longterm supporters, as well.)

"The cable advisory committee is very pleased with what MCTV is doing," Laucanno told the board on Monday, December 4th. We feel we're moving in a positive direction for Montague. Not only are they taping government meetings, but they are also broadcasting the school configuration hearings, the Veterans Day ceremony, the Peoples Harvest, and other community events. Their financials are wonderful, their administration is extremely tight about how they spend their money. They are doing what we hoped they would be doing, and we are encouraging them to keep doing that," Sawyer-Laucanno said.

"A couple of thoughts," interposed Allen. "Special town meeting, I appreciate they had new people running things, but there were significant problems [with the audio and the video]. Also, the latest school committee meeting [on school closing]: All of a sudden, off it went, at the most important part, the last 45 minutes," when votes were taken. "So you're left in limbo."

"These are both issues we are very aware of," said Sawyer-Laucanno. "And we got a good explanation."

He said the high school had preset the audio levels for the special town meeting, and the MCTV producers played catch-up during the meeting to establish better sound. As for last week's school committee meet-

ing, MCTV had been informed positively that the meeting would not run longer than two hours, so had programmed another tape to air at 2 hours and 10 minutes later. The meeting ran nearly 3 hours, and three important votes were taken near the end.

Allen continued, "We are still hearing complaints they are having a hard time hearing the people talking," during regular selectboard meetings.

Sawyer-Laucanno said the problem had improved, but that people like himself who tend to mumble, and are not wearing microphones like the board members, need to learn to speak up.

Allen asked what had become of the much publicized new MCTV logo. Sawyer-Laucanno answered the image had been provided by the contest winner in a low-resolution format, and a higher resolution version was expected at the station soon.

In other news, the board approved a request by Denise DiPaolo for an entertainment license, so she may provide live acoustic jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo. She left the meeting in time to host a jazz duo that very evening at the popular Italian restaurant, where jazz will be a regular Monday night feature.

Art Gilmore, chair of the Soldiers Memorial Trustees, received approval for a request for \$7,000 in program income funds for the new veterans memorial on Avenue A. Along with a pledge for \$13,000 from the Greenfield Savings Bank, the town funds will augment the \$79,000 the trustees have already raised.

The scaled down plans for the memorial will include individual granite markers for each of the major wars America has been involved in, along with the names of Montague residents who served in many of those conflicts. The trustees hope to break ground next spring.



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## NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

# Wendell Shopping for a New Town Attorney

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - John Gates plans to retire as Wendell's town counsel. As the November 29th selectboard meeting opened, attorney Donna MacNichol of MacNichol, Tombs, and Brown from Greenfield met with the board, interviewing as a possible replacement for Gates. MacNichol now represents the Franklin County Council of Governments, the solid waste district, ten towns, and two school districts in Franklin County. She has experience with many aspects of small town legal situations, including employment, subdivision and zoning regulations, and contracts. She has run seminars to help newly elected board members learn the basic legal structure of their position, and in Orange, when the entire planning board was replaced, she helped the new board members pick up where the prior board had stopped work.

She charges \$100 an hour flat rate to towns, less than the regular fee for legal services, and does not charge for travel within Franklin County. She is available for quick telephone advice, and said she could send an email for a fast but informally written response, and follow that with a paper copy.

Selectboard member Dan Keller asked about a recent auction of town property in which the town did not accept the highest bidder, but instead accepted a lower bid with the

hope of keeping land taxable. The higher bidder sued, and the town settled by accepting his bid, and losing the ability to tax the property.

MacNichol answered the town might have fashioned a Request for Proposals (RFP), to define more precisely what the selectboard had in mind for the property. She cited a similar example in the town of Gill, where a home developer wanted to purchase one of the only properties in town really suitable for industrial or commercial expansion. She also suggested an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) to selectboard chair Ted Lewis when he asked if the town could prefer the bid of an abutter to make the abutter's lot conform to town zoning bylaws.

MacNichol said adding one more town to her client list would not overload her firm, although the workload seems to come in waves. She has worked as long as 25 years with some clients, and said she would love to serve Wendell.

At its next meeting, the selectboard will interview a representative from Kopelman and Paige of Northampton.

## Building Unfit for Habitation

Building inspector Phil Delorey met with the board to report on developments concerning rental units on Elm Street in Wendell Depot. Tenants initiated a complaint about faulty wiring and plumbing and the owner did

nothing. The state of the septic system is unknown, but the property, close to the Millers River, does not have enough area for a septic system adequate for four apartments, Delorey said. The board of health inspected, and the case was brought to housing court in October. The owner appeared in court, but left when the case was not heard right away, and has said she cannot afford to make the necessary repairs to the property.

