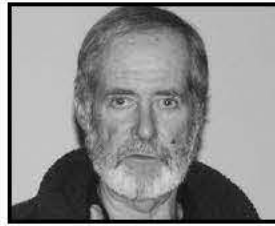




**BOON OR BOONDOGGLE?**  
Ethanol / Page 6



**TRACKING THE WILY COYOTE**  
With David Brown / Page 16

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 19

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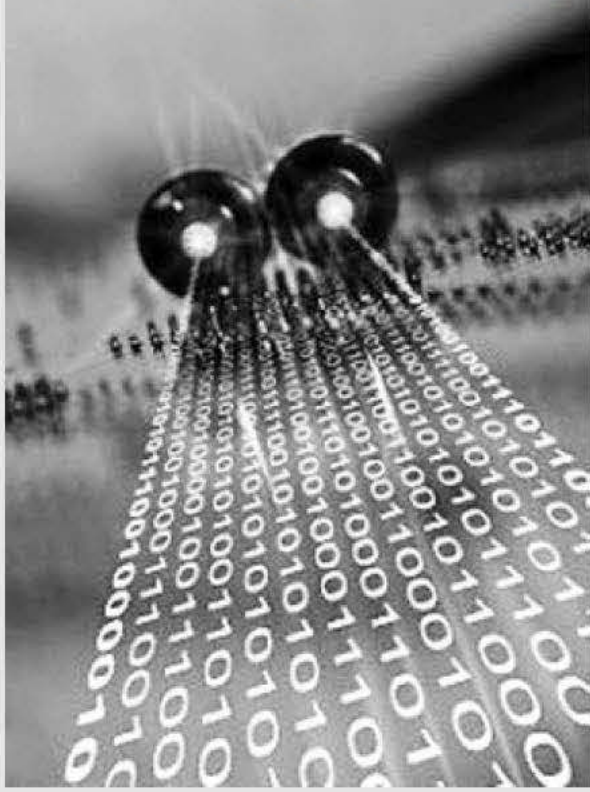
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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 15, 2007

## Broadband Access Draws Forty to Shutesbury Meeting



**ROBBIE LEPPZER** - Over 40 people attended a meeting of the joint Wendell-Shutesbury-Leverett broadband committee (WSLBC) meeting Tuesday night at the Shutesbury town hall. Broadband committee members and interested residents from New Salem, Warwick, and Royalston also attended the meeting.

Jessica Atwood, director of Pioneer Valley Connect (PVC), a project of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, and Maggie Bergin, the new project manager of PVC's Underserved Communities Project, gave a presentation and answered questions about new initiatives they are working on to bring high-speed internet access to underserved towns in our region.

The lack of broadband access is a major problem in Western Massachusetts, with one-third of the 101 communities having no cable or DSL broadband internet access, and

another one-third of communities having only limited access. The primary reason that most rural communities lack high-speed internet access is because private cable companies such as Verizon and Comcast have decided it is simply not profitable enough for them to make the investments necessary to upgrade the internet infrastructure to serve people outside of major towns and cities: the vast majority of Western Massachusetts.

At the meeting, residents from six towns voiced their growing frustration with slow dial-up service, which severely hinders residents, students, small business owners, and self-employed people from utilizing the internet for their work and personal business. Wendell selectboard member Christine Heard, along with selectboard members and other town officials from Shutesbury, New Salem and Royalston,

see **BAND** pg 10

## Gill-Montague Regional School Committee Reverses Course on Closing Hillcrest School

By Lisa MERKEL

**Sticking their fingers in the wind, the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee voted on Tuesday, Feb. 13th to rescind their decision of December 19th to partially close Hillcrest Elementary School. Turners Falls resident and school committee member Kristin Boyle brought the motion forward, and it carried by a 6-3 vote. Consequently, both Hillcrest and Montague Center Elementary School will remain open, for now, while the school committee gathers more detailed and comprehensive data for a more widely acceptable reconfiguration plan.**

Montague selectman Allen Ross recommended that the school committee rescind their decision to transform Hillcrest into a preschool center and expand the Montague

Center School to a K-5 grade span. He stated, "There is a widespread perception" the committee's decision did not represent the consensus of the people of Montague, which has engendered great tension between the school district and the town. He went on to say that the plan does not allow enough time for students, families, and faculty to transition without unreasonable disruption. In addition, the process of reconfiguration will be complicated by the current search for a new superintendent. Lastly he reasoned, "There are many undefined financial aspects to the plan of December 19th, 2006, that will, at a minimum, impede the necessity for the town and school district to arrive at a balanced budget." At the end of his speech, he requested that the school committee allow the townspeople more time to work through these issues in a "civil, constructive, informed manner."

In a letter from selectboard

member Pat Allen, read by Donna Klaiber, Allen also expressed concern about the lack of information regarding capital improvement costs that would be necessitated by the committee's decision; the impact on students and staff in transition; and the effort that will now be required to find a new superintendent for the district. Klaiber chimed in after the letter by saying, "Buildings don't teach. Teachers teach, and good teachers can teach all children anywhere."

The room was stirred by discussion of the petition signed by over 1100 people in favor of closing the Montague Center School. The committee conferred about the legality of the petition, and were informed by superintendent Sue Gee that it has resulted in a non-binding referendum that will allow citizens to voice their opinions, "so that the representatives voting know the will of the people."

see **SCHOOLS** pg 9

## Erving Town Meeting Approves Senior Center Study

**BY KEVIN FOLEY** - Town moderator Rich Peabody congratulated the 41 people in attendance at the special town meeting on Monday, February 12th for "making the room inadequate for the purpose," due to lack of space in the basement meeting room at town hall. Despite the good turnout, there was virtually no disagreement on any article in the 12-item warrant, all of which passed easily.

The topic that provided the most discussion was an article to set aside \$30,000 from free cash to conduct a feasibility study for a new senior center, to be located next to a proposed senior housing complex nearby the Erving Elementary School. Many seniors were present to weigh in on the lack of room in the current facility, located on the first floor of an old school building on Pleasant Street. Polly Kiely, the senior center director, was present at the meeting as well.

"If we have more room, I think we can increase the amount of people using it," Kiely said. "I feel that the seniors in Erving deserve this."

Andrew Tessier, selectboard chairman, agreed with Kiely's assessment. "The seniors have supported many things for the kids. This is a small token back to them."

The article passed with little opposition, but the new center may take up to five years to plan for and build, Tessier said. At the Monday, February 5th selectboard meeting, the board estimated that the project could wind up costing the town between \$400,000 and \$500,000.

All other articles on the agenda passed unanimously, including an article to set aside \$11,000 from free cash for engineering services to evaluate the Farley wastewater treatment plant's possible replacement, and for an evaluation of the existing sand filters at the facility. Tessier said the sand filters aren't functioning properly. The engineering services will evaluate if it is necessary to replace them.

A new position of Environmental Supervisor was discussed and approved, with \$6,000 transferred from free cash to the Waste Water Enterprise Fund to help pay the

salary for the new hire. The position, to be full-time and compensated at a salary range between \$46,000 and \$52,000 a year, will be responsible for keeping the three wastewater treatment plants in Erving in compliance with environmental regulations.

The town established a stabilization fund of \$100,000 for future insurance liabilities for retirees. Tessier said the fund is primarily meant for people who are under 65 and retired, because those people don't get federal support for insurance.

Another stabilization fund of \$50,000 was established to pay for future benefits for active employees. This fund will pay for unused sick days and vacation time, according to Tessier.

Articles 1, 2 and 3 on the agenda all dealt with the same issue. The town is handing over a portion of the "paper street" property, located off of the Prospect Street extension. The property is changing hands in order to facilitate MassHighway's

see **ERVING** pg 16

**PET OF THE WEEK**  
**Be Mine**



**Boots**

Boots is a one-and-a-half-year-old black and white cat in need of a good home. Boots is an adorable little cat with an upside down V on her forehead, exuberant white whiskers, and tuxedo markings. She seems to be OK with dogs and other cats and came to Dakin as a transfer from another shelter. Boots has lived as an indoor only cat, so it's best she stay that way since she's so unfamiliar with the great outdoors. She's a fun cat who loves to play, but come bedtime she's all set to burrow under the covers and stay warm with you. Who can say no to extra warmth in this cold? For info contact the Dakin at 413-548-9898 everett@dphvs.org.

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**LIBRARY NEWS**



**TURNERS FALLS-**  
Bella Justiano of Greenfield and Melissa Hersey of Turners Falls were among the over 60 children and family members who attended the annual Valentine's Party at the Carnegie Library on Saturday, February 10th.



**MONTAGUE CENTER-**  
Dawn Ward of Montague Center led a very interesting program on animal tracking for families on Saturday, February 10th. The event began with an introduction inside the Montague Center Library, and then the group went searching for animal signs in the Montague Center Conservation Land. The Community Partnerships for Children sponsored the program.



**DISCOVERY CENTER**  
Paige Slavenwhite and Teagan Glenn, both of Millers Falls, enjoyed an animal book together at a half day after school program at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Ground Hog's Day. The theme was ground hogs and other burrowing animals. The half day after school series is a collaboration of the Discovery Center, Montague Public Libraries, and the Family Literacy Project, administered by the Montague Catholic Social Ministries and funded by the Montague Community Development Block Grant.

Text & Photos  
LINDA HICKMAN

**Native American Stories and Songs**

**NORTHFIELD** - "Native American Stories and Songs in the Yurt with Loril Moondream and Peter Whitefox" will be held on Saturday, Feb. 24th

from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Northfield Mountain Yurt for ages 5 and older. It is free. Pre-registration required by calling 800-859-2960.

**Beat Poets Program at LCA**

LCA Gets the Beat! Ode to the Beat Poets Gala at Leverett Crafts & Arts. Come warm the night, free your soul and support community arts at a Coffee House with Wine Tasting, Art Exhibit and Auction, Poetry and Jazz. Saturday, February 24th,

8pm, LCA, Barnes Gallery, 13 Montague Road, Leverett. Tickets \$20, with a \$30 donation you get a pound of LCA Special Blend Coffee! Black beret, black turtlenecks and dark glasses encouraged. 548-9070 to reserve your tickets.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES Feb. 19th - 23rd**

**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, 19th**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics  
1:00 p.m. Canasta  
**Tuesday, 20th**

9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi  
**Wednesday, 21th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 22nd**  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, 23rd**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. PACE Aerobics

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

ical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

**Monday, 19th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch  
**Tuesday, 20th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday, 21st**  
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing  
12 Noon Bingo  
**Thursday, 22nd**  
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.

**FACES & PLACES**



**Drifting Peacefully**

Four Directions Healing Arts on Avenue A extends healing services to passersby with a window display of Flore's serene mixed media art. Free flying birds of peace are hand painted on cascades of rich purple silk flowing from the ceiling with the doves appearing in paintings casually placed on cinder blocks amid groupings of small stones and photos of lush countrysides, stone landscapes and deserts. Today, her photo of sand drifts resembles the drifts reflected in the window of our first snowstorm of the season. Four Directions allows its display window to be used by local artists on a rotating basis as part of the downtown arts initiative. For info, call Karen at 863-8033.

**NMH Orchestra Fetes Area Seniors**

The Northfield Mount Hermon Symphony Orchestra will honor area senior citizens with a free concert, Sunday February 25 at 3 p.m. in the chapel on the Gill Campus of Northfield Mount Hermon School.

Selections will spotlight award-winning students and include: Felix Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor (violin solo by Yvonne Change of Taiwan), Cecile Chaminade's Concertino for flue and orchestra (Flue solo by Eleanor Shea of Ashland, Virginia) and Richard Wagner's Die Meister Singer (conducted by Susan Maday Travis of Holden).

The concert is free but voluntary donations are welcome that

will go to support area programs for seniors, like Meals on Wheels. For more information call 413-773-5555 Ext. 296

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## Local Students to Compete in Western MA Swim Meet

BY CORI URBAN

**TURNERS FALLS** - Thirteen Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School students are scheduled to compete in the Western Massachusetts Swim Championships on February 17th at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

Senior Sunny Lucas will

swim the 200-yard individual medley, 100 back stroke and relays. Freshman Tim Carlisle will swim the 50-yard free, 100 back and relays. Senior Chris Krzykowski is set for the 50 free, 100 free and relays while junior Sam Johnson is to swim the 50 free and relays. Senior Adam Bastarache will swim the

50 free and relays. Swimming the relays also will be freshmen Matt Garber and Chris McMahon.

For the girls, junior Jen Jason will swim the 500 free and 100 breaststroke, as well as relays. Eighth-grader Katie Kukiewicz will swim the 200 free and 100 butterfly, along with relays. Senior Jenna Lapachinski is set to swim the 50 free and relays. Also swimming the relays for the Turners Falls girls will be juniors Ali Urban, Molly Perry and Steph Joly.

Swimming in the boys' state meet February 24th at Northeastern University in Boston will be the 200 medley relay team of Carlisle, Lucas, Bastarache and Krzykowski, and the 200 free relay team of Krzykowski, Lucas, Johnson and Bastarache.

The Turners Falls boys' team finished the regular B Division season with a 6-5-1 record, while the girls finished with a 7-5 record. Turners Falls is the only high school Western Massachusetts swim team from Franklin County.



