

ADAMS GRANT
Montague Receives \$42,500 for the Arts
 see page 9



HATS OFF
Vintage fashion at Montague Grange
 see page 2

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS GILL ERVING WENDELL

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The Montague Reporter

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 16, 2006

Special Town Meeting to Seek Additional Construction Funds \$245,000 Sought for New Library, Town Office, Public Water Supply

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - At their February 8th meeting, the Wendell selectboard signed the warrant for a February 23rd 7:00 p.m. special town meeting. There will be five articles on the warrant, four of which would transfer a total of \$245,000 from the stabilization fund to the public drinking water supply account, the town office construction account, the library construction account, and the septic system construction account. Article 5 would transfer \$20,000 from the town office construction account to an account for remodeling the current library for use as a senior center. Approval of the warrant would reduce the stabilization fund to a low of \$120,000, but selectboard chair Ted Lewis said the town can now start to build it up again.

Later, the selectboard signed a letter

plan review held by the planning board on February 7th for the new town office building, saying the major addition requested was an adequate light for people going out to the parking lot after late night meetings. The highway commission is working to reduce the speed limit on the stretch of Morse Village Road from Davis Turn Road to the stop sign at the top of the hill, hoping to make entering and leaving the new town office site safer.

In other news, administrative coordinator Nancy Aldrich said the town received \$1,500 from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) for professional roof inspections of three town buildings: the town hall, the current office building, and the highway garage. The highway garage roof is in the worst condition of the three, and



Artist rendering of the proposed new Wendell Free Library

to state representative Steve Kulik requesting that the legislature restore the \$148,000 reduction the state declared for Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for state-owned land within Wendell's borders. The reduction comes at an especially difficult time for the town, with all the capital improvements in progress around the center.

Board member Dan Keller reported that Ward Smith has flagged the wetlands on town-owned land on Cooleyville Road, the intended site for a well for the public water supply for the new town buildings. In addition, Smith is writing a notice of intent for the conservation commission about the well and the wetlands, and sending copies to abutters. The conservation commission met to discuss the matter on February 15th at 6:00 p.m. Later that evening, the selectboard interviewed to select the engineer for that project.

Members of the conservation commission had gone out with Smith and agreed the project could be accomplished, as long as swamp mats were used for access to the well head, to span the short stretches of wetland that will have to be crossed.

Keller also gave an update on the site

needs immediate attention. Keller suggested screwing down the metal roof and applying some caulk in the hope of keeping the garage roof relatively leak free for another year.

Martha Senn brought two concerns to the board meeting. The first was a request by the Wendell Women's Club to use the town hall on the evening of Saturday, February 28th for a fundraising spaghetti supper. The selectboard approved the request. The hall will be rent free that night because the event is for the town.

Next, Senn asked about drainage and runoff from the roof of the town hall. It is directed now to the field she owns behind town hall, which is already wet, and she hoped the drainage could be directed elsewhere. Water from the cellar is also pumped out towards the field, and there was some question whether leaks from the oil tanks might be polluting that water. Selectboard member Dan Keller suggested a berm around the sump pump might be a good idea to keep oil out of water drawn from the cellar, and also said during construction of water and sewer lines it should be possible to direct

see FUNDS, pg 7

COMMUNITY CENTER PLANNED



Seniors clear away lunch dishes and prepare for an afternoon of bingo at the Gill - Montague Senior Center

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - The town of Montague is considering finding a new home for the Carnegie library, the Gill - Montague senior center, and the Montague parks and recreation department - all under one roof. After months of meetings between department heads and town officials, an article will appear on the March 23rd special town meeting seeking

funds for a feasibility study to explore the possibility of building a community center to house the three municipal services in a location downtown. As of now, the one site under consideration, according to town officials familiar with the plan, is the paved area to the southeast of town hall. In order to make the footprint for the building big enough to comfortably house all three depart-

ments, the current garages used by the police department, and a nearby metal storage shed would all have to be demolished first. Therefore, a community center at that location is hinged on first relocating the police department.

Discussions about the police station sharing a safety complex with the Turners Falls fire department at the intersection of Turnpike and Turners see CENTER, pg 8

Montague Seeks \$1 Million in CDBG Funds Sidewalk Improvements, Housing Rehab Targeted



This Avenue A crosswalk has no curb cuts for wheelchair accessibility. Grant funds will pay for reconstruction of walks up and down the Avenue

BY PATRICK RENNICK - The town will apply for \$1 million in fiscal '07 federal community development block grant (CDBG) funds to improve wheelchair accessible curb cuts and crosswalks along Avenue A in Turners Falls, and to generate loan funds for low and moderate-income homeowners to rehabilitate their houses in Montague. The town, as the lead community, will be jointly applying for the grant funds with Ashfield, which is also seeking housing rehab funds.

This year Montague's CDBG grant was utilized for design work for access improvements on Avenue A crosswalks, and for the \$320,000 redesign of Peskeomskut Park. In the upcoming grant application, two social service programs in town, the Montague Catholic School Ministries and the Brick House, will seek funding for family literacy and dropout prevention programs, respectively.

The proposed housing rehabilitation

see GRANT, pg 7

PET OF THE WEEK
She's a Snuggler



Joyce

Joyce is a four-year-old brindle and white greyhound in need of a good home. She is about as friendly as a girl can be! She loves to lean up against you and snuggle. She is also super smart and picks up new things really quickly, which is good because greys have a lot to learn when they get adopted.

She would prefer to live in an environment without cats or small dogs. Joyce should do well in a home with kids over 12 years old. For more information on adopting Joyce contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org.

MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS
Hats Off To America



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

MONTAGUE CENTER - Carol Pedigree of Greenfield performed her *Hats Off To America* at the Montague Grange on Thursday, February 9th. Carol modeled hats and vintage clothes that spanned from the 1800s to 1950 and sang popular songs from the decades. She is shown in a 1905 picture hat holding a 1900 flower-shaped silk parasol. The performance was sponsored by the Friends of the Montague Public Libraries.



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

(L - R) Mary Ellen Preston, Mary Ann Packard and Pat Saczawa, all of Greenfield, along with Kathy Burek and Cathy Pura of Montague, won prizes for their hats at the *Hats Off to America* program last week at the Montague Grange. Performer Carol Pedigree of Greenfield judged the contest. The winners all received fruit baskets or wine from the Friends of the Montague Public Libraries, who sponsored the February 9th performance.

FACES & PLACES
Roses in Powertown



Teresa Gray (left) of Bernardston sold roses on Valentine's Day next to Peskeomskut Park. Sarah Rooney (middle) and her mother Mary Rooney of Northfield chose bouquets for their Valentines.