At a court-ordered inspection of the property on December 1st, a judge from the Springfield Housing Court deemed the building unfit for habitation. She ordered that tenants leave the building that day and not spend another night in the apartments until repairs are made. The owner is responsible for their lodging until they find another place to live.

## Town Building Progress

The new town office and library buildings are finally showing real progress. But Lewis said some of the plywood decking has delaminated in recent rains. Delorey said the plywood is tongue and groove, so removing one or several pieces will destroy the integrity created by the tongue and groove. Lewis said that at the last building meeting the clerk of the works insisted on better site safety, including hard hats, and dumpsters on site for better cleanup.

Keller reported 50 feet of piping had been laid down for the new buildings' water supply, as of the 29th of November.

The finance committee, Michael Idoine and Jim Slavas, met briefly with the selectboard to make sure they were on the same page concerning the warrant for the special town

meeting scheduled for December 6th. Most of the articles would take money from the foundation reserve account (state 'pothole' money) for expenses, two new furnaces for the town hall, an interest payment for the new fire truck not included in the annual town meeting warrant, highway bills from prior years, money to supplement the fire department budget that was depleted during the tornado response, money to pay for removing and grinding the root balls left from felled trees from that storm that are so close to the road they would interfere with winter plowing. Article 1 would pay for moving the veterans memorial from the front of the library to the area of the gazebo, and adding other memorials from other wars, (the stones are already paid for) and moving the flagpole to the center of the memorials so the flag no longer wraps itself around the tree.

Article 9 would allow an easement by the town for Verizon to place a pole to supply electricity to the new town office building, and Article 10 have Wendell join other towns in telling Congress to impeach both President Bush, and Vice President Cheney.

Idoine asked if the selectboard had considered writing a letter of appreciation to representative Steve Kulik and senator Stan Rosenberg for their effort in getting Wendell the pothole money, as a partial compensation for the \$148,000 the town lost from the state in PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) money in fiscal '07.

Heard relayed a request by music teacher Ed Hines to rent the town hall from 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 8th for a seasonal concert by the Swift River School fifth and sixth grade chorus. She invited the other selectboard members and all townspeople to attend,

and said the chorus really does a good job, that Hines gets even quiet students to sing out.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich brought out papers for selectboard members to sign confirming the conservation restriction on the land recently sold by Kate Neilson. Keller said he was a little mystified at why the selectboard had any control over the transaction, and Aldrich answered, unlike a Chapter 61 restriction that can be bought back, this restriction is permanent, and requires approval by both the town and the state secretary of environmental affairs.

The Franklin County Solid Waste District wrote to Wendell asking that the town appoint a representative.

## Old Egypt Road

Old Egypt Road has had a locked gate on it since Theo Bennett, the owner of the road, acquired the property north of the road from RDI in the late 1990s. Lewis said the town discontinued maintenance of the road, but did not discontinue the road itself. Now two people who own property along Old Egypt Road want vehicle access to their property, and have contacted the selectboard on the matter. Lewis said he thought the road was still a public way; Keller asked if Lewis would bring the issue up with Bennett.

Robin Pierce came in to ask for information about the process of getting a class II license to sell more than three automobiles a year. The town may issue no more class III salvage licenses, but there is no such limitation on class II licenses.

The selectboard gave Rosalie Rosser permission to use the town hall as a place to wrap presents for Good Neighbors, because the town has no senior center this winter.

## Wendell Holiday Fair

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# TFHS Government Students Learn Community Involvement

BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

A few weeks ago, Turners Falls High School government teacher Heather Batchelor brought in seven members of the famed Bread and Puppet Theater Company to perform workshops in street theater with two of her senior classes. On December 6th, she organized a somewhat less famous but no less important group to talk to those same students about how they could become involved in the community. The panelists included Chip Wood, principal of Sheffield Elementary; Jeff Kenney, TFHS principal, Doug Brown of the Montague police; Kara McGlaughlin, who runs peer mediation at TFHS; Karen Foster, the Middle School After-School Program director; Jared Libby from the Brick House; and from the *Montague Reporter*, Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno.

Although each of the panelists spoke individually about how Batchelor's students could contribute to the community, the common theme was that of taking initiative to create positive change. Wood, acknowledging that the students present had invested in their education, encouraged them to empower younger students, particularly in the elementary schools, to see that education provided endless opportunities. "You may not realize it, but younger kids look up to you. You can be real role models for them." He suggested that students volunteer to help out at Montague Catholic Social Ministries' day care facility, work in the after-school programs, present at Sheffield's all-school assembly, or simply talk to siblings or neighbor kids about investing in themselves by investing in education.