PHOTO: CORI URBAN

Members of the TFHS varsity swim team are set to swim in the Western Massachusetts Swim Championships Feb. 17th at the University of Massachusetts: (back, left to right) Sunny Lucas, Chris Krzykowski, Adam Bastarache, Jenna Lapachinski, Matt Garber, Tim Carlisle, and Chris McMahon; (center) Jen Jason; and (front, left to right) Ali Urban, Steph Joly, Molly Perry, Katie Kukiewicz and Coach Karen Greene. Not in the photograph is swimmer Sam Johnson.

## Nomination Papers for May Election

Nomination papers for the annual town election are now available at the town clerk's office until Friday, March 30th. They must be returned no later than Monday, April 2nd by 5:00 p.m. Positions open are as follows:

- Selectman, town clerk, treasurer/tax collector, assessor, board of health, parks & recreation and tree warden are all open for three-year terms.

- Library trustees have 3 open seats, all for three-year terms.

- Soldiers memorial trustees have 1 seat open for a three-year term (veteran) and 1 seat open for a two-year term (veteran).

Nomination papers are also available for town meeting members.

The annual town election will be held on Monday, May 21st, 2007. The deadline to register to vote is May 1st.

The town clerk's office is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, please call the office at 863-3200, ext 203.

## G-M School Committee Openings

Nomination papers for Gill-Montague Regional School Committee openings are available at the superintendent's office, and are due back no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 30th, 2007.

There are openings for 1 three-year Gill seat, and 2 three-year Montague seats.

For more information on school committee nomination papers, please call: Robin Hamlett at 413-863-9324.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

### Fisher Cats, Funerals, and Crack Cocaine

**Wednesday 2-7**

6:45 p.m. Reported fisher cat attack on Mountain Road. Officer unable to locate.

**Thursday 2-8**

11:30 a.m. Officer assisted with large funeral at Lester Street Bridge.

**Saturday 2-10**

1:15 a.m. Assisted with medical

emergency at East Main Street. Subject transported to hospital.

6:45 p.m. Wendell dog officer called reporting they had picked up a dog with "Maxine" on the tag, advising it may have come from Erving.

**Monday 2-12**

1:55 p.m. Report of a larceny of prescription drugs from a North

Street address. Report taken.

**Tuesday 2-13**

12:02 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on E. Main St., car crashed into a light pole. Pole extensively damaged. [redacted] arrested and charged with operating with a suspended license (subsequent offense), operating to endanger, possession of a class B drug (crack cocaine).

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# The Montague Reporter

24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, Mass. 01376

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<b>Circulation</b> Jean Hebden Julia Bowden Smith Philippe Deguise		

## Long-Awaited Snow

Long-awaited snow has fallen, covering all the rooftops of our town, the houses of the well-to-do, the tenements of the less well off. In Montague Center, farm fields, sagging barns, modest old mills, modern homes and renovated 1830s Greek Revival buildings huddle together beneath a fresh blanket of white. In Millers Falls, the barrooms offer warmth against the February chill, a coat of ash lines the railroad tracks, the households along Grand Avenue look down on the households of Crescent Street, and recall winters past when factories boomed and Main Street bustled. The old ball field in Montague City is overgrown with brambles and ailanthus; snow lies deep on the sagging roof of the Rod Shop, the veterans memorial is drifted over on the corner of Masonic Avenue, leading past the old schoolhouse.

Down on the canal, the last timbers supporting what is left of the Griswold Cotton Mill's roof groan under the added weight. They cannot wait for spring. The rusty chimneys of the coal plant rattle in the ice and sleet, yearning for sunnier climes. On the Avenue, some stores are closed; others struggle to stay open. Even the bank took a holiday. The sidewalks with their trash and uncurbed dogs and free furniture split apart and

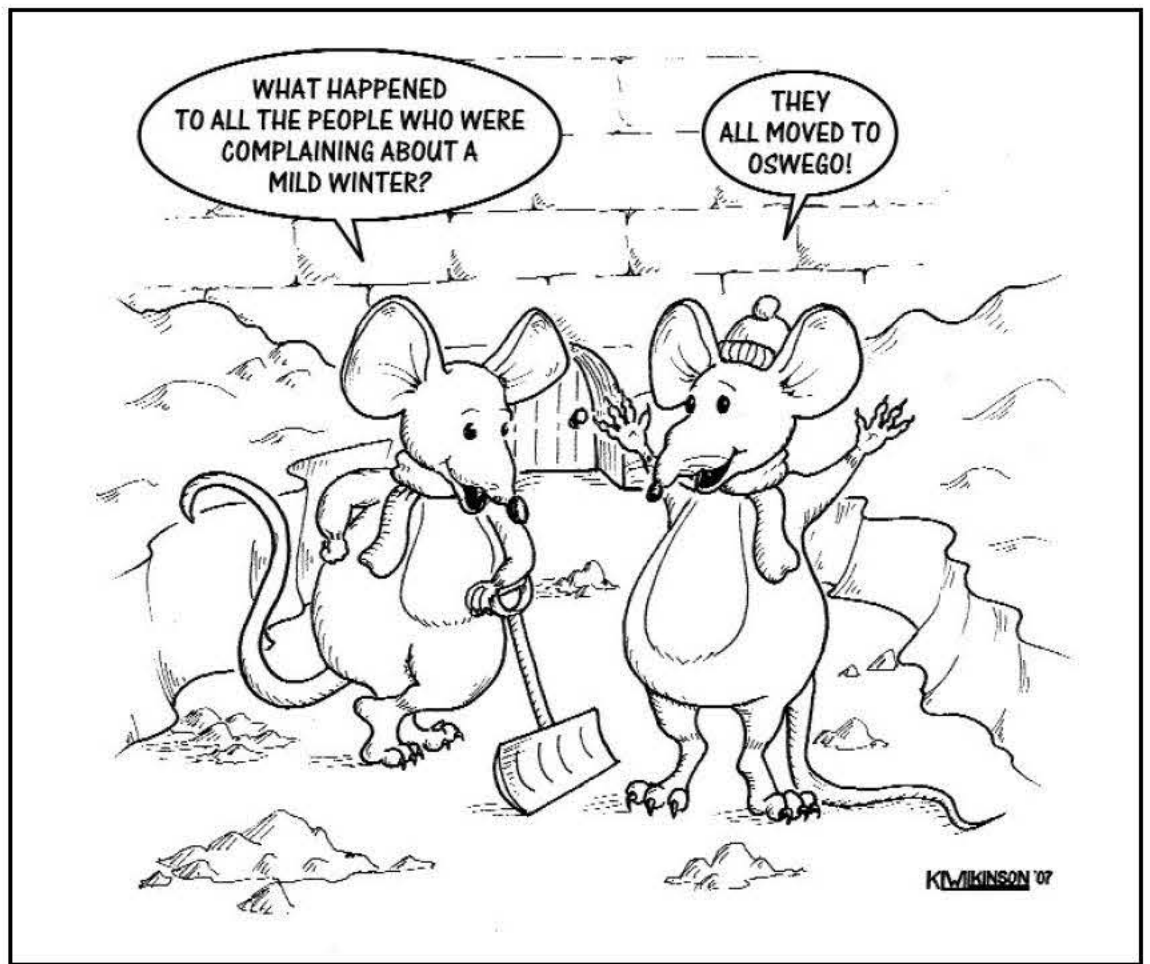
broken lie ankle deep. Wood smoke is on the wind, which drives the flurries sideways. People bend into the gusts, greeting one another cheerfully, with frost-pinked cheeks.

In Lake Pleasant, the crystal lake is covered at last in a sheet of ice, and the summer cottages hunker down for what is left of the season of darkness.

A winter storm brings the town together in a certain way. At whatever hour it strikes, men from the highway department wake up, down a pot of coffee, and start plowing the main arteries, then the side roads, finally the back alleys, laying down sand and salt, making it possible for us to resume our daily journeys. They go to each village, up each hill, down each narrow dead end street, providing the same service for everyone, regardless of our station.

Children come out in the snow and play, taking a welcome holiday from school, a day they have waited impatiently for since warm December gave way to mild January, and snow seemed to never come. Their school buildings, on the Hill in Turners Falls or by the Sawmill in Montague Center, are closed, for one day at least, and peaceful beneath the welcome snow. On the morrow, they will reopen, filled with fresh-faced scholars, revived by a respite from labor at their reading books, maps and ciphers, and looking towards their teachers, and the other adults who shape their lives, for guidance.

Let's hope we can find the wisdom to give them the guidance they need, in the same spirit of community we occasionally find beneath the snow on winter days like this.



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Take First Amendment Seriously

I was sorry to see an article in the *Montague Reporter* (on 1/25) describing the vandalizing of a war protest sign that had been placed legally on the Montague Center town common in the designated 'free speech zone'. My disappointment, of course, lies with the person(s) responsible for the vandalism, and their attempt to thwart someone's right to free speech.

Not only is it important to protect the free speech rights for all, but I also admire the effort that Eric Chester went to in

order to have his opinion publicly stated. He went through the proper channels; it took six months and it sounds as if the selectboard charted new territory in the process. His efforts have helped to establish a forum for other citizens in Montague to publicly express their opinions and values.

So thank you citizen Eric Chester.

I hope the selectboard compensates Mr. Chester by allowing him to display his sign again for a length of time commensurate with the time denied him

due to the vandalism. I hope the vandals read the article in the *Reporter* that describes their misguided actions and from this infer that by trying to quell the free speech of others they are actually bringing more attention to the very message they had hoped to silence.

A supportive response from the community communicates to those that attempt to thwart free speech that the citizens of Montague take their First Amendment rights seriously.

- Gini Brown  
Berkeley, CA

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

#### Breaking and Entering in Daytime

<b>Wednesday 2-7</b> 2:55 a.m. Assisted Gill EMS and BHA on Main Road; subject taken to FMC via BHA. 11:18 a.m. Report of subject requesting an ambulance for assault wounds on Pisgah Mountain Road. 1:20 p.m. Arrested [redacted] of [redacted] of Springfield. Charged with breaking and entering in the daytime for felony, larceny from a building, and three counts of larceny. Incident occurred on Pisgah Mountain Road. [redacted] had claimed he had been assaulted in a nearby cornfield; Pisgah Mountain Road resident allowed him to use his phone to call an ambulance. [redacted] took off before ambulance arrived. Resident later determined his house had been broken into, and [redacted] was picked up for the above offenses.)	and BHA ambulance with medical emergency on Main Road. 5:20 p.m. Assisted Gill fire department with fire in woods off Wyart Road. 8:50 p.m. Charged [redacted], with unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle, and a headlight violation. 9:40 p.m. Assisted Gill EMS and BHA with medical on Cross Road. 10:00 p.m. Assisted Gill EMS and BHA with medical on Northfield Mount Hermon campus. 11:50 p.m. Assisted Gill EMS on Cross Road with medical assistance call.	Parties located at another location; all OK. 2:15 p.m. Burglar alarm at the post office on the Northfield Mount Hermon campus, all checked OK.
<b>Friday 2-9</b> 10:45 a.m. Assisted Gill EMS	<b>Saturday 2-10</b> 8:45 a.m. Assisted a disabled motorist on French King Highway. <b>Sunday 2-11</b> 12:10 a.m. Welfare check requested on Myrtle Street.	<b>Monday 2-12</b> 5:20 p.m. Requested to assist Northfield police with domestic disturbance. Canceled on route. <b>Tuesday 2-13</b> 3:01 p.m. 911 misdial on the Northfield Mount Hermon Campus; responded with security. All OK. 4:15 p.m. ATV noise complaint on West Gill Road. Unable to respond; tied up on B&E investigation. 5:10 p.m. Assisted Gill EMS and BHA with medical emergency on the Northfield Mount Hermon campus. 7:38 p.m. Medical alarm sounding at West Gill Road residence. Responded with BHA ambulance.

## American Dead in Iraq as of 2/14/07

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GUEST  EDITORIAL

# On Closing a Neighborhood School

## An Open Letter to the G-M School Committee

BY PAT ALLEN

First, I believe none of us wants to close a neighborhood school. The loss of an integrating focal point for any village is a sad time for all of us, as a number of Montague's villages have found in the past. The depth of the emotion involved is obvious when words such as "shocking" and "outrageous" are used by people begging us all to work together.

Second, I believe the main reason you had not heard from most of the people who signed the petition brought to the selectboard recently is not because they don't care. I think that most of those who signed the petition, including me, never thought closing Hillcrest or Sheffield was a viable, fiscally realistic, or sensible option. We chose instead to trust the school committee to determine whether closing Montague Center School was

appropriate or not, recognizing the complexity of the financial and educational issues involved. Listening to Sheffield principal Chip Wood's vision for a campus school gave me great hope and enthusiasm for the future of education for the children of Montague. Hearing the impassioned support for the programs in the Montague Center School made me wonder why those terrific programs couldn't be in place in a campus school. The building in Montague Center isn't what makes those programs special, it's the people.

Third, I believe that over the last several years of discussing the elementary school configurations, (I was on two study groups), we never reached the point of studying the actual numbers and logistics necessary to make a truly informed, rational decision. As the numbers are

now bandied back and forth, we find ourselves scrambling to determine the real costs involved in not only capital and operating costs, but also trying to ask the questions that would help assess the impact on the students and staff while changes are made.