Clarification

Lake Grove School abutter Richard Mackey called seeking a printed clarification of his quotes about the Wendell police response to student AWOLs at Lake Grove. Mackey wanted it clarified that in a recent incident, reported on February 9th, (MR IV #18: Hearing on Lake Grove Continues) when Lake Grove staff entered his property searching for an AWOL student on Monday evening, January 30th, the following events occurred. In Mackey's words, "After I discovered the Lake Grove personnel on my property, at about 5:50 p.m. I called my neighbors to inform them of the escape. I called the state police; they promised to send a trooper. I then called Ed Chase, around 6:40 p.m. and while I was speaking to him, [Lake Grove executive director] Roland Paulauskas called him on the other line to inform him of the

escape. By 7:20 p.m., Lake Grove activated the neighborhood phone tree to inform the neighbors that the boy had been located in Montague and returned to Lake Grove."

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SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES Feb. 20th - Feb. 24th

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, 20th
CLOSED FOR PRESIDENTS DAY
Tuesday, 21st
9:30 a.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday, 22nd
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 23rd
10:00 a.m. Coffee/conversation
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 24th
9:15 a.m. Tap and soft shoe dance, open to the community, reservations and fee apply
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics

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

by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at (978) 544-3898.

Monday, 20th
CLOSED FOR PRESIDENTS DAY
Tuesday, 21st
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Oil Painting
Wednesday, 22nd
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing
12:00 Noon Bingo
Thursday, 23rd
9:00 a.m. Aerobics

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

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Chocolate Lovers Descend on Gill

BY JOE PARZYCH
DOWNTOWN GILL - The gods of cocoa smiled down on the Gill Store, holding off the snowstorm and providing a perfect day for a chocolate tasting on Saturday, February 11th. It was another rousing taste treat sensation at the downtown hot spot. The jovial crowd ebbed and flowed, with a stream of customers lining up at cashier Elizabeth Worthington's register. She played a cha-ching cha-ching melody, ringing up purchases by rabid chocoholics who stood, shameless, with chocolate ringed lips and a glazed look in their eyes, clutching

bags of sweet smelling delicacies. The vast majority of them appeared to be bonafide card-carrying members of Chocoholics Unanimous. Lissa Greenough, who owns the building, pitched in to help. She opened a bottle of French

Bordeaux and a bottle of Italian dry red. The wines were largely ignored by the chocolate tasters, who polished off assorted sample goodies, like bears at a bird feeder, as fast as store owner Vicki VanZee could replenish them.



Chocolate lovers lined up at cashier Elizabeth Worthington's register at the Gill Store.

Spring Bulb Show at Smith College

NORTHAMPTON - To celebrate the changing season, Hans van Waardenburg will give a lecture titled Flowerbulbs and What They Can Do in Any Community, opening the Spring Bulb Show at Smith College. The lecture will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, March 3rd, in the Carroll Room of the Campus Center. It will be followed by a reception and preview of the bulb show in the illuminated Lyman Conservatory. The talk, reception and bulb show are free, open to the public and wheelchair accessible. Van Waardenburg is the owner of B&K Flowerbulbs, a family-owned and operated Dutch company. Founded in 1894, B&K Flowerbulbs currently sells over 200 million bulbs in the United States. Van Waardenburg contributed to the New York Daffodil Project, begun after September 11th, 2001, by donating more than 3 million daffodils to beautify the city. The Spring Bulb Show in Lyman Conservatory will be open to the public daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 4th, through Sunday, March

19th. Special evening hours will be held on Fridays, March 10th and 17th. In addition, a live Web cam will allow viewings of the show's preparations. It will run for the duration of the show and can be accessed at www.smith.edu/garden/Home/web_cam.html.

Smith's annual bulb show is a long-standing tradition of the college's Botanic Garden. The simultaneous bloom of some 5,000 forced bulbs begins in October when Smith horticulture students put them in cold storage. In January, the bulbs are transferred to the greenhouses where they await the March show in a temperature-controlled setting.



The Botanic Garden is open to the public free of charge (although donations are always appreciated) and is wheelchair accessible. Parking is available on College Lane for the two weeks of the show. For more information, call the Botanic Garden at (413) 585-2740 or visit the Web site at <http://www.smith.edu/garden>

Pinewood Derby

BY PAM LESTER
TURNERS FALLS - The Montague Elks Lodge #2521, 1 Elks Avenue, Turners Falls, held its annual "Murph" Trophy Races for the adults on Saturday, February 4th at 7:00 p.m. at the Lodge. There were 25 entries this year. The winners were: 1st place, George Emery; 2nd place, Francis C. "Murph" Togneri, Sr.; 3rd place, Chuck Neff. The Bogusz Memorial Trophy was awarded to Derek Zellman for the best looking car. John "Flea" Perreault presented his retired car #23, the car that won the last three consecutive races, to Doug Brown, Exalted Ruler. The children's races were held on Sunday, February 5th at 12:00 p.m. There were 15 children participating in the race this year. The competition was tough, but remained good natured and was relieved by

free refreshments for the children, including soda, hot dogs, chips and popcorn. The winners were: 1st place, Peyton Emery; 2nd place, Savannah Emery and 3rd place, Dominic Emery, an Emery sweep. The "Murph" Trophy races began about 11 years ago when life member Francis C. Togneri, Sr., (aka "Murph"), suggested the Lodge hold its own Pinewood Derby Races. The track was built by the membership as a memorial to Brian F. Bogusz, who loved the "Murph" Trophy races. The proceeds of \$162.59 will benefit the Elks National Foundation. Make plans now for the races in 2007, and get those car kits made for the whole family. For further information about this event please contact the co-chairs: John "Flea" Perreault at (413) 824-9749 or George Emery at 367-0382.



Front Row: left to right; Savannah Emery, Peyton Emery, Dominic Emery, Joe Hildreth, Matt Hildreth, and Ryan Kucenski. Middle Row: left to right: Scott Brown, Trent Bourbeau, Max Leb, Sam Tirrell, Wyatt Bourbeau, Colby Zilinski. Back row: left to right; John "Flea" Perreault, Joshua Dobosz, Francis C. Togneri, Sr. "Murph", Donald Demers, Ben Demers, Jay Demers, George Emery.

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The Constitution in Crisis

U.S. House Judiciary Committee Minority Staff

Executive Summary, issued December 20th, 2005

This Minority Report has been produced at the request of Representative John Conyers, Jr. (D-Detroit), ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee. He made this request in the wake of the President's failure to respond to a letter submitted by 122 members of Congress and more than 500,000 Americans in July of this year asking him whether the assertions set forth in the Downing Street Minutes were accurate. Mr. Conyers asked staff, by year end 2005, to review the available information concerning possible misconduct by the Bush administration in the run up to the Iraq War and post-invasion statements and actions, and to develop legal conclusions and make legislative and other recommendations to him.