Kara McGlaughlin explains principles of peer mediation to TFHS government students, as members of the panel look on.

Libby reminded the classes that the Brick House has a variety of programs for teens, some initiated by teens themselves. He encouraged students to work with him on the rehabilitation of the Turners Falls skate park. Kenney told the students that all around them numerous opportunities existed for making a difference, from tutoring younger kids to talking to the parks and recreation department about starting up a Saturday morning flag football league or helping out at the senior center. "You don't need to wait for someone to call on you. Take action your-

self." Both Brown and McGlaughlin addressed issues that create negative forces in the community. Officer Brown mentioned three of his major concerns: one, that there were too many young kids in Montague on the streets, victims of active or benign neglect; two, vandalism and graffiti tagging; and three, senior citizen isolation. He encouraged students to watch out for the little ones, make some muffins for elderly neighbors in order to open a dialogue with them, and help educate others about the

public cost of vandalism. McGlaughlin spoke to the students about turning aggressive behavior into assertive behavior. "Get out of the fight/flight cycle," she said. "Become a peer mediator, or at the very least work to peacefully resolve your own conflicts or those of others. What is lacking in public education is communication." Foster, echoing earlier remarks about helping younger kids, recommended that students

become after-school tutors, or initiate their own activities with younger school children.

Sawyer-Laucanno mentioned that, at present, junior Ali Urban is the sole *Montague Reporter* spokesperson for high school happenings and issues, and that the paper welcomed all students to write, submit cartoons or poems, take photographs, or even help maintain the computers. He told the students that since the high school no longer had a student paper, they should consider the *Montague Reporter* as their paper. "We'll give you a section once a month, if you'd like, to write about what you want." He solicited position papers for guest editorials.

Batchelor held the panel symposium to give the students ideas for their final projects, which are due by the end of the semester. We look forward to seeing how they put the ideas into action.

## MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: Friday, December 8th through Thursday, December 14th

<b>Friday, December 8</b>	
8:00 am Montague Update-Gina McNeely	6:30 pm On the Table: Cooking with Michael Collins
9:00 am Montague Selectboard 12/4	7:00 pm Montague Selectboard LIVE
10:30 am Waterfowl Identification	9:00 pm The 2006 National Honor Society Induction
11:00 am Wind Changes	10:00 pm School Forum-Sheffield
6:00 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow # 21	
6:30 pm The 2006 National Honor Society Induction	<b>Tuesday, December 12</b>
7:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review	8:00 am On the Table: Cooking with Michael Collins
8:00 pm The Cost of Freedom	8:30 am The 2006 National Honor Society Induction
10:00 pm Peskeomskut Park Renovations	9:00 am School Forum-Sheffield
	5:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review
<b>Saturday, December 9</b>	6:00 pm GMRSD Meeting LIVE
8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #21	10:00 pm Montague Update-Gina McNeely
8:30 am The 2006 National Honor Society Induction	11:00 pm Living in the Shadow of the Vernon Reactor
9:30 am TFHS Weekly Review	
10:00 am The Cost of Freedom	<b>Wednesday, December 13</b>
12:00 pm Peskeomskut Park Renovations	8:00 am TFHS Weekly Review
6:00 pm On the Table: Cooking with Michael Collins	8:30 am Montague Update-Gina McNeely
6:30 pm NASA Connect: The Right Ratio of Rest	9:30 am Living in the Shadow of the Vernon Reactor
7:00 pm The Well Being: Managing Diabetes Today	6:30 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #21
8:00 pm School Forum-Gill	7:00 pm GED Connection #18
10:00 pm Mass Wilderness-Autumn	7:30 pm The Well Being: Managing Diabetes Today
	8:30 pm The Cost of Freedom
<b>Sunday, December 10</b>	10:30 pm Tiny Tim
8:00 am On the Table: Cooking with Michael Collins	
8:30 am NASA Connect: The Right Ratio of Rest	<b>Thursday, December 14</b>
9:00 am The Well Being: Managing Diabetes Today	8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #21
10:00am School Forum-Gill	8:30 am GED Connection #18
12:00 pm Mass Wilderness-Autumn	9:00am The Well Being: Managing Diabetes Today
6:00 pm Montague Update-Gina McNeely	10:00 am The Cost of Freedom
7:00 pm School Forum-Montague Center	12:00 am Tiny Tim
10:00 pm Mass Wilderness-Winter	6:00 pm Montague Update-Gina McNeely
	7:00 pm Montague Selectboard 12/11
<b>Monday, December 11</b>	9:00 pm Surviving the Vernon Reactor #2
8:00 am Montague Update-Gina McNeely	10:00 pm Farmers Market Concert: Stephanie Marshall
9:00 am School Forum-Montague Center	
12:00 am Mass Wilderness-Winter	

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# Montague Center School Shares Results of Sawmill River Study

After the fire at the Montague Center School in 1956, Taylor Brook was diverted to form the pond by the school. "We think it was made to be a fire pond," said a first grader named Sahaley.