I implore you to take the opportunity to reconsider your vote, and if nothing else, return to the current configuration while you really take the time to address all the questions either unanswered, or even unasked, as yet. Certainly questions came up spontaneously at the Montague capital improvements committee meeting last Thursday that brought to light other concerns, and there must be even more out there. In addition, you are now faced with a new superintendent search which will require time and effort on your part.

I believe if you return to the

current configuration for the immediate future and spend the time to get the information needed to make a logical, objective decision, the ballot question would be moot, as the townspeople who signed the petition would feel you have heard them and have listened, and they would be willing to wait for new developments.

*Pat Allen is a member of the Montague selectboard. The opinions stated here are her own, and do not represent the opinion of the selectboard as a whole.*

*This letter was read aloud to the G-M School Committee on February 13th, prior to their vote to reverse their earlier decision to partially close Hillcrest and expand the Montague Center School.*



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
SUSAN**

Susan B. Anthony was born February 15th, 1820 in Adams Massachusetts. She was brought up in a Quaker family with long activist traditions. Early in her life she developed a sense of justice and moral zeal.

Ignoring opposition and abuse, Anthony traveled, lectured and canvassed across the nation for women's right to vote. She also campaigned for the abolition of slavery, women's rights to their own property and earnings, and women's labor organizations. She remained active until her death on March 13th, 1906.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG A Series of Arrests

**Friday 2-9**

2:40 a.m. Report of a motor vehicle accident on Sunderland Road at North Leverett Road. One car involved. One subject transported to FMC.

2:24 p.m. Report of a breaking and entering at a Montague City Road address. Unknown if anything was stolen. Report taken.

**Sunday 2-11**

7:49 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road, [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested and

charged with operating with a suspended license, operating with a revoked registration, operating an uninsured motor vehicle, license not in possession, registration not in possession, and failure to inspect.

10:59 p.m. [redacted] was arrested at a 5th Street address on a straight warrant.

11:25 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

**Monday 2-12**

1:51 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop on 1st Street, [redacted] was arrested and charged with possession of a class D drug (subsequent offense).

1:35 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

6:22 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant and a straight warrant.

8:13 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

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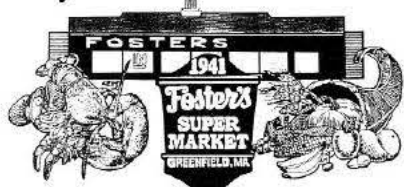
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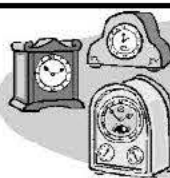
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# Ethanol: Boon or Boondoggle?

Ethanol is being touted as one possible solution to the nation's energy woes. But production of the corn-based fuel is hurting small farmers who rely on corn for feed, like Charlene Berniche of Gill.

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - Ethanol is a hot topic. Even President Bush was pushing it in his State of the Union address. Corn prices are up. Growers are planting more acreage to corn. John Deere is cranking out tractors, planters and harvesting machinery. One hundred twelve ethanol plants in this country are at work distilling ethanol, with 76 more plants under construction.

On Saturday, February 10th, President Bush, in his weekly

radio address, pushed for approval of proposals to produce ethanol from corn and non-corn feed stocks to help solve "one of the great challenges facing our generation, by approving proposals that will cut gasoline consumption by up to 20 per cent over the next 10 years. Every member of Congress who cares about strengthening our economy, protecting our national security, and confronting climate change should support the energy initiatives I have set out," he said.

## Henry Ford's Dream

The promise of ethanol development seems likely to fulfill Henry Ford's dream of farmers prospering from the new era of the automobile. When ethanol got a tax break, ethanol refineries sprouted up like Iowa corn in springtime. Oversupplies of corn in storage from consecutive years of exceptional production held prices low. Hurricane destruction of port facilities in the Port of New Orleans and damaged rail freight terminals because of Katrina hurt exports and depressed prices further. Dairy farmers in the Northeast could often buy corn cheaper than growing it.

## Ethanol to the Rescue

According to the National Corn Growers Association, "Ethanol production makes huge amounts of the nation's corn disappear - some 1.4 billion bushels of corn went into ethanol production in 2004." The problem of surplus corn was solved. By 2008, half the nation's corn crop will go into production of ethanol. Corn prices increased, especially in markets near ethanol plants, to the relief of corn growers.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ethanol production adds 30 cents to the value of a bushel of corn. Ford and General Motors increased production of 'flex-fuel' cars with hopes of reviving their fortunes.



PHOTO: JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

Charlene Berniche of Gill with Harry the horse.

## Free at Last!

In his State of the Union address, Bush said ethanol as a motor fuel will free us from dependence on foreign oil and will help offset global warming. Not only that, but farmers will prosper and more Americans will be put to work. Ethanol production adds \$4.5 billion to U.S. farm income annually, a win-win situation for everyone.

## Flex-Fuel Model T

Henry Ford designed his 1908 Model T with an easily adjustable carburetor to run on gasoline or ethanol. Ford, once a farm boy, envisioned automobiles, tractors and trucks running on ethanol made from farm products, and farmers prospering thereby. He later built a prototype car body made of plant-derived plastics reinforced with plant fibers, similar to Fiberglass-reinforced plastic car bodies.

## Flex-Fuel Engines

While Ford Motor Company never manufactured plant-based plastic bodied cars for sale, the company is now producing more sophisticated 'flex-fuel' car

engines designed to run on ethanol, in ratios up to 85%. The company is even producing ethanol-electric hybrids. Alcohol is not all that difficult to produce, as any moonshine still operator can tell you. During WWII, Germans produced alcohol from potatoes, among other things, to run their vehicles, the same way vodka is produced today.

## Brazilian Commitment

Brazil made a commitment to free itself from dependence on foreign oil while producing an ecologically balance motor fuel. While ethanol produces carbon dioxide, the CO2 released is balanced by the CO2 that plants use in the photosynthesis process. The ethanol feedstock plants convert CO2 and sunshine to sugar for plant food, while releasing oxygen to the air. Brazil has gone beyond flex fuel blends of ethanol and gasoline. Forty percent of Brazil's cars run on 100% ethanol, as Henry Ford's 1908 Model T did. Brazil uses energy-laden sugar cane for ethanol production, but most of the U.S. is unsuitable for sugar cane production.

see ETHANOL pg 12

## MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: February 16th - February 22nd

**Barton Cove Eagles:**  
7A-8A Daily  
2P-3P Daily  
4P-5P Daily  
11A-1P (Tuesday)

### Friday, February 16

8:00 am An Interview with Steve Alves  
9:00 am Montague Selectboard 2/12/07  
11:00 am Friends Coffee House Series: Falltown String Band  
1:00 pm Montague Update: Dave Lovelace  
6:00 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #7  
6:30 pm How To Do The Montague Reporter Sudoku Puzzle  
7:00 pm GMRSD meeting 2/13/07  
10:00 pm View & Vision

### Saturday, February 17

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #7  
8:30 am How To Do The Montague Reporter Sudoku Puzzle  
9:00 am GMRSD meeting 2/13/07  
12:00 pm View and Vision  
6:00 pm The Well Being: "Sexual Abuse and Healing"  
7:00 pm Roger Salloom Interview  
8:00 pm Coffee House Series: Falltown String Band  
10:00 pm MCTV Year in Review

### Sunday, February 18

8:00 am The Well Being: "Sexual Abuse and Healing"  
9:00 am Roger Salloom Interview  
10:00 am Coffee House

Series: Falltown String Band  
12:00 pm MCTV Year in Review  
6:00 pm Wind Changer 7/25 #1

6:30 pm Discovery Center: "Tracking The Wily Coyote"  
8:30 pm An Interview With Steve Alves  
9:30 pm On The Ridge: Springfield Sportsmen's Show  
10:30 pm New Beginnings

### Monday, February 19

8:00 am Wind Changer 7/25 #1  
8:30 am Discover Center: "Tracking The Wily Coyote"  
10:30 am An Interview With Steve Alves  
11:30 am On The Ridge: Springfield Sportsmen's Show  
12:00 pm New Beginnings  
6:00 pm Roger Salloom Interview  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board (Live)  
9:00 pm Discovery Center: "What's Happening with The Eagles"  
10:00 pm Montague Update: Ted Graveline  
10:30 pm Mass Wilderness: Winter

### Tuesday, February 20

8:00 am Roger Salloom Interview  
9:00 am Discovery Center: "What's Happening with The Eagles"  
10:00 am Montague Update: Ted Graveline  
10:30 am Mass Wilderness: Winter  
6:30 pm GED Connection #28

7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting 2/13/07  
10:00pm The Well Being "Sexual Abuse and Healing"  
11:00 pm Cost of Freedom

### Wednesday, February 21

8:00 am GED Connection #28  
8:30 am GMRSD Meeting 2/13/07  
11:30 am The Well Being: "Sexual Abuse and Healing"  
12:30 am Cost of Freedom  
6:30 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #7  
7:00 pm GED Connection #29  
7:30 pm Discovery Center Presents: "Tracking The Wily Coyote"  
9:30 pm Coffee House Series: Falltown String Band  
11:30 pm Prevailing Winds

### Thursday, February 22

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #7  
8:30 am GED Connection #29  
9:00 am Discovery Center Presents: "Tracking The Wily Coyote"  
11:00 am Coffee House Series: Falltown String Band  
1:00 pm Prevailing Winds  
6:00 pm On The Ridge: Springfield Sportsmen's Show  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board 2/19/07  
9:00 pm How to do The Montague Reporter Sudoku Puzzle  
9:30 pm Montague Update: Ted Graveline  
10:00 pm View & The Vision

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**NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD**

# New Town Buildings "Looking Good"

## But Completion Date Delayed til March 21st

**BY JOSH HEINEMANN**  
**WENDELL** - The new town building projects are still high among the concerns on the selectboard's agenda, both for the amount of money they will cost, and for the time the buildings will take to reach completion. When the buildings were brought up at the February 7th selectboard meeting, board member Christine Heard's first comment was, "They are looking good." Heard passes both the new library and new town office building on her daily commute.

Board chair Ted Lewis responded, "Painters cover many sins." He said he had seen screws not fully seated, or missing entirely in the truss plates.

Board member Dan Keller said Handford Construction has asked for an extension of the completion date until March 21st, and town counsel is reviewing the legitimacy of their reasons. The USDA loan will not replace the town's short term borrowing until the entire project - both the library and the town office building - is complete, and until then short term interest on the loan is costing the town \$4,000 a month. Rent and electric heat for the temporary office trailers is another steadily mounting expense.

Both architect Margo Jones and building committee members like the look of the two-tone finish on the town office building, a result of different primers, on the hardy plank clapboards and the flat panels. The plan is to try to duplicate those colors when the building is given its final coat of paint in the spring.

Keller said that the cellar in the library building still needs a perimeter drain, and the floor there is still unfinished. Handford Construction's project manager has been changed. Leo

Handford attended the most recent building committee meeting; he said he would address the issue of their insurance company's refusal to pay for damages to the library following the July 12th tornado.

The water supply system has been hooked up to the town hall, and DEP inspector Mike McGrath is happy with the entire system. All that is needed is a registered operator, and town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said she would be willing to take the short course required to gain that accreditation.

Keller said the selectboard needs to talk with the finance committee about money for the additional expense of maintaining the new town buildings. Heat costs will be a fraction of the heat cost for the trailers, Keller said, and both buildings are tighter than the ones they will replace. The office building allows more natural light in than the old office buildings did, and the new electric lights are T1 fluorescents, so the difference in lighting bills might not be too great.

Davenport Construction, who built the septic system, will have to return to connect the town hall tight tank to the septic system, and to test the permanent electric power for the system once it has been connected some time in the next month.

The planning board is seeking comment from the selectboard on plans it received and forwarded from developer James Tierney for four houses at the east side of the intersection of Locke Hill Road and Old Stage Road. The plans include environmental impact statements. Two of the lots, one four acres, and the other seven acres, are in back and have just enough frontage to allow for a driveway. Keller said it is up to the planning board to determine

if the plans conform to town bylaws, and the only restrictions the town can impose are that the construction meets already established criteria. All departments have 35 days to submit their comments.

The meeting opened with the selectboard approving a request by the Wendell Women's Club to use the town hall from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 24th for a spaghetti supper. Proceeds will be used for the annual Christmas party. There will be no fee, because the event is for the town.

A letter from a resident complained about the ice that has stayed on Depot Road for weeks following the last light snowfall. It called the situation, "an accident waiting to happen," and suggested that more salt be mixed in with the sand to help de-ice the road. Heard said the town voted at town meeting to limit the amount of salt mixed in with the sand. Lewis said that with temperatures as low as they have been, no amount of salt will melt the ice. Keller added the road gets no sun, as it is on a north slope with trees close to the road on both sides, and that going slow is not a bad idea either. They forwarded the letter on to road boss Dan Bacigalupo, hoping maybe when daytime temperatures rise the road crew can run a plow over the softened ice.

The board signed appointment slips for assistant constables Byron Ricketts and Ted Lewis, who will help patrol the town hall during elections.