In brief, we have found that there is substantial evidence the President, the Vice President and other high ranking members of the Bush Administration misled Congress and the American people regarding the decision to go to war with Iraq; misstated and manipulated intelligence information regarding the justification for such war; countenanced torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and other legal violations in Iraq; and permitted inappropriate retaliation against critics of their administration.

There is a *prima facie* case that these actions by the President, Vice-President and other members of the Bush administration violated a number of federal laws, including Committing a Fraud against the United States; Making False Statements to Congress; the War Powers Resolution; Misuse of Government Funds; federal laws and international treaties prohibiting torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment; federal laws concerning retaliating against witnesses and other individuals; and federal laws and regulations concerning leaking

and other misuse of intelligence.

While these charges clearly rise to the level of impeachable misconduct, because the Bush administration and the Republican-controlled Congress have blocked the ability of members to obtain information directly from the administration concerning these matters, more investigatory authority is needed before recommendations can be made regarding specific Articles of Impeachment. As a result, we recommend that Congress establish a select committee with subpoena authority to investigate the misconduct of the Bush administration with regard to the Iraq war detailed in this report, and report to the Committee on the Judiciary on possible impeachable offenses.

In addition, we believe the failure of the President, Vice President and others in the Bush administration to respond to myriad requests for information concerning these charges, or to otherwise account for or explain a number of specific misstatements they have made in the run up to war and other actions warrants, at minimum, the introduction and Congress' approval of Resolutions of Censure against Mr. Bush and Mr. Cheney. Further, we recommend that ranking member Conyers and others consider referring the potential violations of federal criminal law detailed in this report to the Department of Justice for investigation; Congress should pass legislation to limit government secrecy, enhance oversight of the Executive Branch, request notification and justification of presidential pardons of administration officials, ban abusive treatment of detainees, ban the use of chemical weapons, and ban the practice of paying foreign media outlets to publish news stories prepared by or for the Pentagon; and the House should amend its rules to permit ranking members of committees to schedule official committee hearings and call witnesses to investigate Executive Branch misconduct.

The report rejects the frequent

contention by the Bush administration that their pre-war conduct has been reviewed and they have been exonerated. No entity has ever considered whether the administration misled Americans about the decision to go to war. The Senate Intelligence Committee has not yet conducted a review of pre-war intelligence distortion and manipulation, while the Silberman-Robb report specifically cautioned that intelligence manipulation "was not part of our inquiry." There has also not been any independent inquiry concerning torture and other legal violations in Iraq; nor has there been an independent review of the pattern of cover-ups and political retribution by the Bush administration against its critics, other than the very narrow and still ongoing inquiry of Special Counsel Fitzgerald.

While the scope of this report is largely limited to Iraq, it also holds lessons for our nation at a time of entrenched one-party rule and abuse of power in Washington. If the present administration is willing to misstate the facts in order to achieve its political objectives in Iraq, and Congress is unwilling to confront or challenge their hegemony, many of our cherished democratic principles are in jeopardy.

This is true not only with respect to the Iraq war, but also in regard to other areas of foreign policy, privacy and civil liberties, and matters of economic and social justice. Indeed as this report is being finalized, we have just learned of another potential significant abuse of executive power by the President, ordering the National Security Agency to engage in domestic spying and

wiretapping without obtaining court approval in possible violation of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

It is tragic that our nation has invaded another sovereign nation because "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy," as stated in the Downing Street Minutes. It is equally tragic that the Bush administration and the Republican Congress have been unwilling to examine these facts or take action to prevent this scenario from occurring again. Since they appear unwilling to act, it is incumbent on individual members of Congress as well as the American public to act to protect our constitutional form of government.

For the entire report, go to www.judiciary.house.gov and click on the minority button.



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congrats TFHS Cheerleaders

And what about that Turners Falls High School Cheerleading Squad! I watched these young ladies and one young man go from rags to riches. Fifteen dedicated girls and one boy and their coaches worked hard long hours to perfect their routine so that they could go to tournament, and they did just that.

I walked into the Mullins Center at UMass Amherst on Sunday, January 29th, and was horrified at the sight. So many young girls ages ranging from two to sixteen with so much makeup and glitter and hair-spray! I wondered if I was in the right place. This is a cheering tournament, right? The majority

of the cheering uniforms were exposed midriff, and a good percentage of the girls wearing them were quite portly. They would have otherwise looked fine if the extra belly weight wasn't exposed while they bounced around in their routines.

I thought, "I hope the Turners Falls Squad isn't clown-faced and sparkly." They weren't! They wore their full uniforms, no midriffs, had their hair braided very nicely and wore next to no makeup. They looked beautiful and real. They put their all into their performance and they took second place. When asked how second felt... just like in the

movie, the answer was: 'like first!'

Congratulations Turners Falls Varsity Cheering Squad. Ya' done good!

- Margaret Pyfrom
Turners Falls

Praise for Peacemaker Article

I would like to praise the excellent writing and interesting format of David Detmold's article on the Opening of the Zen Peacemaker Center. The clever interweaving of journalism and excerpts from Stephen Diamond's novel, *What the Trees Said*, created an entry into

the present as directed from the past. This is journalism at its finest. And, not having read the book since its publication, I was struck once again, by the fine writing of our dearly loved and sorely missed brother, Stephen Diamond. - By Nina Keller Wendell

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MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

GUEST EDITORIAL

Act Now to Prevent Cancer: Stop the Uprate at Vermont Yankee

BY HATTIE NESTLE

ATHOL - Activism around Vermont Yankee has accelerated in direct proportion to the stonewalling by the Vermont governor, legislature, other Vermont decision making bodies, and the NRC to the public's reasonable demand for an independent engineering assessment of the 33-year-old nuclear plant, prior to uprate.

November saw the first group of seven women cross the line at Vermont Yankee headquarters to protest the pending 20% uprate and the lack of an independent safety assessment. Since that time, there have been two more affinity groups, one including 86-year-old Frances Crowe of Northampton, who have crossed the line and been arrested. More affinity groups are forming. So far, the first affinity group had its case dismissed, the second group upon appearing in court was told the court had not received any paper work on them, and the third group were told this week the state's attorney would not press charges against them.

Meanwhile the *Rutland Herald* and the *Brattleboro Reformer* have reported some startling new information. The Vermont Health Department

has stated that Entergy's proposed power boost of 20% could violate the state's strict standards for radiation releases by 26%. These releases, called 'fenceline doses' have already been called into question by a dispute between the state and Entergy about how those measurements are made. The state claimed its measurements were double the radiation levels claimed by Entergy and were already on the edge of violating the state standard.