DETMOLD PHOTO

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - The Montague Center School, one of four EIC (Environment as an Integrating Curriculum) schools in the Commonwealth, held an all school presentation of the results of the students' environmental studies of the Sawmill River Watershed on Wednesday. Seated in a wide circle in the auditorium, students from each class filed up to the microphone and related statistics, observations, and hypotheses drawn from the natural world around them.

"A hypotheses is kind of a guess after you've gathered scientific information," explained

one young lady from Ms. Mieczkowski's 3rd grade. Under the tutelage of Colleen Kelly, a naturalist from the Amherst-based Hitchcock Center for the Environment who has worked with the entire school community for years under the grant-funded program, the youngsters have gathered a great deal of scientific information indeed.

Ms. Wortell's kindergarten class started off the proceedings, reading from an "I Spy" book they wrote about their first trip to the Sawmill River. A boy named Jonathan saw a hole in a tree, a student named Andy saw some leaves, and Dakota saw "da

river!" Other kindergartners noticed a cat, some berries, milkweed and a cricket.

Building on these observations, first graders coached by Ms. Jorgensen described the history and ecology of the school pond. A student named Sahaley said, "We asked a lot of people in the community about the history of the school pond. Mr. Voudren knew the most about it." In the 1700s, Taylor Brook took water downhill from the farms on Taylor Hill. After the fire at the Montague Center School in 1956, Taylor Brook was diverted to form the pond by the school. "We think it was made to be a fire pond," said Sahaley.

In September, water in the pond measured 20 inches deep, at 70 degrees. "I saw a tadpole," reported a young herpetologist.

Riley related some facts about beavers, though none of these had been spotted in the school pond. "Beavers make houses out of sticks. Their house is called a lodge. They eat bark." He didn't mention anything about flooding people's basements. A hypothesis like that would require a field trip to Montague City Road, in spring.

The first graders studied five distinct habitats: the pond, the river, the field, the farm field, and the woods. They sang an enthusiastic song about different habitats, to the tune of "Lollipop, Lollipop." One verse went like this:

"The forest is a habitat, a very special habitat, It's where the

tallest trees are at, It's where a bear can scratch its back, Renews the oxygen in fact, The forest is a habitat that we depend on..."

There's room in Washington for that kind of common sense environmentalism.

Second grade teacher Amy Calkins ushered her students through a recitation of a non-fiction book they have prepared based on a field trip to the Sawmill River. "We went walking and walking and walking," it began. But, after a scavenger hunt incorporating natural objects like squirrel's food, green plants, something red, and a parachute, the students admitted, "We thought walking was too much fun." However, one noted "a prickly bush with thorns, very sharp, don't touch!" And another found "Poison ivy, so poisonous you would be really itchy. It grows up a tree. Don't go near!"

They found natural parachutes in the many seeds of a milkweed pod, something red in berries poisonous to humans but delectable to birds, and recorded different sense impressions of Japanese knotweed. One girl thought the invasive plant "smelled like spearmint," but young Kin Srey thought it smelled "like sushi".

Grape vines with their twisty tendrils yield grapes that smell, well, like grape soda, one young naturalist averred. And the method of constructing 'leaf boats' was carefully explained. Take a sycamore leaf, they are

nice and big, and push the stem through the leaf to form a miniature caravel, "then let it go in the river." The sort of vessel a mouse would captain proudly.

Stone Dresser said, "The leaf restaurants are closed for the winter. There is not enough sun for them to make their food."

One student noticed "a weird looking slug, green with red dots on it." Another found a snake under a log. "It is cool, brown, and five inches long."

The second graders got together in groups of four or five and wrote plays about their field trip. They will share their plays at all school meeting on Friday.

The third graders asked questions like "How healthy is the river?" and tried to determine the answers. They found out the source of the Sawmill is at Lake Wyola and the mouth is at the Connecticut, down by Meadow Road. They described their scientific method: Ask a question, gather information, form and test hypotheses, then tell others what you found.