The board received an Unsung Heroine nomination form that is going out to every town in the Commonwealth. Heard said the school principal suggested Rosalie Rosser, for her creation and work at "Good Neighbors." Any person in town can submit a nomination.

Brian Anderson, whose house and property is just west

of the new town office building wrote a letter dated December 18th stating his concerns about vegetation that was damaged between his house and the new building. Keller said the board had seen the letter, and that Anderson's concerns are legitimate. The parking lot and building were located so the building shields his house from noise and activity in the parking lot, but Keller said replanting should be a responsibility of the town.

Robbie Heller sent the board an email saying that a state representative will be at a broadband committee meeting that took place at the Shutesbury town hall on February 13th. The meeting will concern testing a system for getting high speed internet access into western Massachusetts hill towns. There

is a possibility that Wendell might be one of six towns selected for the trial. Heard offered to attend the meeting. The selectboard signed an appointment slip for Ben Schwartz as a new member of the broadband committee.

Aldrich read a letter from Marianne Sundell of the open space committee about a management plan for town owned land on Montague Road. The forester recommended thinning and long term management favoring red oak, but there is some question of clear title on part of the land. Board members thought town ownership of the whole lot was clear, that the land had been donated, not taken for taxes, and was to be managed and profits from harvested wood was to be given to the schools.

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# Wendell Ag Commission Holds Forum on Animal Identification System

**BY JOSH HEINEMANN** - On Tuesday evening, February 6th, 20 residents of Wendell and neighboring towns attended an informational meeting about the proposed federal National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The meeting, sponsored by the Wendell agricultural commission, was facilitated by town moderator Kathy Becker, and featured guest speakers Mike Cahill, from the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture bureau of animal health, and Jack Kittredge of the Northeast Organic Farming Association.

Kittredge spoke first. He called the NAIS - envisioned as a massive nationwide electronic animal identification and tracking system - the animal equivalent of the energy policy created by Vice President Dick Cheney in secret confabs with energy industry executives. Kittredge said the NAIS is a product of meetings with big agricultural associations, feedlot owners and their representatives, Monsanto, Cargill, and high tech companies that would make and sell animal electronic tracking devices. The proposed system would be expensive, cumbersome, and ineffective, and would not address the spread of animal-borne diseases, Kittredge said.

The NAIS program would be carried out in three phases:

The first phase is premise registration. Every facility that handles livestock, including veterinarians, slaughterhouses, and farms, would be registered with its address (which will allow GPS coordinates to be determined) and given a seven-digit identification number.

The second phase is animal identification. Each animal would be tagged with a 15-digit identification number attached to its body. A poultry flock that is moved together for the whole life of the birds, and is contained inside and isolated from wild birds could be covered with a single identification number, but in a household flock of a few free ranging birds each animal would be required to have its own identification number and tag. Large animals would be identified individually. It costs \$25 to set up the system on a farm, \$14 to insert one ID tag, and \$500 or more for an electronic reader for the tags. Tags may be legal and cheaper without the electronic chip, but only electronic tags are available now.

The way the system's proposed costs are structured favors large factory farms over small, diversified farms, Kittredge said, and therefore would promote the very factors that lead to large scale outbreaks of disease. The effect of implementation would be to make small, free-ranging flocks of poultry prohibitively expensive.

The program's third phase involves tracking the animal with a national database that would follow, and be no more than 48 hours behind any change in the location or health of a tagged animal. The computer programs to handle all that data have not been created yet, but they would be large scale and expensive, Kittredge said.

He said animals kept inside in crowded conditions develop stressed immune systems. Viruses living among these animals mutate opportunistically and spread rapidly, Kittredge alleged. Through most of history, hosts and viruses have co-existed; genetic variation within the host species allows some of the host animals to survive a new virulent virus, and the host species becomes dominated by the resistant animals. A new stasis is reached between the virulent virus, and the resistant host.

stressed he was from the state government, not the federal government. He reminded the crowd that local animal inspectors have had in place a statewide paper system of premise registration, which includes address, telephone number and type of animal, for years. With the implementation of federal premise registration, the state submitted that information for 1,800 sites. For 400 of those sites, the information bounced back. Concerned about the conflict between confidentiality of the Freedom of Information Act, the state contacted the federal government, and stopped sending the premise information.

The Massachusetts Department of Agriculture firmly believes in premise registration, but there is still internal discussion on the value of individual animal identification and tracking. With the new governor and acting commissioner of agriculture, Massachusetts has taken no firm decision on participating in the program as yet.

For diseases with short incubation, like Avian Flu, which can result in death of a bird within 48 hours, identification and tracking seem useless, Cahill said. But for diseases with a long incubation period, like mad cow disease or scrapie in sheep, identification and tracking can be useful to help eliminate infected hosts, but are less useful for protecting the food supply. Both scrapie and mad cow disease are transmitted from mother to offspring, and take years to show symptoms. Tracking and eliminating the offspring of animals that show symptoms could eliminate those diseases, Cahill said.

It is now illegal to feed rendered parts of cows to cows, but Ben Grosscup, NOFA public relations spokesperson, said it is legal to feed rendered parts of cows to chickens, and to feed rendered parts of chickens to cows, so in this manner mad cow disease could still be passed on through feed.

Cahill said it will take years to get from the draft legislation to a bill, and the only thing the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture is pursuing now is premise registration. He said there are portions of the draft legislation that people in the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture take issue with. He also said if people are skeptical of the federal government, he does not blame them.

**"If people are skeptical of the federal government, I don't blame them."**

**- Mike Cahill  
Mass. Dept. of Agriculture  
Bureau of Animal Health**

Similar dynamics are lacking in huge confined poultry flocks, for example. Genetic variation is minimal and crowding (perhaps half a square foot per bird for life) means new viruses have the chance to spread rapidly. Most transmission of a virus from animals to humans comes from workers being exposed to closely confined animals.

The Vermont legislature held hearings on the NAIS last year, and so much opposition was generated that legislators there passed bills against participating in the program. Massachusetts House Bill #1324 and Senate Bill #2166 would similarly oppose state participation in the NAIS program.

The Department of Agriculture's Mike Cahill

## NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

### Hillcrest Supporters Pack Selectboard Meeting

**BY ERIC WASILESKI** - The room was filled to capacity with town residents as the selectboard took up the topic of elementary school closings on Monday, February 12th. Reacting to the selectboard's decision of February 5th to place a non-binding referendum on the townwide ballot in the May election calling for closing the Montague Center School, finance committee chair Jeff Singleton, speaking over the outbursts of the crowd, defended the Gill-Montague school committee's December 19th decision to partially close Hillcrest Elementary, and expand Montague Center School to a K-5 school. The selectboard acted last week in response to the presentation of a petition with over 1100 signatures, including 900 registered Montague voters, calling for the Montague Center elementary school to be permanently closed as of September 1st, 2007.

Singleton said, "I am concerned with the selectboard's reaction to the petition. This was one of the most open processes in this town. The selectboard should support the school committee and it's process." Continuing, Singleton said, "We had a timeline to come up with a decision. People have a right to petition, but that doesn't make it the right thing to do."

Selectboard member Allen Ross responded strongly. "The school committee needs to rethink its decision. (I believe) the decision the school committee made was an unwise one." He added, "Very experienced professional educators all thought that the campus model [of retaining Sheffield and Hillcrest Elementary Schools, while closing Montague Center] would be best, and I don't think their testimony was given the full credit it deserved."

In many emotional statements from the floor, nearly all present favored the school committee rethinking the issue. One man said, "We can spend our money on bricks and mortar or we can spend it on books and education. This should be a no-brainer."

Speaking of the selectboard's decision to place a non-binding referendum question on the May election ballot, board member Pat Allen said, "This is a non-binding resolution, but we can get the will of the town. If it is close, we can disregard it if we like, and it will give us time to gather all the facts and figures we need to make the best decision for the town."

The Montague selectboard also heard a report from the Shea Theater board of directors about capital improvements needed at the town-owned theater. For the Shea Theater, board chair Robin Paris and her colleagues told the selectboard the venue was, "fully booked, and they had just held a successful fundraiser." Looking at the numbers, Paris said, "The theater had sold \$145,900 in tickets last year at an average of \$12 per ticket, that amounted to over 12,000 patrons coming to the downtown area." The fundraising had been averaging \$11,800 dollars per annum over the last five years, with a substantial spike last year due to the Valley Idol fundraiser, which the board plans to repeat this year. Operating expenditures for the theater last year amounted to \$186,000 dollars, leaving the theater in the red for the fifth straight year. But the gap is getting smaller, according to Paris.

Shea board member Elliot Levin spoke of the building's maintenance needs. He said there was a significant amount of water infiltrating the building's foundation into the basement. Levin also said, "Hundreds of cars go by the theater each day. We want a marquee. This would make an appealing hallmark for the town."

In addition to the \$2500 in program income money the town normally provides to the Shea for annual maintenance, the board of directors of the Shea requested and additional \$5,000 this year to pay for the theater's deferred maintenance issues. They also asked the town to consider upping the town's contribution.

see MONTAGUE pg 9




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**SCHOOLS**

continued from page 1

Boyle argued that the previous survey conducted by the elementary school configuration committee, which showed wide support for creating broad grade span schools was not indicative of how a lot of the community feels about the elementary school reconfiguration. She asked the committee to acknowledge the time and effort it took to gather the petition signatures; which came from all precincts in town; and received the support of exactly 900 registered Montague voters. Boyle said it would take town approval to renovate Montague Center School. She claimed renovations to that school were going to cost at least a couple of million dollars, an expense the community is not willing to bear at this point. She said people are angry. "It would be foolish of

us as a school committee to ignore them."

Her words were met with passionate applause from the crowd in the packed meeting room. Other committee members were moved by the expressions of dissent in the community.

However, the divisions on the committee were again on full display. While Valeria Smith seconded the motion to rescind, others were staunchly opposed. Ted Castro-Santos contended the leaflets that went out in support of the petition drive contained many factual errors, claims that had been previously discussed and debunked, claims which formed the basis of the popularity of the petition. Disgruntled people in the audience burst out in anger.

He also stated, "No new information has come out. We knew what we were doing. I knew what I was doing. You

knew what you were doing (he pointed at Boyle)."

Mike Langknecht spoke to arguments about the projected financial burden of renovations by stating that the Montague Center School roof will have to be replaced regardless of what it is used for, because it is a town building.

Richard Colton added that the roof would have been fixed years ago, but work on the Montague Center School has been held back due to internal district policy.

The discussion ended with general agreement that Montague Center and Hillcrest, as well as Sheffield, would be explored for more definitive renovation needs and costs before another motion to vote. Research information will be presented and discussed at the next budget subcommittee meeting on Tuesday, March 6th at 6:30 p.m.



**Gill - Montague Education Fund Awards \$6,000 in Mini Grants**

BY CORI URBAN

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Gill-Montague Education fund board of directors met in early February and awarded more than \$6,000 in grants to be used for educational enrichment programs and activities in the district's schools.

Fourteen grants were awarded ranging from \$150-\$1,000.

Among the projects the GMEF grants will fund:

• **Field Trip to New England Flower Show.** Forty-two Turners Falls High School students enrolled in Greenhouse, Botanicals or Marketing will attend the New England Flower Show as part of a business venture begun last year in which they marketed and sold plant products and plants for profit.

• **Meet the Deadline.** Gill Elementary School sixth graders will learn to be reporters through recording, interviewing and news writing following a week-long class trip to the Sargent Center for Outdoor Education. They will develop newspapers that include advertisements and comics. Students have already met with local author Joe Parzych and David Detmold of the *Montague Reporter* to learn about interviewing and subsequent article development, and the project will include a trip to the press room.

• **Our Community: Tracks and Fossils.** Fifty-one first-grade Hillcrest School students will visit the Pratt Museum of Natural History to view the collection of dinosaur tracks removed from Turners Falls. They will also see rocks, minerals and other natural history specimens. This experience will help them understand

that their locality was once home to dinosaurs and learn about how observations helped scientists come to this conclusion.

• **Black Ash Basketry.** Fifty students enrolled in Greenhouse and Botanicals classes at Turners Falls High School will have the opportunity to visit a master basket maker, Alice Ogden, and learn about the history of basket making. Students will make baskets after taking notes from a lecture of history and a demonstration of basketry.

• **Field Trip to Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.** Fifty-one French and Spanish students from Turners Falls High School will visit the Museum of Fine Arts to view pre-selected pieces from the European collection. Through this study, students will learn about culture and history as well as art and to understand the interconnectedness of the pieces and the cultures.

• **Connecticut River Watershed Project Part 2.** Forty-seven Gill Elementary School students in grades K-2 will work with a Hitchcock Center presenter to reinforce science curriculum that focuses on the Connecticut River Watershed. Students will learn about the community's natural resources and discover the watershed's diverse habitats and see how over time the watershed has changed.

• **Audio Equipment Upgrade.** The TFHS TV studio, which serves students in classes and provides a news program produced by students, will have new audio recording equipment so students can learn about professional-level audio recording.

**MONTAGUE**

from previous page

tribution to the Shea to \$5000 annually in succeeding years. The selectboard took these requests under consideration.