Meanwhile Vermont's health commissioner, Dr. Paul Jarris, has stated he has confidence the radiological releases would pose no health hazard and said he would support raising the state limit. All the groups are now asking people to call in to Governor Douglas, 1-800-649-6825 or write, State House, Montpelier, Vt. 05609 and the Vermont Public Safety Board at 112 State St. Drawer 20, Montpelier, Vermont, 05620 or write clerk@psb.state.vt.us asking them to oppose this blatant violation of the state's safety codes regarding acceptable radiation emissions from Vermont Yankee. This is especially critical now, as the latest report from the National Academy of Sciences has

definitively concluded there is no safe dose of radiation.

Everyone knows these fenceline readings will not stop at the fenceline. They will impact populations as far away as Boston, Hartford and Albany, all of which are only 75 miles from Vernon, VT.

The other issue that has the local communities enraged is how Entergy wants to handle the increased radioactive waste the proposed uprate will produce. Since no nuclear waste facility in the United States is now willing to have this waste stored in existing landfills, the only option is for the waste to be stored on-site. Vermont Yankee is proposing the cheapest dry cask storage available and plans to place the waste 200 feet from the Connecticut River.

These casks will be above ground, and a very visible target, and vulnerable to any serious meteorological issues that might arise. This high level radioactive waste facility will also cause increased radiation releases.

Finally, the state seems hesitant to require a full independent safety assessment, like the

one that finally caused Maine Yankee to be shut down. In a recent letter to NRC Chairman Nil Diaz, Massachusetts Congressman John Olver wrote, "Conducting a stress test of components while the reactor's power level is being ramped up is both irresponsible and creates an unacceptable risk to the lives of all living in the vicinity of the reactor." David Lochbaum, nuclear safety engineer with the Union of Concerned Scientists has said, "I firmly believe that safety cannot be adequately assured by the NRC without an Independent Safety Assessment." When there was an inspection of 45 selected items at Vermont Yankee by the NRC recently, eight had safety-related defects. This was only 5% of what a full inspection would cover.

Statistics regarding cancer rates in Windham County, closest to the reactor were alarming. Comparing 1990-2002 statistics with the period 1979-1988, breast cancer death rates rose 15% in Windham County, but fell 19% in other Vermont counties. The cancer death rate for ages 20-54 rose 125% in

Windham County, but fell 3% in other Vermont counties. And in Franklin County, MA, only 14 miles downwind of Vermont Yankee, there was a 26% increase in breast cancer mortality rates over a 30-year period, during a time when diagnosis and treatment should have improved survival rates.

The only possible reason to allow this uprate before doing an independent safety assessment, to allow the cheapest on-site spent fuel storage and to reduce the present radiation limits is to increase the profits of Entergy.

We are asking for full community involvement either by organizing affinity groups willing to cross the line, or by writing to your elected officials and Vermont Governor Douglas to insist on an independent safety assessment, not to allow Entergy to exceed any of the state's present limits for radiation releases and require hardened on site storage of high level waste in underground berms.

For more information, contact CAN at 413-339-5781.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG Responsible Party Located

Tuesday 2-7

6:40 a.m. Assisted Gill Police with a domestic problem at a French King Highway location. Calmed subjects down. All verbal.

7:40 a.m. Report of a collie-type dog in the road on West Main Street. Searched area. Unable to locate.

10:30 a.m. Report of a bicycle and backpack left unattended at park. Recovered a Mongoose bicycle, back pack and, toy gun at park on Pleasant Street. Nobody around. Secured at station.

2:00 p.m. Report of past domestic assault. Under investigation.

Wednesday 2-8

9:55 a.m. Report of a disabled tractor trailer on Route 63, east bypass. Assisted with traffic.

11:35 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Route 2, a criminal complaint was issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Arsenault towing removed vehicle. Assisted subjects with transportation to Athol.

Friday 2-10

7:05 a.m. Report of a medical emergency at a West High Street address. BHA on scene. Transported subject to hospital.

3:15 p.m. Report of ATV being ridden up and down Prospect Street. Operator not wearing helmet. Area searched, unable to locate.

8:00 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on River Road, [redacted] was charged with operating an unregistered, uninsured motor vehicle. Arsenault Towing removed vehicle.

Saturday 2-11

6:27 p.m. Responded to request for assistance by Montague Police at the Exxon. Transported subjected to Montague police station.

Sunday 2-12

1:00 p.m. Report of four-wheeler operating on East Prospect Street. Checked area, unable to locate.

2:50 p.m. Report of four-wheeler operating on East Prospect Street. Located responsible party. Advised of applicable laws.

Monday 2-13

10:45 a.m. Report of tractor trailer on fire on Route 2 near Farley. Truck found not to be on fire, but disabled. Rose Ledge Companies removed truck and operator.

2:00p.m. Report of tractor trailer parked on Mountain Road blocking side of road. Unable to locate owner. Passed on to next shift.

9:40 p.m. Officer spoke to Mountain Road resident and advised of snow removal by-law. Advised not to park tractor trailer on street and was given option to park at the cemetery during inclement weather.

Tuesday 2-14

8:30 a.m. Responded to alarm on Northfield Road. All secure.

WORD ON THE AVENUE

The federal government is requiring towns using paper ballots to have at least one electronic voting machine per precinct. How do you feel about electronic voting coming to Montague?

COMPILED BY LISA DAVOL



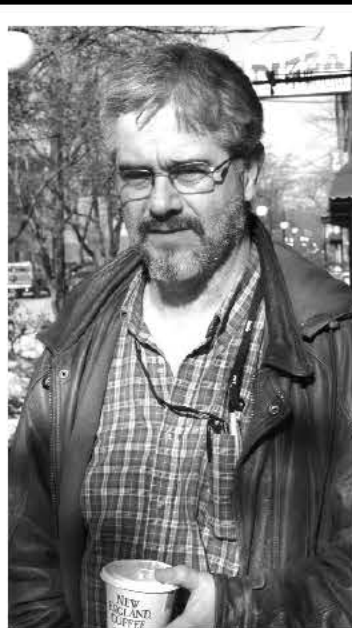
I think it would be good although I don't really know why.

-Julie Hill
Turners Falls



It might speed up the process. I have nothing against them. We never seem to matter since we get our results in later, after the election is decided usually. It may make a difference in the long run though.

-Hyrum Husky
Turners Falls



I don't think we really need it because we don't have enough voters to support it.

-Mike Farrick
Turners Falls

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Community Notices:

Art Meets Acupuncture on Avenue A

TURNERS FALLS - Acupuncturist Karen Adams announced the first in a series of rotating window displays in her newly opened "Four Directions Healing Arts" studio at 112 Avenue A in Turners Falls. "Explorations in Color" exhibits the most recent knitted work of Turners Falls fiber artist Anne Harding, as well as a few sentimental pieces from her son's early childhood. From infants' bonnets and headbands to children's vests and eight-foot long shawls, a variety of vivid color work is on display for the visual pleasure of customers and passersby.