They demonstrated the amount of drinking water in the world today with a visual display. Assuming the total amount of water on Earth was equal to a little more than three gallons, then 1 gallon would be salt water, 1 1/2 gallons would be locked in glaciers, and 3/4 of cup would be available fresh water.

"Out of all the water in the world, this is all the water we have left to drink," said one young lady, holding up a 3/4 cup measure. The other students seemed concerned to hear this.

The third graders also proved how fast a pill bug can travel. Under the right circumstances, the little crustaceans can travel 28 centimeters in 15 seconds. "A centimeter is about half an inch long." There was no word on how long a millipede was.



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**FINDING BALANCE**

# Hope and Perseverance

**BY JENNY CHAPIN**  
**MONTAGUE CENTER**

From eight years of practicing alternative medicine, and based on my own much longer journey of healing, I would say two things are necessary in order



to get anywhere in the process of improving our lives. We need to have hope that we can and will feel better, and we need to know the possibility of change does indeed exist. While either one - hope or possibility - can come first, in a way hope is more important, because it drives us to finding something that works for us, and it keeps us on the path when the going feels rocky. When we feel hopeful, we're more inclined to take action, and to be committed to the process.

It can be hard to hope for feeling better if for years that result has been elusive, or if it seems nothing we try does any good. Sometimes we need to borrow courage, faith, even strength from elsewhere, and that's okay, because we're here to help each other.

Lots of people grit their teeth and bear their pain and unhappiness. They don't know there's an alternative, or perhaps they've given up on their lives getting better. Their energy is used up in just getting by, leaving little or nothing left over for examining other options.

Yet it never ceases to amaze me how much our bodies want to be healthy, to feel good, to be strong, move easily. When we decide we want that, too, and we give them even half a chance, our bodies usually respond quickly.

Change takes time, and it's often difficult in the beginning - but it is feasible. For all that we humans are creatures of habit, we are also incredibly adaptable (look at how we have populated this planet in all kinds of environments). We just have to really want something to be different,

and we have to be prepared to persevere when we meet resistance.

Healing requires us to release old habits, old ways of moving through the world that no longer help us. These habits get in our way, holding us back rather than holding us up. Releasing habits takes consistent practice in the beginning, until we get used to the new ways, whether it's changing your diet or starting an exercise program. There's a play, back and forth, of letting go of something you no longer want, then picking it back up because it's familiar, then remembering you don't want it anymore, once more letting it go, again and again. The good thing is that once we start to shift toward better health, it's cumulative: little shifts start lasting longer, and then start being bigger shifts.

It's important to have realistic expectations of what can be achieved and when. If you've had health issues for years, expect to spend at least a few months of dedicated action to turn it around.

There's no miracle cure, or instant fix, or one thing that works for everybody. There are many modalities to choose from, which can be confusing or overwhelming, so it's important to ask questions. Talk to people you know, find out who they've worked with and how they've been helped; talk to practitioners, get a feel for what they do, and their responsiveness to you.

Borrow hope and strength from your friends and health-care practitioners when you need to, but hold the possibility in your mind and your heart that you can be healthy and happy, and you're already on your way.

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

**BY FRED CICETTI**  
**LEONIA, NJ - Q.** *My doctor put his stethoscope on my neck and muttered to himself, "no brooey." I'm not the type to ask the doctor questions, but I'm still wondering what he meant by that. My spelling is probably wrong.*

Your doctor was checking your carotid arteries on the sides of your neck to see if the blood flow to your brain was blocked. If one of the arteries was blocked, it would make a "swoosh" that the medical profession calls a bruit. Your phonetic spelling is excellent. Bruit is pronounced "BROO-ee" like "phooey."

Carotid arteries run from the aorta - the main trunk of the arterial system - up to your brain. When these vessels become blocked, you have carotid artery disease, which can cause a stroke.

The chances of developing this disease increase with age. About one percent of people in their 50s have significantly blocked carotid arteries, but ten percent of people in their 80s have carotid artery disease.

As you age, a sticky substance called plaque, which contains cholesterol, can accumulate on the inside walls of your arteries. The process is called atherosclerosis or hard-

**THE HEALTHY GEEZER**

# "No Brooey"

ening of the arteries.

Some of the causes of carotid artery disease are high blood pressure, cholesterol in your blood, smoking and dia-



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

betes.

It is possible to fight carotid artery disease. First, quit smoking.

This is the probably the most significant thing you can do to combat this disease. In addition to quitting smoking, you should get regular exercise, eat a healthy diet and keep your weight down. Obviously, if you have high blood pressure, too much cholesterol in your blood or diabetes, you should be treating those.