The selectboard held a hearing to revoke an all alcohol liquor license for the former Yesterdays bar at 78 3rd Street for non-payment of property taxes. Owner Linda Morrow, who has moved to Florida, as former proprietor of the establishment said in a statement from her attorney Scott Cote she would not contest the revocation of the license. The selectboard voted unanimously to revoke her liquor license and

backdated the revocation to January 1st, when the property taxes were originally overdue. Yesterdays closed for good at the end of October 31st of last year. A partnership of Turners Falls residents, Chris Janke, Emily Brewster and Jamie Brewster, have purchased the building at 78 3rd Street with Mark Wisnewski of Greenfield, and plan to re-open the bar under the former name of the Rendezvous this summer.

Other matters before the board included the resignation of officer Michael Kelley as a reserve member of the police force. Kelly has been hired as a court officer at the Greenfield Courthouse. The selectboard

temporarily reinstated reserve officer Allen Stevens for an unspecified length of time. Stevens had been laid off last spring, and was first on the list to be called back. He is starting at \$13.35 per hour, for 40 hours per week.

The board also approved the resignation of Doug Dziadzio as chair of the planning board; he will remain a member of the planning board. The selectboard also approved a permit for a bicycle fundraiser for the American Lung Association, which will be traveling 3.7 miles on town roads on June 23rd as part of a statewide three-day ride.



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BROKER

**BAND**  
continued from pg 1

all expressed the difficulty of town governments conducting their work without access to high-speed internet service.

Deval Patrick, the new governor of Massachusetts, has made comprehensive broadband access a high priority of his administration. Several members of WSLBC spoke at a public forum with then Governor-elect Patrick and his transition team at the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield on December 13th, 2006. In his remarks at the meeting, Governor-elect Patrick highlighted the need for broadband access throughout the state. He emphasized his point by saying, "this is not a luxury. Broadband internet access is key to the future economic growth and development of the Commonwealth".

In January, WSLBC issued a report to the Patrick administration providing a detailed overview of the issues

involved. This report can be downloaded on-line at: [www.turningtide.com/pdfs/WSLBC\\_Broadband\\_Report.pdf](http://www.turningtide.com/pdfs/WSLBC_Broadband_Report.pdf)

Pioneer Valley Connect, in conjunction with Berkshire Connect, are the leading organizations researching ways to bring broadband access to underserved communities in Western Massachusetts.

At Tuesday night's meeting, Atwood spoke about PVC's Underserved Communities Pilot Project which last year issued a report recommending the creation of a fiber-optic ring, in combination with a wireless network, in a case-study of three towns - Leverett, Egremont, and Worthington.

In a new grant received last fall from the John Adams Innovation Institute of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, Pioneer Valley Connect and Berkshire Connect will work over the next year with at least three different communities in Western Massachusetts to conduct a beta test of wireless equipment to see which spe-

cific technology is best adapted to the forested, hilly terrain of most small towns in our region. Guidelines and an application for towns seeking to apply to this program will be available on PVC's website ([www.pioneervalleyconnect.org](http://www.pioneervalleyconnect.org)) by late February.

In addition, PVC will hire two technical consultants to develop a plan for a sub-regional implementation of a model broadband system for three to six contiguous Western Massachusetts towns. When asked how the towns would be selected for this project, Atwood responded by saying that "decisions would be made on a technical and practical basis."

In the meeting, Atwood stressed that bringing broadband access to Western Massachusetts "is not an issue of technology. It's about funding." She spoke further about new political openings on the state level with the Patrick administration, commenting, "There is such great political momentum now. We haven't seen this in years."

Atwood stated that the key to bringing high-speed internet access to underserved towns will be to have a major investment of state and possibly federal funds to create a fiber-optic "backbone" ring in each community or sub-region of Western Massachusetts. With this initial infrastructure paid for by public funds, PVC's plan is then to approach private companies to invest in building and operating the remaining portion of the system to link residences and business to the internet.

Shutesbury resident and former WSLBC member Michael DeChiara voiced his concern about working with private media companies that have been so unresponsive to local community needs. He expressed his desire, which was supported by several other people at the meeting, for PVC to explore options for community-controlled, non-profit organizations to have an equal opportunity to operate and manage a broadband Internet service.

Atwood responded by say-

ing that the fiber-optic "backbone," which would most likely be publicly-managed, could be utilized by both private companies and municipally-controlled or non-profit organizations to provide internet services on a "competitive basis" to the public.

*Robbie Leppzer is Chair of the Wendell Broadband Committee and can be reached at [robbie@turningtide.com](mailto:robbie@turningtide.com).*

*The Wendell-Shutesbury-Leverett Broadband Committee (WSLBC) is a three-town committee that has been meeting for several years to try to obtain broadband access. For more information, visit their website: [www.slbc.us](http://www.slbc.us).*

*For a look at a January '07 report from the WSLBC to the Patrick administration on issues regarding broadband access in Western Massachusetts, go to: [www.turningtide.com/pdfs/WSLBC\\_Broadband\\_Report.pdf](http://www.turningtide.com/pdfs/WSLBC_Broadband_Report.pdf)*



## HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) are currently applying for funding for the Towns of Erving, Leverett, Montague, Rowe, Orange and Shelburne. At this time we are establishing a waiting list for each town.

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# In Household	Gross Annual Income
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2	\$45,900.00
3	\$51,600.00
4	\$57,350.00
5	\$61,950.00
6	\$66,550.00
7	\$71,100.00
8	\$75,700.00

If you are interested in applying for the Housing Rehab program please call Charity Day @ (413) 863-9781 ext. 132 or email at [cday@fchra.org](mailto:cday@fchra.org).

## Great Falls Middle School 2nd Quarter Honor Roll

Grade 7	Patrick Moretti	Thompson
<b>First Honors</b>	Alyssa Nicotra	Jack Hubert
Jolina-Rose Blier	quincy Ortiz	Kelliann Humphrey
Zacharie Boisvert	Angelica Renaud	Katherine Kuklewicz
Jane Booth	Joshua Ruiz	Joseph Lafleur
Samantha Caouette	Caroline Sena	Kelsey O'Brien
Jenna Costa	Samantha Shaw	Elysia Ollari
Taylor Croteau		Katarina Palso
Megan Foster	<b>Third Honors</b>	Daniel Skarzynski
Matthew Fowler	Kate Dobosz	Andrew Turban
Stephanie French	Nathaniel James	Taylor Varilly
Christopher Gordon	Jessica Keene	
Sara Hanley	Aria Roberts	<b>Second Honors</b>
Mark Hudyma	Kayleigh Turn	Rachel Arial
Lily Kane		Katherine Burgin
Jesse Langknecht	<b>Grade 8</b>	Jordan Charboneau
Jeremy Mankowsky	<b>First Honors</b>	Uriah Forest-Bulley
Malik Odeh	Anna Bochamnikova	David Garcia
Haley Ozdarski	Zhanna	Taylor Howe
Iancu Placinta	Bochamnikova	Aubryanna Hyson
Emily Pollard	McKenna Brunell	Illayna Perkins
Cameron Savinski	Erin Casey	Kenneth Rounds
	Sarah Crowell	Natasha Vaughn
<b>Second Honors</b>	Nina Dodge	Kayla Weller
Casey Banning	Makayla Dolhenty	
Daniel Colton	Kristy Dunbar	<b>Third Honors</b>
Holly Doyle	Jacob Eugin	Julianne Fisk
Haley Fiske	Sarah Foster	Ryan Pelis
Stacy French	Nicole Fuller	Christopher Phillips
Colton Hallett	Brooke Hastings	Andrew Podlesny
Kyla Kelly	Vance Herzig	Emily Robertson
Corban Mailloux	Julie Howard-	Kelsey Waldron

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FILM REVIEW

# Il Postino a Valentine for Neruda

BY DAVID DETMOLD

Free with the film Sunday evening at the Book Mill - *Il Postino* (The Postman) - came a lecture on movies and poetry by UMass professor and award winning poet Martin Espada, who introduced Michael Radford's tender masterpiece, calling it the best film on poets and poetry ever made. "In the golden era of Hollywood biopics, the 30s and 40s, somehow the great poets were missed," Espada said. "We're still waiting for the biopics of Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Carl Sandburg, we're still waiting for films of the great American poets."

He mentioned a film called *Regeneration*, about WWI poets Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, which he called the second greatest film on poets and poetry ever made. He liked *Slam*, about ghetto poet Saul Williams.

Then he turned to the bad poetry films, starting with *Sylvia*, starring Gwyneth Paltrow, a production hamstrung by the prohibition on using the work of Ted Hughes. He slammed *Tom & Viv*, depicting the relationship between T.S. Eliot and his wife Vivienne Haigh-Wood, through which Willem Dafoe "shrugged and grimaced for two hours" before driving his wife mad, locking her up, and keeping her money. "By now," Espada pointed out, "Dafoe has played Eliot, Count Dracula, and Jesus Christ, company in which Eliot would feel right at home." He had less than kind words about *Total Eclipse*, starring a young Leonardo DiCaprio as Rimbaud and David Thewins as Verlaine, but noted, amid the fighting, drinking and fornicating, absolutely no poetry was uttered - or harmed - on screen in that film.

Espada mentioned a few other epic poetry film flops, capping the list with what he called

the worst poetry film of all time, *Lorca*, starring "and I use the term advisedly" Andy Garcia. Espada said *Lorca* may not only be the worst film on poetry ever made, "but, I would argue, the worst film on any subject ever made."

Far better fare was on the menu for the two dozen cineastes gathered in folding chairs beneath the rough hewn beams of the Montague Book Mill for another episode of "Free Films for the Frozen." Espada complimented the audience on their good taste in attending the fabulous 1995 film, which imagines the exile of the great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, on the Italian Isle of Capri in 1952, and he complimented Book Mill owner David Lovelace for his use of alliteration in the film series' title.

*Il Postino* finds Neruda (played by Philippe Noiret, of *Cinema Paradiso* fame, who bears an uncanny physical resemblance to the poet) ensconced, not too unhappily, in a cliffside villa looking west across the Atlantic toward his beloved homeland. Lightening his exile is his companion and future wife, Mathilde, (Anna Bonaiuto) with whom he bills and coos and dances a tango or two to the masterful baritone and guitar of Carlos Gardel. (The film, which garnered an unusual five Academy Award nominations for a foreign film in 1995, won for only one of them, best soundtrack).

Neruda, elected to the Senate by the Chilean Communist Party in 1945, went into exile after the party was banned by President Gonzalez Videla, and after Neruda defended the striking miners at Lota in a famous speech to the Senate in 1948. After living in hiding for two years, Neruda escaped on horseback across the Andes, nearly



Massimo Troisi and Philippe Noiret take poetic license with Maria Grazia Cucinotta in *Il Postino*

drowning in the crossing of the Curingue River. The Isle of Capri offered Neruda respite from his travails in real life, and in the pleasant fiction of the film the heroic poet is kept in touch with his thousands of admirers worldwide by the solicitude of his bicycling postman, Mario Ruoppolo, played with warmth and natural naivete by Massimo Troisi.

It would hardly have been out of character for Neruda, the son of a railroad worker, to befriend a man of humble origin like Ruoppolo during his enforced isolation. The film takes their friendship as its starting point to show the power of poetry to move the human heart, to ennoble and lay waste to the mundaneness of human existence.

For years, according to Espada, up to and after Neruda's death, critics argued about the place of Neruda's work in the Western canon: was he a poet of love or a poet of the people; a Communist first and foremost or the great romantic lyricist of our time? To its credit, *Il Postino* manages to convey and unite both Nerudas, particularly in one heartbreaking scene at the film's finale, as we are shown the grandeur and folly of both poetic avocations.

Espada said the film may have been seen as an antidote to Auden's dictum that "Poetry makes nothing happen." In *Il Postino*, poetry makes everything happen, and fills the space between each human act with wonder, humor, and sly grace.

Stealing a page from one of Neruda's notebooks to win the heart of his inamorata, Beatrice Russo (the incandescent Maria Grazia Cucinotta), Ruoppolo, a brazen bicycle thief, defends the act by declaiming, a la Walt Whitman, "Poetry doesn't belong to those who write it; it belongs to those who need it." Neruda, whom Espada called Whitman's greatest disciple, compliments the mailman on his democratic sentiments.

The poems themselves are not forgotten. Several of Neruda's works are quoted at length in the film, including the one Ruoppolo "borrows" for love, Sonnet XVII, of *100 Love Sonnets*:

*I don't love you as if you were the salt-rose, topaz or arrow of carnations that propagate fire:  
I love you as certain dark things are loved,  
secretly, between the shadow and the soul.  
I love you as the plant that doesn't bloom and carries hidden within itself the light of those flowers,  
and thanks to your love, darkly in my body lives the dense fragrance that rises from the earth.  
I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where,  
I love you simply, without problems or pride:  
I love you in this way because I don't know any other*

*way of loving but this, in which there is no I or you,  
so intimate that your hand upon my chest is my hand,  
so intimate that when I fall asleep it is your eyes that close.*

Neither are their component parts, those nefarious metaphors, neglected. Trying his hand at forming one, Ruoppolo manages to murmur, "Beatrice, your smile spreads like a butterfly," as the barmaid passes him by. Not much good, perhaps, but enough to pique her interest, and raise the withering hackles of her watchful aunt.