With two large windows in the storefront, Adams reserves one for information about her business, as well as special events she will offer from time

to time. She offers the other as an opportunity for local artisans to show their work in an ongoing series of two-month exhibitions. Adams will also hang artwork on the many inside walls of the facility.

Harding's works include examples of stranded knitting and involve the use of color in simple geometric patterns, emerging into wonderfully elaborate looking garments. Some of her creations were influenced by patterns and techniques learned from a knitter who grew up in a small fishing village in Newfoundland.

Harding's knitting will be on display until mid-March. Artisans interested in an exhibit of their work should contact Karen Adams at 413-863-4993.

2nd Annual "Hold 'Em for Hospice" Poker Tournament

GREENFIELD - Hospice of Franklin County is holding its second Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament on Friday, March 3rd, 2006. The tournament will be held at the St. Kazimierz Hall, 179 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376. Registration begins at 6:00 p.m. and the tournament begins at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

\$100.00 buy-in for the first 200 players to register. 50% of

the registration fee will be awarded in cash prizes and 50% will be donated to Hospice of Franklin County, Inc. All players at the final table will win prizes. There will be snacks and a cash bar available.

Players interested may also pre-register by mail. Send your check for \$100, made payable to Hospice of Franklin County to: 329 Conway Street, Suite 2, Greenfield, MA 01301.

Early Days of Turners Falls Part III

From a speech given by Charles Hazelton to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, February 23rd, 1926. In 1867, Hazelton was engaged to help engineer William P. Crocker lay out the power canal and the streets of the newly established village of Turners Falls.

One, and the principal reason for the slow and gradual growth of Turners Falls, as compared with Holyoke, was that Holyoke was well started before the beginning of the war of 1861, and during those war years, by reason of the demand for war goods, at war prices, great headway was made in the manufacturing interests and development of that place. Turners Falls was started at the close of the war - at the beginning of the period of deflation, with the consequent depression of general business interests, which culminated in the Jay Cook financial panic of 1874.

A second auction sale of lots was held the following year, but in the meantime construction of the cutlery works and of the pulp mill was going on, and dwelling houses were being built.

In carrying out the plans for a development of the place, one of the first things to be considered was how to get a railroad in, the next to establish a post office, then build a hotel, then start a bank. In the meantime, a schoolhouse was being built, two churches were started, and following those was the establishment of a printing office with a newspaper, then a fire department, a water supply and the settling of a doctor and a lawyer.

Several different surveys were made for a railroad, first from Millers Falls, then from a point down near Montague Town [the Center], but finally, on the advice of Alfred R. Field, an engineer who had been connected with the construction of the Troy and Greenfield Railroad, the present location was adopted. The branch railroad from Greenfield was built

in 1869, B.N. Farren having the contract and Aaron Wright of Greenfield building the bridge at Montague City, which was under construction at the time of the 1869 flood, the water at that time coming within about two feet of the lower chord of the structure; and for 24 hours it was a question with the builder and others whether or not the bridge would stand the strain, but it did.

The first station agent was W. G. Potter of Greenfield.

At the time of the construction of the dam, and for some years afterward, the post office was at Montague City, in the store of R. L. Goss, he being the postmaster. During the construction of the dam he had opened a branch store at Turners Falls in the basement of a large building built by George A. Andrews, of Montague City, located near the present end of the pulp block on First Street for the use of some of the help that were working on the dam, as tenements. The branch store was run by a young man named Frank W. Rugg, now living at Montague City. Our mail for two years was brought up by said Frank W. Rugg, in his pocket. This building is the one now standing on L Street, near 2nd, sometimes called "the Battery."

In 1874 a petition was presented for a post office at Turners Falls, and Benjamin W. Mayo, who had been in the employ of R. L. Goss, was appointed postmaster, and the office was in a wooden building standing at the corner of Avenue A and Third Street, which was burned in 1876.

Early in 1872, the need for a hotel was apparent, and Mr. Farren said that he would build one, so the Farren Hotel Company was incorporated and the present hotel block was built, the ground floor to be used as stores and a bank and the upper part as a hotel. The first proprietor was Col. N. P. Brower, from Pennsylvania. He was succeeded in a short time by George T. C. Holden, who ran the hotel for a number of years, or until he took over the management of the Mansion House in Greenfield.

The next institution established were the banks, the National Bank and the Savings Institution, Col. Crocker being president of both. R. N. Oakman, Jr., was the first cashier of the National Bank, also treasurer of the Savings Institution. Both banks were located in the part of the hotel block now occupied by the town offices.

Continued next week

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Elisabeth von Trapp to perform benefit for Montague Education Fund

A Concert with Elisabeth von Trapp will be held on Saturday, April 29th at 7:30 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School Theater. Also performing with Elisabeth von Trapp will be the Gill-



Elisabeth von Trapp

the Sound of Music, about a singing Austrian family who fled the Nazis and eventually settled in Vermont. In the movie her father's name was changed to 'Kurt'. Today she has

Montague Elementary Chorus and the Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School Singers

The Second Annual Gala is sponsored by the Gill-Montague Education Fund, a non-profit organization established for the purpose of raising funds for students' enrichment through the academic, arts and athletic programs, and underwritten by their corporate sponsors, Hillside Plastics, Inc. and Construction Monitoring, Inc.

Elisabeth is the granddaughter of Maria von Trapp, the musical matriarch portrayed first on stage by Mary Martin in 1959, then six years later on the silver screen by Julie Andrews. Elisabeth's father, Werner, is one of the seven Von Trapp children made famous in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical,

five self-produced albums to her name, composes her own music set to Robert Frost poems and Shakespeare sonnets, and has played the Kennedy Center, National Public Radio, the Washington National Cathedral and ABC's *Good Morning America* series. Elisabeth sings with an astonishing clarity about disappointment, the power of love and coming of age. Her music reflects her classical training and her love of folk music.

Tickets go on sale February 11th, 2006. Prices are: \$20 - \$15 - \$10

Ticket locations: Equi's Store, Scotty's Convenience Store, World Eye Bookshop, Webs of Northampton, all Gill-Montague Elementary Schools or by calling Turners Falls High School @ 863-9341

GRANT from page 1

program in Ashfield and Montague seeks to assist low to moderate-income homeowners in essential repairs they would otherwise be unable to afford. Recipients will be able to take out 0% interest deferred payment loans to perform these repairs. The cut-off household income for potential applicants is \$66,650. The project will receive \$365,000 from the block grant, which will ideally provide funds to rehab nine units for Montague and three for Ashfield. The plan aims to serve 30 people.

The Montague Catholic Social Ministries proposed a targeted family literacy program to improve literacy for children in grades K-3 and English classes for adults who are speakers of other languages. The classes are planned to hold 30 children and 60 adults respectively. The combined cost of the program is \$88,935, \$50,811 of which will be taken from the CDBG budget.