The common diagnostic tests for carotid artery disease are: carotid duplex scan, an ultrasound study that shows the location and size of the problem; arteriogram, which is an X-ray, and computerized

tomography (CT Scan) of the brain for damage.

The amount of blockage in a carotid artery determines the risk of having a stroke. If the blockage becomes severe enough, you may need surgery to open the blood flow to your brain.

In carotid endarterectomy, a surgeon makes an incision in the neck to open a carotid artery. The blockage is removed and the artery is closed.

Carotid artery stenting is a procedure in which a wire mesh tube called a stent is positioned and expanded across the blockage in the artery.

In its early stages, carotid artery disease may have no symptoms. The initial indication could be a stroke. However, you may experience warning symptoms of a stroke called transient ischemic attacks or TIAs, which usually last less than an hour.

TIA symptoms include: weakness, numbness, or a tingling on one side of your body; inability to control a limb; loss of vision in one eye, and inability to speak clearly.

If you experience TIA symptoms, contact your physician immediately.

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

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

### Two Men Fighting

**Thursday 11-30**

10:p.m. Received a call of two men fighting in the parking lot near the French King Bridge. Vehicle involved was identified and stopped on Rt 2 in Gill near the long rest area. Gill police arrested operator for operating under the influence. Passenger transported to Gill Mobil.

**Friday 12-1**

10:15 a.m. Arrested [redacted] at a North Street address on a warrant.

12:45 p.m. Report of an alarm sounding at a Gunn Street address. Found to be a fire

alarm with a fire in the downstairs apartment. Assisted Erving Fire and Turners Falls Fire. Fire contained to kitchen.

**Sunday 12-3**

2:23 p.m. Pedestrian on North Street handed patrol officer a check belonging to a Hansen Court resident. Unable to make contact with owner; brought check to station. While speaking with pedestrian, officer was approached by a loose spaniel-type dog. No license or identification was found on animal. Transported to kennel at DPW yard.

**Tuesday 12-5**

8:44 a.m. Report of a motor vehicle accident on Rt 2 at North Street. Pick up truck into a tree. No personal injuries. Damage to truck over \$1000.

10:10 a.m. Assisted Wendell police with motor vehicle accident on Mormon Hollow Road involving a pregnant woman. Assisted with first aid. Operator found to be unlicensed. Montague Police arrived and identified them as leaving the scene of an accident in Millers Falls. Under investigation.

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

## Potato Pancakes

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - Late one evening we were eating potato pancakes, our absolute favorite. Ma didn't like to make them because it took too long to peel and grate the potatoes and to fry them in lard. She only made them when we were low on food and there wasn't much else to eat. Cooking them smoked up the kitchen, so she kept the kitchen door open even in

cold weather. We loved it because we didn't have to sit crowded on the long benches at the kitchen table, and could go out on the porch to eat the pancakes.

For us it was a party. We could talk and laugh, and we didn't need to keep quiet as we did when Pa was home. We just loved everything about it.

One evening, Pa was at work on the night shift, and we were polishing off pancakes faster than Ma could fry them. As soon as they were

done, she scooped them out of the frying pan and flipped them right into our hands, still piping hot. We'd juggle our pancakes, and go outside on the porch to cool them enough to eat.

I was standing on the porch next to my older sister Irene when someone appeared out of the darkness. It was a little scary. The shadowy figure stood on the ground, below the porch, in the shadows.

"Hey, kid, gimme me one of them pancakes. I'm

hungry."

I didn't know what to make of it. I was too scared to hand him my pancake, but Irene gave him hers. As he came closer to reach for the pancake, I could see he was just a boy. As soon as Irene came back with another pancake, he asked for it, again. She kept making repeated trips and he kept wolfing them down. It didn't seem to bother him that they were hot. He asked me for mine, again.

"Who are you, anyway?" I asked, trying to get a good look at him in the darkness.

"Stanley," he said, "your half brother."

I vaguely remembered Stanley talking to Johnny about the snowplow, but the concept of a half brother still confused me. The shadowy figure looked a little thin, but otherwise seemed whole enough to me. When Irene came back, he asked her for yet another pancake. Irene balked.

"Go in and get your own; I haven't had one to eat yet myself."

"Don't tell your Ma I'm out here, just give me another pancake."

Someone gave him one. The way he'd bolted those hot pancakes, he seemed terribly hungry.

"Do they ever talk about me?" he asked between bites. "Do they ever wish I'd come home?"

No one answered, and he slipped away into the night as silently as he'd come.

- continued next week.