Before the lights dimmed, Espada mentioned that Troisi, the movie's star, put off surgery for a congenital heart defect long enough to complete the filming, then died in his sleep twelve hours later. But the film will move you without any of this knowledge or foreshadowing.

Neruda was a great star in his own right, who once gave a poetry reading to 135,000 people at a stadium in Sao Paolo. In the film, Noiret has him tell his devoted postman not to exaggerate when speaking, because, "Even the most sublime ideas sound ridiculous if heard too often." So here, as in the poet's life, greatness is understated, conveyed in word and glance and gesture, and expressed in the love of the people.

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# EARTH TALK

## Why Aren't Plastic Food Containers Easily Recyclable?

From the Editors of *E: the Environmental Magazine*



Food containers like these may soon be made mostly from corn and other plant-based materials

(PETE, designated with a "1"), high-density polyethylene (HDPE, "2"), and sometimes polyvinyl chloride (PVC, "3").

According to the Society of the Plastics Industry, polypropylene is a "thermoplastic polymer," meaning that it has the density and resins that give it a high melting point, enabling it to tolerate hot liquid

without breaking down. As such, it is used in a wide range of food packaging applications in which the product initially goes into the container hot or is later microwave heated in the container. It is also used to make bottle caps, computer disks, straws and film packaging. Its toughness, strength, ability to be a barrier to moisture, and resistance to grease, oil and chemicals also make it a very attractive material

for many uses.

Environmentally friendly alternatives to polypropylene and other plastics are beginning to be developed, however. NatureWorks, a division of Cargill, has developed a corn-based plastic called polylactic acid (PLA). While it looks and functions like other plastics PLA is fully biodegradable, given that it is derived from plant-based materials. Whether it is composted or landfilled, it will biodegrade into its constituent organic parts, though there are debates as to how long that process takes.

Another pioneering company is Massachusetts-based Metabolix, which has partnered with corporate giant, Archer Daniels Midland, to make corn plastics that the company claims will "biodegrade benignly in a wide range of environments, including marine and wetlands."

A handful of natural foods companies and retailers, includ-

ing Newman's Own Organics, Del Monte Fresh Produce and Wild Oats Markets, are already using corn plastic for some of their packaging, though not yet to replace heat-resistant polypropylene. Analysts expect such plant-based alternatives to come on stronger and stronger in the days ahead as petroleum becomes more expensive and more politically unstable. Even Coca-Cola has started experimenting with replacing its traditional plastic soda bottles with a corn-based alternative. And last October, as part of its "green" overhaul, Wal-Mart announced it would replace 114 million plastic produce containers a year with PLA varieties, sparing about 800,000 barrels of oil annually.

Got an environmental question? E-mail: [earthtalk@emagazine.com](mailto:earthtalk@emagazine.com).

**Dear EarthTalk:** Dairy products like yogurt always seem to come in packages of low recyclability (labeled "5," which our town won't take). Why aren't these containers more recyclable? And isn't there a more eco-friendly container these companies could use?

- John Marble  
Portland, ME

The ability to recycle a plastic item rests with many factors, including its material, its usability in new products once it has been broken down into its original components, and whether or not a market is in place that can facilitate transactions of the recycled materials from sellers to buyers.

Recycling polypropylene (designated with a "5"), the material used in many food con-

tainers, is technically possible. The challenge is in separating it from other plastics, including its own many variations, once it arrives at the waste station and beyond. Because of the difficulty and expense of sorting, collecting, cleaning and reprocessing plastics of all kinds, in many places it is only economically viable to recycle a few select types. These usually include polyethylene terephthalate

## ETHANOL

continued from pg 6

### Cashing in on Ethanol

Ford, GM and John Deere have factories in Brazil, cashing in on Brazil's determination to drastically reduce, or even eliminate, dependence on foreign oil. John Deere no longer manufactures gasoline, nor does it produce ethanol engines, though they do market an ethanol/diesel burning engine that burns cleaner than straight diesel.

### Bio-ethanol

Biomass-ethanol can be produced from a variety of crops - corn, wheat, waste straw, willow and poplar trees, switch and various other grasses, sawmill waste, sugar cane, sugar beets and other plant material. Research to convert solid wastes from wastewater treatment plants and livestock manure is another promising source of material. Biomass-ethanol plants cost more to build, and operate with less profitability.

### Critics

Critics point out that it takes oil-based fertilizers and diesel burning farm tractors to grow, harvest, process and transport corn. Ethanol uses energy in the form of natural gas or dirty coal to process the corn into ethanol before it is transported. Ethanol cannot be sent through pipelines. Trucking ethanol to market uses diesel fuel.

Detractors claim it takes as much fuel to get ethanol into gas tanks as the fuel it delivers. Ethanol also has fewer BTUs, resulting in fewer miles per gallon. David Pimental, a leading Cornell University agricultural expert, calculates that it takes 131,000 BTUs of energy to pro-

duce one gallon of ethanol from corn. That gallon of ethanol has the energy value of 77,000 BTUs. Using switch grass, wood or other cellulose produce a much worse return of BTUs.

### Pollution

According to an Associated Press report, federal scientists want to tighten smog standards to allow tens of millions of Americans to breathe easier. That plan runs right smack into Bush's plan to make America free of dependency on foreign oil by boosting ethanol production. The sad fact is, while ethanol cuts carbon monoxide in winter, it produces smog when summer heat reacts with tailpipe emissions. Ethanol also releases more nitrogen oxides; another key element of smog. Ethanol evaporates more readily than gasoline, thereby adding more air pollution vapors. The American Lung Association, in concert with the EPA, is pushing to tighten air quality standards of smog producing ethanol, at the same time the Bush administration is pushing for ramped up ethanol production he says will free the U.S. from foreign oil dependency.

### Prices Hurting Dairy Farmers

Meanwhile, with the price of corn continuing to soar, dairy farmers Charlene and Michael Berniche of Gill are hurting. "We are getting \$14.50 a hundredweight for milk, the same as we were getting 30 years ago when we started in the dairy business," Berniche said. "We need \$15 per hundredweight just to break even. My husband pays the grain bill out of his paycheck from working as a crane operator. He works to support the farm!"

### Herd Cut

The Berniches needed to cut their herd size from 145 down to 45 so that Charlene can handle the workload alone. Michael's work takes him out of town, leaving her to tend to the 30 remaining milkers largely by herself. Another reason Michael went back to work on construction is that there isn't enough farm income to afford health insurance.

"Our health insurance was killing us," Charlene said. "We were paying \$1100 every two months. And it's gone up since."

### Catch 22

The Berniches love living on their farm and would like to switch to something more profitable, but they have their property mortgaged through the Farm Service Agency and are not allowed to convert the farm to a more lucrative business such as boarding horses, trail riding, or raising horses on their 80 acres. "Farm Service Agency does not consider horses farm animals," Berniche said. "I don't know what we'll do."

### High Corn Prices Good

On the other hand, Northfield dairy farmer William Llewelen said, "The rise in corn prices is good." He and his son have planted more and more land with corn, invested in a combine, corn dryer and a bagging machine. Not only do they make ensilage and cornmeal for their own herd, but they sell those products to other farmers to feed cows, hogs, sheep, goats, sheep, horses, turkeys and chickens.

"It's true that grain prices for our dairy herd have gone up," Llewelen said. "But we grow most of the main ingredient - corn. We mix our corn with other grain. It comes premixed

in combinations with all sorts of things - soybeans, wheat bran, citrus peels, brewer's yeast - whatever you want. But corn is the main ingredient of cow grain, and we have plenty of corn."

### Corn Users Resentful

At present, most ethanol plants in the U.S. use corn. Detractors point out that the ethanol tax incentives, now at 51 cents per gallon, designed to help corn growers, is going to the oil companies, and hurting farmers who are now paying high prices for corn as animal feed. Livestock farmers pay record prices for feed, pay at the gas pump for fuel, and pay oil companies for ethanol tax breaks with their tax dollars. Corn prices have doubled to \$4 a bushel, while wholesale milk prices have lagged at levels of 30 years ago. Poultry and egg prices also have not kept pace with inflation. Growers are switching soybean acreage to corn to cash in on the ethanol bandwagon. Soybeans produce nitrogen fertilizer with their root systems. With less natural fertilizer in the soil from soy, growers are turning to petroleum-based fertilizers, putting a drain on petroleum and adding to run-off pollution. With less soybean productions, grain prices will take another hike.

### Alternate Biomass

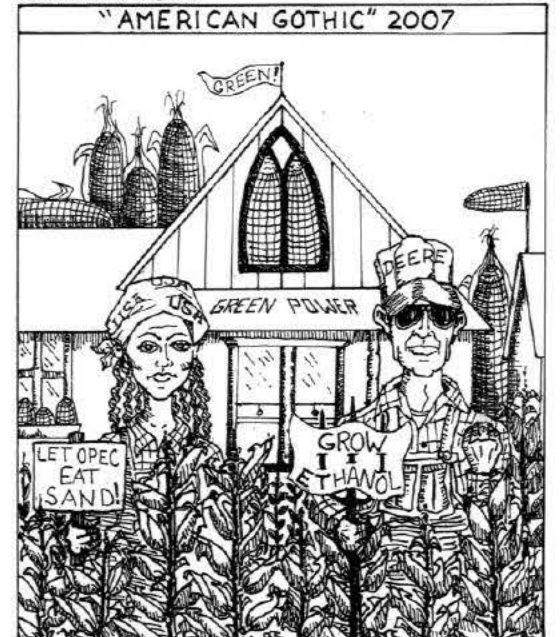
Eventually, more ethanol

plants using waste or other biomass that requires little or no fertilizer will be on line. Those products, rather than corn, will diminish the pressure on corn supplies. The U.S. does not have enough land to grow enough corn for ethanol to even begin to eliminate foreign oil. Plants that don't need fertilizer, such as switch grass or hemp, poplar trees and other non food crops may be a better bet. But that may come too late for the Berniches.

### Caught in the Middle

"We buy all our feed," Charlene said. "It was a poor year for hay, so that went up. Cow grain was \$220 a ton last spring; it's \$272 a ton now," Charlene said. "Milk prices are \$14.50 per cwt - the same as when we started in 1979. Fuel was 68 cents a gallon in 1979. Bedding sawdust went up and is hard to find because it goes into wood pellets. Everything has gone up but milk. It has gone up in the supermarkets, but we don't see any of that. We need at least \$15 per cwt, to maybe break even."

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## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

## Headaches of Every Variety

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. I seem to be getting a lot of headaches lately. I'm pretty sure they're been caused by stress, but I was wondering if I should see a doctor.

You should definitely see your doctor. Most headaches are harmless, but they can be a symptom of a serious condition.

The American Council for Headache Education urges people to see a doctor if there are any of the following symptoms with headache:

Headaches that began after age 50; three or more headaches per week; taking a pain reliever almost daily; taking more than the recommended doses of over-the-counter pain relievers; stiff neck; fever; shortness of breath; unexpected symptoms that affect your eyes, ears, nose, or throat; dizziness; slurred speech; weakness; numbness; a tingling sensation; confusion; drowsiness; headaches that begin and persist after a head injury; a headache triggered by

exertion, coughing, bending, or sexual activity; a headache that intensifies and persists; headaches that change character; persistent or severe vomiting; a headache that is your "first or worst."

More than 45 million Americans suffer from recurring headaches. About 70% of headache sufferers are women.

There are primary headaches that are not related to another condition, and secondary headaches, which are.

Primary headaches include tension, migraine, mixed headache syndrome and cluster headaches.

About 90 percent of primary headaches are caused by tension. These muscle-contraction headaches cause mild-to-moderate pain and come and go. Tension headaches are called chronic if you have them more than 15 days per month. They are episodic if you get them less than 15 days per month.

Most tension headaches can



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

be treated with over-the-counter pain relievers such as acetaminophen, aspirin and ibuprofen.

The precise cause of migraines is unknown. However, research has demonstrated that migraines involve the actions of nerves and blood vessels. The pain from migraines is moderate to severe. They can last from hours to days and be combined with stomach distress. Prescription medications are often needed to treat migraines.

Another subcategory of primary headache is mixed headache syndrome, which is the combination of migraine and tension headaches.

Cluster headaches, which come in groups, are the worst type of primary headache. The pain hits behind one eye and it's severe. Cluster headaches occur one to three times per day during a cluster period, which may last two weeks to three months.

Preventive medications are prescribed for cluster headaches. During a cluster headache, injecting medication or inhaling 100 percent oxygen may help. About 85 percent of cluster-headache sufferers are male.

Secondary headaches include chronic progressive, sinus and hormone headaches.

Chronic progressive headaches worsen and become more frequent. These headaches may be caused by a brain or skull illness such as encephalitis, inflammation of the brain. If

diseases are ruled out, doctors will try to focus on preventing the pain from striking. Preventive medication may include antidepressants, muscle relaxants or other drugs.

Sinus headaches cause pain in the head and face and sometimes can fool you into thinking you have a dental problem. These headaches coincide with other sinusitis symptoms such as nasal discharge. Over-the-counter pain relievers and decongestants work well with this type of headache.

Hormone headaches come with changing hormone levels during menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. These are treated with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen, and other drugs.

Another type of headache is caused by taking too much pain medication. This type is called a rebound headache.