The Brick House Community Resource Center proposed a project titled, "Transitioning to Success" geared towards reducing the dropout rate from Montague schools. The program will focus on 30 students who are considered most at risk of dropping

out. Some of the planned activities include: career development, apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities, expanded opportunities for the School to Work program, and college tours. Montague currently has one of the highest school dropout rates in the state, at 9.6%. The project has requested \$49,588 from the CDBG for this project.

Marty Espinola, director of grants and technology for the Gill - Montague schools said, "The major reason kids drop out is because they have poor relations with their family and the school system. With this program we are trying to integrate them back into the community."

Weston and Sampson Engineers of Rocky Hill, CT gave a presentation on the planned access improvements to Avenue A crosswalks. The proposal detailed the replacement of handicap walks, correction of grading problems on the Avenue, and extended sidewalks for more pedestrian space.

"The current crosswalks are quite narrow and hard to see in the rain," said Gene Bolinger, of Weston and Sampson. "Thermo-plastic paint will be used to illuminate the new crosswalks."

The process for the accessibility upgrades on the Avenue

began one and a half years ago when local citizens challenged the selectboard to tour the Avenue riding wheelchairs. The board took them up on the offer, found the experience challenging at best, and established a committee to plan improvements.

Local business owner Chris Couture, of Couture Brothers, operating on the Avenue since his grandfather founded the paint store in 1931, voiced opposition to the plan.

"I just found out about this last week," Couture said. "I've been plowing my own snow for 30 years, and I know that if this plan goes through the snow from the Avenue will end up piled in front of my door." Couture also made reference to the 1983 streetscape project on the Avenue, which he claimed made it difficult for his customers to park in the store's lot. "I am not objecting to the handicap issue," he said. "But I have seen people do the most asinine things with this street."

The board decided to hold off on the plan until it was discussed further.

"Even with ten meetings we still need to shake all of the local storeowners' collars and let them know what is going on," said board chair Allen Ross.

Adams Grant Received

Town planner Robin Sherman delivered the good news that Montague has recently received a \$42,500 John and Abigail Adams Arts Program grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The money will go toward a project dubbed 'River Culture,' with the goal of reinvigorating interest in the Turners Falls area as a center for the arts. Of the 48 grant applications sent to the Mass Cultural Council, Montague's was rated third in the state.

Board member Patricia Pruitt commended the committee that worked on the grant application, a collaborative of local agencies and artists, labeling them, "an incredibly capable group."

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio has still been unable to contact legal services at Mass Highway regarding the Greenfield Road bridge, demolished seven years ago after Guilford Railroad undercut the abutments.

Regarding a recent dog hearing in which two dogs on Chestnut Hill in Montague Center were ordered euthanized, owner Kevin Howe has asked the selectboard for a pardon for one of the dogs. Under his proposed settlement, one dog, "Hunter" would be put down,

while the other, "Maggie" (who did not attack a human, although she harassed other pets), would be placed in the custody of a veterinarian until a proper home for her can be found. Under the proposal, neither dog would go back to their owner, and full responsibility would be placed with the veterinarian.

The board moved to hold off placing Maggie until documentation guaranteeing the veterinarian's responsibility in the matter was received.

Chris Sawyer-Laucanno, John Reynolds, and Sam Gilford presented the general charge of the Montague Cable Committee. There are currently two openings for positions on the committee. Eileen Dowd of Turners Falls has already come forward to apply for one of the positions. Applicants are urged to submit a letter of interest to the committee. Gilford discussed the possibility of increasing the current capacity of 5 staff members.

"The more people we have, the more balanced we can be in representing all five villages," Gilford said.

Due to the Presidents' Day holiday, next week's board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 21st at 7:00 p.m.

FUNDS from page 1

drainage lines down the sides of Morse Village Road.

Keller also relayed that starting in April, the council on aging wants to use the town hall for its once a month health checks (first Wednesday of every month), which have been held at the senior center.

Aldrich reported the company the town has chosen to supply trailers for temporary town offices had not returned her call.

Neighbor Keith Washburn came for a continuation of the class III license hearing for Robin Pierce's property on Stone Road. Neither Pierce nor

John Germaine, the prospective buyer of the property, was at the hearing, which was continued until March 8th. Selectboard member Christine Heard asked Aldrich to send a letter to Germaine asking what, if any, progress had been made.

Aldrich said the McNamara Law, which mandates towns to provide survivor benefits for dependents of police officers, firefighters and EMTs will increase the town's accident insurance bill from \$3,400 to \$5,400; another unfunded mandate.

The selectboard discussed in general terms the process needed for getting rid of vehicles on

property the town owns because of back taxes. Keller said if the cost of disposal exceeded the value of the vehicle, then Massachusetts General Law 135 does not apply. Lewis said he knew someone who would remove the vehicles for free.

The board also discussed selling a town-owned piece of land on Farley Road, before or after it was cleaned up, and whether a public auction or a sealed bid process was best for the town. Keller said a good auctioneer might shift liability away from the town, and Heard asked Aldrich to contact the town treasurer, Carolyn Manley, and pursue the different options.

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CENTER continued from pg 1

Falls Road are ongoing. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said town meeting may be asked to expand the warrant article to include funds for a separate study of the police department's move. The total amount requested would probably fall in the \$50,000 - \$80,000 range, he said.

Selectboard member Pat Allen, who serves on the town's capital improvements committee, said the idea of combining the three services under one roof came about after the plan to renovate and add a wing onto the Carnegie Library fell through, due to the difficulty of raising the local match for the \$6.4 million project.

"The money for the library design was so astronomical," she said. "With all these capital needs coming up for town buildings, and each department saying they needed more meeting space, that was the kernel for starting to think in a collaborative fashion."

Wednesday, as more than two dozen seniors finished lunch and cleared the long tables in preparation for an afternoon of bingo at the senior center, council on aging director Bunny Caldwell sat in her cramped office and discussed the shortcomings of the building on 5th Street. Built originally as a church, perhaps by the Methodists, (although not all authorities agree) the distinctive wood frame structure was subsequently used as a Temperance Society Hall, and more recently as the gathering place of the Turners Falls Athletic Society. Power Town acquired the building, and leased it for the town to use as a senior center in 1984. The 30-year lease cost the town just one dollar. Before moving to the building on 5th Street, Caldwell said the senior center was located in the Knights of Columbus building, where the Elks parking lot is now.

In the present quarters, "We can't have two programs going at the same time," Caldwell said. When a foot clinic or tax clinic is held, and seniors need privacy, they use her little office, forcing her into the hall. Each day the tables have to be set up for lunch and taken down again for aerobics or tai chi. The kitchen is in the basement, meals have to be brought up on an elevator, there are no windows downstairs, and the

kitchen staff is unhappy with that arrangement. The air conditioning cannot keep up with the heat of the oven in the summer, making matters worse for the cooks.