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**Jep's Place**  
 by Joseph A. Parzych

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**Saturday, December 9, 2006**  
 Doors open at 6pm, film at 7pm.  
 Tickets: \$10 reserve by calling 413-303-9193  
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**Seating limited to 65 people.** Refreshments available. Sponsored by the **ManKind Project of New England**. There will be a brief informational panel after the film about the work of the ManKind Project.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Heroes*, classic and updated rock! 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH TO DECEMBER 10TH**  
Welcome Yule! at The Shea. [www.theshea.org](http://www.theshea.org)

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**  
At The Bookmill, Montague Center, Robby and Rolf. Stylistic Counterpoint: Rolf Pechukas plays original acoustic soul after Robby Roiter's set of impressionistic free jazz. 8- 11:30 p.m. \$10.

The Montague Elks Lodge #2521 Annual Hoop Shoot at the Turners Falls High School Gymnasium. Registration is at 9:30 a.m., contest 10 a.m. The Hoop Shoot is free and available to all boys and girls ages 8-13 as of 4/01/06.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Factory Defect*, rock & roll! 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

Leverett Crafts & Arts Holiday Open Studios LCA Resident artists open studio. Featuring pottery, screen prints, watercolors, paintings, wooden flutes, and more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Contact LCA for details: 413 548-9070

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9TH & 10TH**  
Wendell Holiday Fair at the Wendell Town Hall. Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Holiday shopping with local artists, crafters and businesses. Live music with Kevin Skorupa Saturday and Kellianna Sunday, both 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Food sales to benefit the Wendell Women's Club.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH**  
Scandinavian Dancing at the Montague Grange. Live music by Andrea Larson and friends. Dancers with all levels of experience are welcome. No partner nec-



*Modern Songs and Wild Old Tunes with John Coster (above) vocals, 6- and 12-string guitars, chromatic and diatonic harmonicas; and Katherine First: (right) Celtic fiddle with special guests. December 16th at the Echo Lake Coffee House, 8 p.m.*

essary, \$8 donation. Celebration of traditional Swedish Pageant of Lights with Santa Lucia. 3 to 6 p.m.

The community is invited to attend Christmas Vespers, Candlelit in Memorial Chapel at Northfield Mount Hermon School. Traditional service of music, readings, and carols. Performances at 3:30 and 7 p.m. A Holiday feast will be served from 5 to 7pm in Alumni Hall. Guest fees for dinner are \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. There is no charge for admission to the concert, but donations will benefit local charities. Directions [www.nmhschool.org](http://www.nmhschool.org) or (413) 498-3000.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH**  
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.

Breakfast with Santa at the Montague Elks. Pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, to benefit the TFHS class of 2007. Adults \$4.00, students/seniors \$3.00, 10 & under \$2.00. 7 to 10:30 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13TH**  
Mid-Week Music at All Souls Church, Greenfield. Greenfield High School Select Chorus,



directed by Paul Calcari Donations welcomed to support the "Warm the Children" fund. 12:15 to 12:45 p.m.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14TH**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Ottomatic Slim*, rocken blues great harp, 8:30 p.m. No cover.

**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. A 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 from the age of six, began building a repertoire of traditional tunes in the mid nineties, and shortly thereafter abandoned her seat in the Springfield symphony. She has since traveled to Ireland and studied with notable fiddlers, including the great Liz Carrol. Known for her lively performances at clubs and festivals throughout the region. \$12/\$10 seniors. Info. 548-9394. 8 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 TO 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).

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

Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Photographer/digital print artist John Paul Caponigro through December 17th.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST**  
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 at 413-863-2281, or [www.thesheacomedy.com](http://www.thesheacomedy.com). Show begins at 8 p.m.



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4. DECK THE HALLS PG MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 2:15 4:15 DAILY 6:45 9:00  
5. THE NAITIVITY STORY PG MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 2:15 4:15 DAILY 6:45 9:00  
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## Upcoming at the Discovery Center

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**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH**  
Winter Birds and Bird Feeders. Come and experience an opportunity to learn about winter birds' feeding habits and build a feeder to hang in the yard. 10 a.m.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**  
Adaptations of Birds in Exhibits. Discover how birds are adapted to each habitat and where they spend the winter. 2 p.m.

**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.

## ON DISPLAY

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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# Bye Bye Birdie

BY FLORE

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - You know when those well-coordinated squadrons tear the sky open in all directions, winter is a-coming. Better plunge in our closets, to put the warm clothes back on duty. The birds are what is left of our natural thermometer.

Do the Canada geese use their genetic memory, as they soar westward and southbound?

Some birds, such as the purple martin, travel tremendous distances. After they sojourn in South America, they return to our land for summertime.