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

## The Neighborhood Toxicologist

## Who's Worried About Nanotechnology?

BY EMILY MONOSSON

MONTAGUE CENTER - My daughter is rehearsing to be a Who down in Whoville, a creature invisible and nonexistent to all but Dr. Suess's Horton, who first hears the Whos. This would make her, and her fellow Whos, inhabitants of a world the size of a dust mote, nanoparticles I suppose, which according to at least one definition are particles smaller than 100 nanometers (or one billionth of a meter).

Around the time Dr. Suess was envisioning the importance and potential of nano-sized Whos, Dr. Richard Feynman, the Nobel Prize winning physicist was also envisioning the technological potential of the very small. In 1959, Feynman offered a \$1000 reward for the production of a nearly Who-sized version of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, such that the entire series would fit on the head of a pin. Though expecting rapid progress, the technological breakthrough (and a legitimate claim for the reward) didn't come for another thirty years.

Nanotechnology is now a billion dollar field, and growing,

and promises both environmental and health applications, including more effective drug delivery, reductions in industrial chemical use and waste, and improved environmental cleanup.

Until researching this article, I had thought the emerging field of nanotechnology would be an opportunity to witness the fruits of over thirty years experience with environmental standards, guidelines, laws and regulations. That development of nanoparticles and nanomaterials (made of nanoparticles) would go hand in hand with human health and environmental toxicity testing. That we would avoid problems of the past, like PCBs and lead paint, so that today's little Cindy-loo Whos won't need to ask, "How did you let this happen, and how do we fix it?"

Unfortunately, it seems that the Whoville cats have already left the bag. According to Dr. John Balbus of Environmental Defense, the production of nanomaterials has already outpaced knowledge of their human health and environmental impacts.

"The Wilson Center [Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars] notes 356 nanoparticle products on the shelves around the world," said Balbus, "and most of them have virtually no in-depth toxicity testing done on the basic material in them.... There are huge knowledge gaps about how these materials will move about and persist, whether they will bioaccumulate, let alone their toxicity to humans or other animals."

Whoops. What about those thirty years of regulations and guidelines and experience? What about all that toxicity testing designed to protect human health and the environment? After decades of data on thousands of chemicals, one cannot argue that we're not better off today than we were thirty years ago, but there are also plenty of chemicals that we still just don't know enough about. And nanoparticles are like the new kids on the block who don't always play by the rules. That's what makes them so intriguing for industry. In many cases, even though they may share the same basic chemical makeup,

nanomaterials are just different from their counterparts, including both their basic atomic building blocks, and their larger composites - either of which may or may not have already been through all the toxicity testing hoops.

"Ordinary new chemicals go through a series of [initial] screens using computer-based structure-activity-relationships," explained Balbus, meaning that to some extent researchers and regulators can predict the activity of a chemical based on its structure, comparing the similarity of that structure to chemicals of known toxicity, allowing regulators to determine the need for more detailed toxicity testing.

"With nanomaterials, we don't have the experience to be able to predict, so they can't go through the same screening tests... The tools to use for regular chemicals don't apply to nanomaterials."

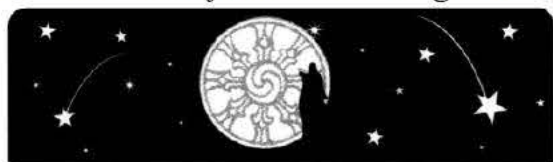
Titanium dioxide is an example of a chemical with a long history of mass production in non-nano form, and a more recent history of mass production as a nanomaterial.

Traditionally one of the most important white pigments in commerce in non-nano form, nano-sized titanium dioxide is a key ingredient of many next generation sunscreens. Ever wonder how those new sunscreens with titanium and zinc oxide protect you from the sun's ultraviolet rays without making you look like a clown? Titanium and zinc oxides typical white smear result from the excellent light scattering properties of pigment grade chemical, but nanosized particles of titanium dioxide allow visible light to pass through them, while still scattering the sun's shorter and harmful ultraviolet rays. And, while many in the field agree that this is one of the few examples where a sufficient number of studies on dermal or skin toxicity of nanosized titanium dioxide have been conducted; the same cannot be said of studies evaluating the potential impacts of industrial releases, or releases from use of personal care products, on the environment.

Though the pending large

see NANO, pg 14

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**JEP'S PLACE: Faith, Hope and Other Disasters Part XX**

**Reunited**

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

**GILL** - One Sunday, as Ma was leaving church, Franz, her childhood playmate, appeared. "Maria!" Franz said. "I thought I would never lay eyes on you again on this Earth. Come and visit my family. They will be so happy fate has brought us together again."

Love kindled between the young couple and they soon married. She was 16; he was a year or two older. "I am so happy, I did not think anything bad would happen," Ma said, pausing for a moment.

"A year goes by and Mary was born two weeks before Christmas, December 11th,

1912. All I can think is to go back to Poland to see my family, to show them my baby." A smile came across her face and Ma's eyes lit up, as if seeing something only she could see. I felt lost amidst the family gathered around the table mounded with feathers, envious of Mary for being so wanted and so treasured.

"My husband has a good job working for a school. He helps teachers when boys play baseball and football; nights, he works for a plumber. He was a volunteer fireman too."

Her fingers flew stripping feathers; the pile of down grew.

"One time I come home with a new dress. He says, 'Take those rags back to the store and buy a good dress. No - buy

two.'" More and more homesick for her family, Ma set out for Poland with baby Mary in the spring of 1913. Mary was about six months old. Ma had no idea what an ordeal they would endure. As she got ready to leave, her husband said, "You must take plenty of money with you. No one knows what can happen."

So she made a little sack for the extra money, pinned it to her corset, and took a train with baby Mary to New York where they boarded a ship for Poland. The journey took two weeks crossing the Atlantic, a long train trip across Europe, and then a horse and wagon ride to her village. My mother and Mary arrived at her ancestral home in the village of Bialka, in the province of

Nowy Targ, close by the Czech border. It was cause for celebration.

"It is the first time I see my two baby sisters, born after my Mama and Tata go back to Poland. The whole village came to see us. At the end, they play the Polish National Anthem - 'Poland will never vanish as long as we live...'"

Tears wet her cheeks. Her eyes had that far-away look, once again.

"Someday, if I ever have the money, I want to go back to Poland, again." She wiped her eyes with her apron and began putting stripped feathers into a pillowcase. She looked at the clock. "Time to put away the feathers and go to bed."

- Continued next week

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**NANO**  
from previous page

scale production and potential release of nanoparticles is new, nanoparticles or ultrafine particles have existed in our atmosphere ever since there were fires, volcanos and sea spray to produce them. More recently, manmade sources including traffic and industry have added to the suite of nano-sized particles in the atmosphere, and higher amounts of particulates in the air are consistently linked with adverse health impacts such as increased death rates and respiratory distress. The most recent studies suggest that ultrafine particles cause the greatest harm to the lungs.

In the lungs, says Dr. Vicki Stone, of Napier University, Edinburgh, Scotland, "Smaller particles almost always induce greater cellular response than larger particles of the same chemical composition. Such responses include cell death, and responses that cause activation of inflammation (immune response) and pathways that drive disease."

In general, as particle size gets smaller the toxicity increases, in part because of increased surface or reactive area, and in part because the behavior of the

chemical in the environment or in living systems might change.

For example, nano-sized forms of chemicals that normally would not be able to cross into the brain (blocked by what is known as the blood-brain-barrier,) might be able to penetrate and gain access more easily. Similarly nano-sized particles may act differently in the environment. Perhaps becoming more easily dispersed than their counterparts, or perhaps just the opposite, sinking into sediments or settling on soils, making them more likely to be ingested by critters that make a living by stripping chemicals from sediment and soil particles.

However, cautioned Stone, "Only a relatively small number of particles of different chemical composition have been tested...so many experiments are needed to verify whether this is a general phenomenon."

Whether a product is tested for toxicity, and how it is tested, may depend on the potential for exposure, whether or not it's currently in use, the amount in production, and the proposed end use (a pharmaceutical, food additive, a pesticide or a device). How a chemical is regulated may depend on all of the above, and this is where a chemical, or an

altered form of an existing chemical, may slip through the regulatory cracks.

Fortunately, the US EPA along with several other government agencies, acknowledging the different nature of nanoparticles and nanomaterials, have over the past five years committed millions of dollars towards health and environmental effects research on nanomaterials, and they're not the only ones concerned about potential toxicity of the new materials.

Said Stone, "There appears to be huge variation in the way in which different companies are approaching the questions about testing nanoparticle hazard and risk - some have funded extensive research, others are waiting to see whether legislation will require testing, while others are avoiding using nanomaterials until they have a clear understanding of how they will be regulated."

So, the question is, will the threat of regulation prompt responsible and meaningful health and environmental testing of nanomaterials by industry, heading off involuntary regulation, or increased creativity in classification of nanoparticles? Let's hope for all those Whos down in Whoville that it's the former.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

## THURSDAY TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH TO 17TH

Northfield Mount Hermon Winter Dance Concert. Featuring works in many different styles, including hip-hop, lyrical jazz, ballet en pointe, modern, and traditional Korean dance. Created and performed by the NMH Dance Company students & faculty. Thursday 7 p.m., Friday 7:30 p.m. and Saturday 8 p.m. Performances in the Grandin Auditorium. Tickets \$5 general admission, \$2 NMH community members. Proceeds donated to the Coalition to Save Darfur. [www.nmhschool.org](http://www.nmhschool.org) (413) 498-3000.

## FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH TO 18TH

Ja'Duke presents *Peter Pan* at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Info. and reservations 863-2281 ext. 2. Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m., Sunday at 2 p.m. Continues February 23rd to 25th.

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

Echo Lake Coffee House presents Sarah Pirtle in concert. Sarah's most recent recordings are singing biographies that describe how people transform challenges, including "Home for Dinner-for Cindy Sheehan" At the Leverett Town Hall. Info, call (413) 548-9394, \$12 adults/\$10 seniors/\$6 children. 7:30 p.m.

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

Acoustic Rock by Kellianna at Millers Falls Pub, Millers Falls. 8 to 11 p.m.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

The Montague Bookmill Presents: The Dead of Winter Free Films for the Frozen: *Diva*. Food and drink available at The Lady Killigrew. 7 p.m.

Classical Piano by Adam Bergeron at Deja Brew, Wendell. 7 to 9 p.m.

## UNTIL SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

Exhibit: Paintings and sculptures by artist Robert Markey at Green Trees Gallery, Northfield. Markey's vibrant oil paintings invoke both cosmic and inner worlds. His sculptured torsos, finished in 23 carat gold, precious and personal, glow with light. Info. (413) 498-0283.

## MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

Live Jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Avenue A, 6 to 9 p.m. Information 863-4441.

## TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

Joseph A. Parzych will read and

sign copies of *Jep's Place: Hope, Faith, and Other Disasters* at the Greenfield Historical Commission Museum on the corner of Church and Union Street in Greenfield. 7:30 p.m.

Bosnian Poet Sem ez di n Mehmedinovic' reads at Smith College. at 7:30 p.m. in Neilson Library Browsing Room. The reading will be followed by a book sale, signing and reception. For further information,

contact Cindy Furtek in the Poetry Center office at (413) 585-4891 or Ellen Doré Watson, director, at (413) 585-3368. The event is free, open to the public and wheelchair accessible.

MCTV's Producer's Group meeting. Everyone interested in either producing their own show or participating in someone else's please come by. At the studio: 34 2nd Street, Turners Falls. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST

Open Mic Fiddle Tune Swap at Deja Brew, Wendell. 8 to 10p.m.

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND

Blues by Larry Kopp at Deja Brew, Wendell. 8 to 10 p.m.

## THURSDAY & FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND & 23RD

*Vagina Monologues* performed by a cast of GCC students, staff, faculty and community activists to raise money & awareness to end violence against women and girls. GCC campus performance 7 p.m., Stinchfield Lecture Hall, main campus. At 6 p.m. festivities include book and DVD sales, crafts & jewelry sales. Friday's performance is sign interpreted and preceded by *The Raging Grammys*. Amherst College students will join GCC performers for a matinee performance at The Shea on March 4th, 2 p.m. Tickets: GCC Bookstore, World Eye Bookshop and the Montague Bookmill. \$4 for students/limited income and donation of \$10-\$20 for others. Info. call Gloria Ratcliffe 775 1141.

## UNTIL FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD

Exhibit of paintings by members of a monthly critique group fac-



Sarah Pirtle in concert at The Echo Lake Coffee House on Saturday, February 17th at 7:30 p.m.

ited by Louise Minks. Range of subject matter includes animals, figures, landscapes in acrylics, oils and watercolors. At Greenfield Community College Downtown, Greenfield.

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH

Native American Stories and Songs in the Yurt with Loril Moondream and Peter Whitefox: Lori Moondream learned tales told by her Apache grandparents and elders on other reservations. Peter Whitefox uses animal skins and his fabulous sense of humor to add drama and fun to the presentation. At Nothfield Mountain Recreation area, Route 63, Northfield. For ages 5 and up. Space is limited, pre-registration required. 7 p.m. Call (413)-659-3714

The National Spiritual Alliance Psychic Fair 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Thompson Temple, Lake Pleasant. Readings \$25 for 20 minutes.