When the senior center holds flu clinics or ice cream socials, St. Anne's has let the seniors use Fr. Casey Hall, which is wheelchair accessible, but that arrangement is ending now that St. Anne's is closed.

"I don't have any parking,"

simply not enough room for that number of children to come in out of the weather in the cinder block building on Williams Way where the parks and recreation department is presently housed. Though the wood stove heats the space Dobosz shares with the light maintenance crew of the highway department fairly well, still, on cold winter days, the building's lack of insulation and inefficient backup gas heat works against them. So Dobosz

events where seniors talked about local history with school children as an example of one such cross-generational program that might serve as a model.

"If you separate different populations, it's just four walls and a ceiling," said Dobosz. "It's not a community center. I get frustrated when people say separate everyone."

Dobosz said participation in parks and recreation programs

uptick in patronage is the new technology itself. "We are busier with people coming into the library to use the computers. We need more space for people to use computers, to access the internet."

Part of the reason business is so good is as old as Alexandria. "Reading a book on the computer screen just doesn't have the same comfort as curling up in a chair with a real book."

But comfortable chairs are hard to come by in the Carnegie library, which has served as the town's main library for 101 years. The first floor - where the narrow stacks, the children's room, and the reading room share 2262 square feet of floor space with four computers, video and audio stacks and the beehive of activity at the circulation desk - has no quiet corners in sight. Upstairs, moth-eaten stuffed animals stare glass-eyed at marble busts of Greek gods, but the room is not wheelchair accessible and is rarely used. Books spill from windowsills on the main floor, the collection is culled ruthlessly each year for lack of space, and desks block the hearth of the marble fireplace.

"Kids get their fingers caught in the swinging doors. The fifteen steps up to the front door are daunting," San Soucie said. (A recently added wheelchair access ramp gets people in the building, but the stacks are too narrow for ambulatory humans, never mind people with wheelchairs.) "The circulation desk is too small for two people to work at comfortably. We need more space."

Despite its quirks, San Soucie admitted patrons are fond of the historic building. It is centrally located in the downtown, "right across the street from where people do a lot of business at the stores." But by the same token, the intersection is one of the busiest, and the library has no parking lot.

None of the department heads could cite an example of a community center in another town that houses a senior center, a library, and parks and recreation activities. But San Soucie said the idea of the feasibility study "is to have someone tell us if it can work, to see if we can exist together in some site downtown."

She said the library would seek 13,000 square feet in a new building, and the Massachusetts

CENTER
continued next page



Parks and Recreation Department director Jon Dobosz is hoping for more office space in the new community center. A little more storage space wouldn't hurt either.

Caldwell said. Of the 1900 Gill and Montague seniors eligible to use the center, perhaps 300 to 400 take part in the programs. "But they all use the center for different things at different times. The people who come for meals are not the same as the card players or those who use the health programs or clinics."

Caldwell said she needs room for growth in a future senior center. "The baby boomers are here," she said. "The population is aging." She hopes for a place where "people can come in and relax, a lounge area where people can get out of their apartments, read a magazine, and relax with their peers."

With fifty or more kids participate in summer playground programs at Unity Park, parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz is forced to bus them up to Sheffield School for indoor activities on rainy days. There is

schedules family fitness programs, yoga classes, and basketball up at Sheffield during the winter months. His wish list for the community center includes a gymnasium, to accommodate programs like these in all weathers.

"I'm hoping for a large enough space to bring in all the indoor programs," Dobosz said. "We do pay a fee to use the schools. The space would have to be adaptable for many different programs," like senior aerobics and tai chi, if the space were used jointly with the seniors.

"There has been some concern about having kids run over senior citizens," at the planned center, Dobosz said. Different entrances could solve that problem. But Dobosz stressed a shared center would encourage "cross-generational programs."

Caldwell mentioned recent


has been holding steady since the number of slots available was reduced a few years ago out of safety concerns. There used to be room for 150 kids to participate at the Highland Park (Millers Falls) and Unity Park summer programs; but the ceiling has dropped to 125. At that level, in '03, programs were 73% full, in '04 they were 81% full, in '05 they were 83% full, Dobosz said.

Some on the capital improvements committee have speculated that the town's need for a free lending library might be on the wane in the age of home computers and the worldwide web. But library director Sue San Soucie said she isn't seeing much evidence of that yet.

"We're busier than ever. The numbers are up. We had 97,000 items circulating in the three branch libraries in 2005."

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving May Hire Environmental Supervisor

BY CYD SCOTT - The Erving selectboard met on February 13th with the finance committee regarding the fiscal '07 budget. The board is considering the possibility of creating a new position for an environmental supervisor, to handle all town projects dealing with the Erving wastewater treatment plant, as well as overseeing the reporting requirements at the town-owned Erving Center treatment facility, operated by Erving Paper mill. Pay for the position might range between \$43 - \$50,000 a year.

Board member Jeff Dubay said, "We need someone who will think about this stuff even when they are off work, when they are at home at night. Someone with field experience is a must."

Board member Andy Tessier said, "There are too many projects in town, and I can't keep up with them myself. There's the Erving pump station, worth \$5 million. This is a small amount for the town to put out to see the thing is running right. The landfill, the sewers need to be looked at; I can't do all of this."

Board chair Linda Downs

Bembury said, jokingly, "You know, no one in town appreciates what you do, Andy, cause you're too persnickety."

The town would have to propose a source of funds for the new position, finance committee member Stanley Gradowski said. The finance committee is thinking about possible cuts in the parks and recreation department, the police, schools, and from nonessential town services to come up with funds for the new position.

The finance committee plans to go over the school budget at the school committee's February 28th meeting. On the previous day, February 27th, Erving will hold a special town meeting, to consider the purchase of a front end loader for the highway department, for \$107,285, along with a John Deere lawn tractor for maintaining town cemeteries, for \$2,112.

In other news:

The board approved funds for office supplies, and proposed to pay D Cubed Engineering \$300 dollars to assess the confined space entry locations for operators who

periodically test the Farley treatment plant, essentially a large public septic system off Route 2. They will also evaluate different processes that could be used in the small system, and its potential for expansion.

The board appointed Don Mailloux and Gail Lynch as alternates to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Erving is also considering changes to the town's retirement guidelines, which would require current retirees to pay 100% of their dental, and require future employees to work for the town at least 10 years before qualifying for the town's retirement coverage.