How and why is it feasible for some birds, to remain attached to one place?

Are they impervious to changes in temperature?

Look over the power canal, for instance. Should you be walking there at noon, or at dusk, every winged sojourner resting on

the water is *son mot a dire* (putting its two cents worth). Don't you find this fascinating?

I gather, through a passing familiarity with the careful studies of ornithologists, that what drives our feathered friends away in winter, is not really the weather, as most of us think, but the lack of available food.

Take the tree swallow, that feeds mainly on insects it catches in the air, while on the wing. The insects too, have gone south, or vanished until spring.

Swallows usually breed in the spring, as far north as Alaska and Labrador, while they make their winter home in the southern half of our country.

But, when they return, where will the birds find a welcome shelter away from common predators? Sweet purring Kitty is one, along with fuzzy squirrels, clever raccoons, quiet moving snakes and human kind!

If their natural setting is destroyed with the clearing of forest and wooded land, what would be left for them?

This is where we come in, building birdhouses, while their tenants are away!

Take a good look at the conservation land in



PHOTOS: FLORE

Montague Center, where stand the empty bird stalls. One is even a skyscraper!

This is a good time to build a birdhouse of our own in the back of our garden.

Do not miss the program offered on Friday, December 8th at 10 a.m.: Winter Birds and Bird Feeders at the Discovery Center in Turners Falls. They explain the proper materials to use, and the method of construction.

Who has heard of a hexagonal wren castle? A double bluebird house, a nuthatch bungalow? A tufted titmouse high rise? Twin gabled bird box? Plug birdhouse?

It's time again, to renew our learning about the bees and the birds.

Suggested reading: two great books, available at the Montague Center Library: *Birdhouses* by Paul Champion; *Birdhouses* by John Kelsey



The workshop, "Winter Birds and Bird Feeders" will take place at the Great Falls Discovery Center Dec. 8th.

**THE GARDENER'S COMPANION**

# December Highs

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - December began on such a balmy note that some forsythia bushes bloomed. On November 29th, the high temperature was 52, on November 30th, 61 degrees and on December first, the temperature soared to 66 degrees. Is this another sign of global warming or just an anomaly in our New England weather?

Several years ago I received a garden log for Christmas. It was meant for keeping track of when and where crops were planted, their time of yield and how well they did. I also used it to track weather that struck me as unusual. Here's a recap of some extremes I found noteworthy at the time:



developed a few late bloomers; I also had the pleasure of two last roses.

It's not these brief bursts of late heat or early cold that task our hardy New England

plants and shrubs. Often we have a warm spell in mid-February that starts the daffodils. They show a few inches of green above the ground and then stop growing when the temperature drops again, but this never seems to affect the future spring blooming.

What is very hard on plants are the winters during which the soil freezes and thaws several times throughout the winter season. This often results in the loss of plants. However, since this weather behavior occurs more winters lately than not, it's best to mulch plants like roses, or protect them in some way. Forsythia and honeysuckle are hardier; it's a challenge to let them go by even if you want to. A few years ago we put on an addition right where my vintage forsythia grew. I was willing to let it go for the glory of our new sunroom-to-be, but the contractor suggested digging it up with the backhoe and relocating it. So it was rather unceremoniously dumped at the edge of the woods, and it has been flourishing there ever since. Lilacs ditto.

Just because New England weather is characterized by highs and lows, big snow winters and especially mild ones, it doesn't mean global warming isn't real. Since we moved here in 1976, I have thrilled to the poignancy of the fall departure of the Canadian geese and their return in March, bringing with them the promise of another spring. Now the rivers always have open water available and the ragged check mark of these flocks comes and goes north or south all winter. I miss greatly that clear line between the ending of one season and the beginning of the next heralded by those haunting raucous cries.

- 1999**  
 11/20 high in the 60s  
 11/24 high of 67  
 11/25 highs in the 50s  
 12/5 high of 58

- 2001**  
 11/15 high in the 60s  
 11/16 high of 70  
 11/21 high of 55  
 11/22 high of 60  
 11/28 high of 60  
 12/5 high of 60

- 2002**  
 11/15 high in the 60s  
 11/17 2-3 inches ice and snow  
 11/27 4 inches snow  
 12/6 4 inches snow

Clearly New England weather has its extremes, and that explains why our weather zone does not allow for some of the enticing plants that can only survive to our south. But what about that blooming forsythia?

Here at the confluence of the Deerfield and Connecticut Rivers, we didn't have a hard freeze until November third. It was preceded by a couple of days in which the temperature hit 65 and my honeysuckle vine

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