Ode to the Beat Poets Gala at Leverett Crafts & Art. Wine Tasting, Art Exhibit and Auction, Poetry & Jazz. LCA, Barnes Gallery, 13 Montague Road, Leverett. 8 pm. Black beret, black turtle necks and dark glasses encouraged. (413)548-9070.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Stone Coyotes*, Come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH

Family-style Contra Dancing for all ages. \$7-\$10 per family. Simple dances with easy instruction geared for little feet. Held on the last Sunday of each month. 4 - 5 p.m. Includes a light snack.

The Montague Bookmill Presents: The Dead of Winter Free Films for the Frozen: *Dead River Rough Cut*. This hard to find film comes highly recommended but

is a bit of a mystery. A documentary tracing the lives of two hermit/loggers in backwoods Maine. 1976, 7 p.m.

## MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH

Live Jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Avenue A, 6 to 9 p.m. Information 863-4441.

## UNTIL FEBRUARY 27TH

*The Interconnectedness of Things*, an exhibition of photographs by Jean Stabell of New Salem, will be on display at Haley's, a mile west of Athol center on Route 2A. Her images of apparently ordinary sights, especially around her New Salem farmhouse and former tree farm, suggest poetry and fresh insight.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 3RD.

MarKamusic, a high-energy, multi-national musical ensemble performs Latin music with Andean roots performs at The Full Moon Coffee House in Wendell. Proceeds benefit The Montague Reporter. 8 p.m. with open mic beginning at 7 p.m.

Benefit event for The Shea Theatre: *An evening with Roger Salloom*, 730 p.m. film documentary *So Glad You Made It, The Saga Of Roger Salloom, America's Best Unknown Songwriter*. Followed by a talk with filmmaker Chris Sautter. At 9:30 p.m.: live concert featuring Roger Salloom. Advance tickets \$10, \$12 at the door.

## SUNDAY, MARCH 4TH

Hallmark Institute of Photography open house. Beginning at 12:30, 27 Industrial Boulevard, Turners Falls. Info. call 863-2478 or <http://hallmark.edu>

## UNTIL MARCH 18TH

Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. *Face to Face: Portraits from Fifty Years*, photo-

## HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER

MONDAYS - Drop-in, 3-6 p.m.  
TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project, 3 - 6 p.m.  
THURS - Drop-in, 3 - 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 - 8 p.m.  
Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips. Info: Jared at 863-9559.  
Hot Spot Teen Center is in The Brick House  
24 Third Street, Turners Falls, 01376.

## Upcoming at the Discovery Center

Open Friday & Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Groups by Special Arrangement, Tuesday - Thursday

### UNTIL MARCH 31ST

Stephen Gingold's Nature Photography. Explore the world of nature, both at a landscape scale and focused at close range for details, through the eyes of Stephen Gingold as you see his photographs in this special exhibit.

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

Animal Food Chain. Hands-on program for families with young children, learn about the importance of wildlife's food chain, and who eats whom. Free, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

Nature Journaling with Annie Chappell. No

experience necessary to have fun drawing. If you can bring a sketch book you can hold, we will have pencils, paper and clip boards. 10 a.m. - noon. Suggested donation \$10.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND** 2nd Annual Caribbean Day! Travel to the Caribbean through hands-on activities and crafts to learn where the migratory birds we know in summer are wintering and what you can do to get ready for their spring return. Free. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH** Friends Coffeehouse: Katie Clarke Band. Held in the Great Hall. This is a fundraiser for programs put on by the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center. 7 to 9 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls (413) 863-3221 [www.greatfallsma.org](http://www.greatfallsma.org)



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2. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA PG13  
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3. CHILDREN OF MEN R  
DAILY 7:00 9:30  
MATINEE FRI-THURS 12:00 3:00
4. BECAUSE I SAID SO PG13  
DAILY 6:45 9:15  
MAT FRI-THURS 12:15 3:15
5. HANNIBAL RISING R  
DAILY 6:45 9:15  
MAT FRI-THURS 12:15 3:15
6. MUSIC & LYRICS PG13  
DAILY 6:30 9:00 DTS sound  
MAT FRI-THURS 12:30 3:30
7. GHOST RIDER PG13 DTS sound  
DAILY 6:30 9:00  
MAT FRI-THURS 12:30 3:30



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# TRACKING WILD CANIDS WITH DAVID BROWN

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**GREAT FALLS** - More than two dozen hominids made tracks to the Great Falls Discovery Center on Thursday night, February 8th, to hear naturalist David Brown run through a slide and video presentation on the traits, tracks and habitat of New England's three known wild canids: the eastern coyote, the red fox, and the gray fox. Brown did not discount recent reports of hunters in northern Maine shooting timber wolves, accidentally or otherwise, but for now the wolf is still officially considered extirpated in New England. The eastern coyote, a hybrid of wolf and western coyote, has moved in to take his place as the top wild predator in the New England food chain.

Brown, who lives in Athol, began his presentation by asking, "How many of you people have seen a coyote?" Nearly everyone in the Great Hall raised their hand. "Ten years ago you would have looked at me as if I were an idiot for asking that question," said Brown.

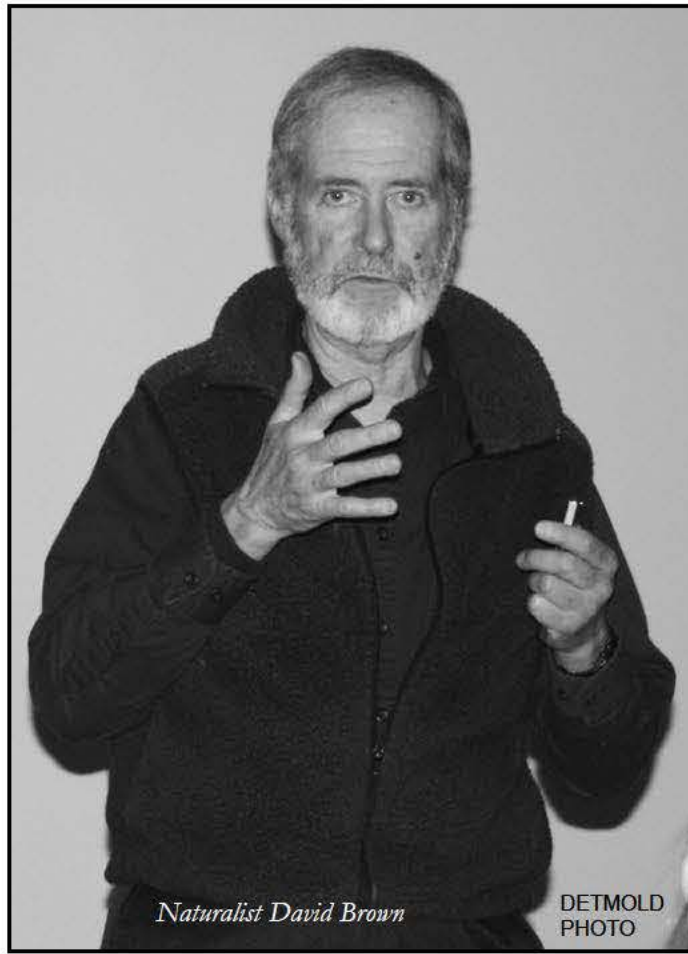
"But these animals have started to filter back to Central and Western New England in the last 20 years. Something has happened here. The regeneration of the New England forest, which reached its high point in the 1970s, has encouraged these animals to move back."

Red fox are now common throughout New England. Once they had been confined to areas around Rhode Island, after being hunted out of the rest of the region during Colonial times. Gray fox are still scarce in North and Central New England. Coyotes, which may have been present in pre-Colonial times in our region, are more likely interlopers taking advantage of the vacuum created by the wolf's removal. Brown said the eastern coyote is larger than the western coyote, with a thicker muzzle, and

every bit as smart as its western cousin. They probably migrated north through central Canada, then east, gradually interbreeding along the way with the Algonquin (red) wolf, with whom it shares a common evolutionary path. The eastern coyote crossed the St. Lawrence and headed south, infiltrating in recent decades to take its place atop the food chain in New England, Brown theorized.

The pelage (which the uninitiated sometimes call fur) of the eastern coyote can range from black to "pinkish," with a tawny orange-brown coloration typical. Brown said the "piercing yellow eyes" of the coyote are a distinctive characteristic. Eastern coyotes tend to weigh 35 - 45 pounds, ten pounds more than their western counterparts, but can weigh as much as 60 pounds. He said the wolf genes in the eastern coyote's make-up occasionally predominate. "I've seen some coyotes crossing the road that I'd swear I thought were wolves."

Red fox are smaller than coyotes, about 22 to 32 inches from snout to tail, with much of that length (14 to 16 inches) taken up by the tail itself. Compared to the coyote, the red fox is a lightweight, tipping the scale at about 6 to 15 pounds. Red fox, with their orange-red coat and bushy tail, are characterized by their black-stockinged feet and the white tip of their tail. Brown called the red fox "extremely well adapted to winter," with their insulating fur. They tend to favor open fields for habitat, where they like to snack on voles, or field mice, but red fox are found in New England cities as well. They have very



Naturalist David Brown

DETMOLD PHOTO

keen sensory perception.

Brown called the gray fox "the fox of mystery." Shunning the open, the gray fox is a creature of woodland shadows, elusive and rarely seen. Though the gray's shorter leg length contributes to an impression that it is smaller than the red fox, in fact their weight and length are about the same: 8 - 11 pounds and 40 to 44 inches long on average.

While red fox appear native to the wintry landscapes of New England, gray fox are likely original habitués of more southern climes, who have only gradually infiltrated Central and Northern New England.

Some of this difference is distinguishable in the tracks these two species of fox leave in the snow. Unlike the gray, red fox have fur-covered paws in all seasons, and tend to leave diffuse prints as a result. Gray fox, when traversing a straight path in the woods, do not leave as efficient a trail of hind foot placed directly in the print of the front foot, as the red fox

does. The red fox's direct print registration displays an evolutionary trait towards energy conservation, traveling through snow in the most efficient manner.

Gray fox have small feet for their body size, and, unusual for canids, display the catlike

propensity of being able to use them to climb trees! Like bobcats or domestic cats, gray fox like to walk along vertical objects such as stone walls or fallen logs.

Since this was a talk about animal tracks, Brown went over a number of slides detailing the defining characteristics of each canid's tracks, but these descriptions are difficult to render into words without accompanying illustration. Coyote tracks display direct registration of back feet placed neatly in the same print as front feet, and tend to follow a straight line. The coyotes' energy conserving habits in snow can lead a tracker to surprising discoveries, as when one straight line of prints divides to reveal two or more coyotes trailing each other neatly across snow-clad fields, each stepping directly into the prints of the coyotes that precede them in the pack.

When running, coyotes leave tracks marking what Brown called a displaced trot,

such that the animal twists its spine slightly to allow the swiftly moving hind legs room to pass the front legs, to one side or the other. Running coyotes leave tracks with the front paws evenly lined up, and the rear feet evenly displaced. "The displaced trot allows for very little up and down motion, with no energy wasted on the vertical vector," Brown explained.

Brown delved into the vagaries of coyote scat, which often reveals large bone chips and the grayish hue of bone dust from their diet of scavenged deer. In early spring, coyotes favor the fallen rotten apples of New England orchards. They love beaver ponds, and such woodland open spaces are ideal haunts for coyote convocations on moonlit nights, where they like to hold "yip-yowls" and bay at the moon.

The walking gait of the red fox leaves behind direct registration prints 17- 18 inches apart, as compared to the longer (22 inch) average step length of the coyote. The toes of the wild canids are rarely splayed like a domestic dog's, and the nail prints tend to barely register. The prints of coyotes and fox display a star shaped pattern between the toes and pads, and the fox prints show a chevron-shaped ridge of callous just in front of the pad.

How can you distinguish the aroma of red fox urine in the woods? Look for the telltale signs near evergreen seedlings, and the distinctive sweet skunk smell.

You can pick up these and other wild tidbits of canid lore by accompanying Brown on one of his frequent tracking expeditions in the woods, including his upcoming excursion in the Quabbin, this Sunday, February 18th.

For more information, go to Brown's website: [www.dbwildlife.com](http://www.dbwildlife.com).

## ERVING continued from pg 1

promise to provide a well for potable water for the Erving Paper Mill.

Linda Downs-Bembury, selectboard member, asked residents for their input on the pos-

sibility of extending the sewer system in Erving, when MassHighway eventually repaves a portion of Route 2. Extending the sewer line when the road is open would cost the town about \$100,000, Downs-Bembury said. She stated that if this were to be done any other time, it would cost the town

closer to \$1 million. Although it wasn't an article, the voters did cast a straw vote on the issue. The result was an overwhelming "no," as some residents expressed a need for more information on the topic.

The cable committee is preparing to renegotiate Erving's contract with ComCast,

the town's cable provider. Downs-Bembury asked the town for their input on this topic as well, and said the cable committee will be open to hearing any suggestions leading up to the negotiations.

The selectboard held a meeting before the start of the special town meeting, during which

they approved the appointment of two new police officers at the request of police chief Chris Blair. Josh Isles was appointed as a new part-time officer, and Linwood Phillips was appointed as an auxiliary officer by the board.




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