Donelan to Talk on Senior Housing

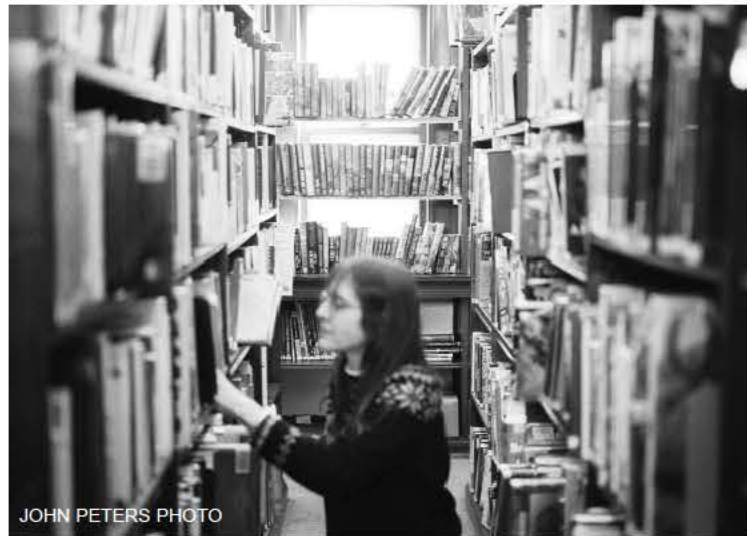
Following up on his January 30th discussion with constituents at the Erving town hall on the subject of senior housing, Representative Chris Donelan will return on March 2nd at 1 p.m., to the Erving Senior Center, to discuss the town's housing options and other matters of concern to retirees in Erving. The talk will be open to the public.

CENTER
from previous page

Board of Library Commissioners would likely be willing to supply funding for a percentage of the portion dedicated to library use. No total square footage for a new community center has been suggested as yet, and no price tag mentioned to construct a joint-use structure.

Caldwell said, "If it's built properly, you could have it so the different uses aren't overlapping." But people of all ages could see the programs available there. "Each one needs to remain a separate entity; but for economics, we need to consolidate."

As the long tables were cleared for bingo, Caldwell



JOHN PETERS PHOTO

Children's librarian Linda Hickman shelves books in the narrow stacks at the Carnegie Library

looked around the hall filled with seniors. "Each of us would like our own place in the sun. I

don't want us to lose our identity."



Time is Right for the Arts

\$42,500 ADAMS GRANT WILL PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN TURNERS

BY PATRICK RENNICK

TURNERS FALLS - The town of Montague recently received a \$42,500 John and Abigail Adams Arts grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council for use in the 'RiverCulture' project, a collaboration between public agencies and artists seeking to renew interest in Turners Falls as a center for the arts and outdoor recreation.

Over the course of this year the project will be working to bring an array of events and activities to the Turners Falls area. Some of the planned activities include: tours of downtown studios, galleries, and museums; performances at the Shea Theater; artist exhibits and artist lectures; crafts fairs; a film festival; a Native American cultural festival; poetry and spoken word performances, and musicians at the Farmers Market. In addition, signage will be created for the downtown area as well as brochures, posters, maps, and a new town website. A downtown cultural coordinator will also soon be hired.

"The downtown coordinator will get the word out about local businesses and artists," said selectboard member, Patricia Pruitt. "With this grant we are laying the groundwork for an ongoing improvement. In the end I hope we will have enough success to keep the project going, or to receive more grant money."

"This project has a potential to have a huge impact on the town," said local businessperson Eileen Dowd, of Carriage House Designs. "Kudos to town planner Robin Sherman for organizing everything. She was the primary mover. If she didn't have the vision, it would not have happened. From this grant will come greater development in the arts, and hopefully local businesses can profit as well."

Laundromat owner Chris Janke said, "I just hope that the project will be managed in such a way that it will show results

for the long-term and not just the short-term."

Of the \$42,500 available, Montague will ultimately receive only as much as the town is able to match through local contributions. Of this, \$30,000 has already been raised, according to Brick House business manager Michael Bosworth. Ten thousand of that was allocated from Montague community development block grant funds. The Western Massachusetts Electric Company put up \$10,000. The Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography donated \$7500. The Franklin County Chamber of Commerce added \$1500, and the Greenfield Co-op Bank put in \$1000.

Bosworth said one of his expectations from the grant related activity is to restart a business association in Turners Falls, or perhaps townwide. "I would like to see a business association sustained after the program is initiated," said Bosworth. "There won't be grants forever."

This year the Mass Cultural Council distributed \$1.35 million in Adams grants statewide, to 34 out of 48 projects applying, according to communications coordinator Erin Haran. Applications were judged by a panel on the basis of expertise, quality, and ability. The John and Abigail Adams grant is designed to promote economic development and job creation through the arts, sciences, and humanities. Montague's grant application was ranked third statewide in the current grant cycle.

"What was most impressive to me about Montague's project was the collaboration I saw in the community," said Adams Arts Program manager Mary Jenkins. "This year's application process was very competitive. The panel was pleased to see that the infrastructure is already in place to support the program in Turners Falls. The timing is just right for this town."

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the
poetry
page

It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

Readers are invited to send poems to the
Montague Reporter at 24 3rd Street,
Turners Falls, MA 01376;
or reporter-poems@montaguema.net

Poetry Page edited by
Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno
& Chris Janke
designed by Boysen Hodgson

Old Bear

He shuffles across the tile floor,
Finishes the last drops of coffee
Moves to the newspaper rack,
Gives fifty cents to the cashier.

He is an old bear, sharp salt and pepper
Whiskers studding his tired face.
He is an old bear, hardened by winters
Even harder than his weathered skin.

I wonder, did he sire any cubs
When he was a young, strong bear?
Does he go home to an empty den,
To huddle from the cold winter air?

He has a strength in the way he moves,
The sort of strength that says:
"I'm tired from loss and grief and loneliness
But merciless Nature has kept me going."

And as I look at him, Old Bear, Old Man,
I see that he is as Nature made him,
To roam, to forage, to return to his den
Until hibernation calls him to sleep.

R.J. DiDonato
Wendell

Volunteer

I drive seniors to
Doctor's appointments.
Meet at their doorstep—tuck them into my car.
Some talk, some don't
Tell of life – anxieties
I listen.

Homeward—pressure—off
Travel byways – share tea—
Listen to health news—good-bad!
We rejoice—hunt for solutions.

Was their day brightened?
Mine was.

—Phyllis Loomis
Ashfield

Thanks to all who submitted poetry for this issue. We welcome
new submissions every month. The Poetry Page will return
in March.



Winter 1999

I took a long, slow walk
up an unplowed and wooded road,
pushing my way through a foot of virgin snow,
squinting my eyes in the bold sunlight,
as I peered through the blanketed forest;
on a mission for the census Bureau.

It was a private way,
with a yellow, metal
pipe type gate, official and serious.
But I left my truck tied to a tree
and made off into the wintery tableau.

I had heavy insulated boots
designed to keep lofty thoughts
from entering the mind of the wearer.
I had my notepad
that I should record any error,
and in a word - I was undeterred
by the field of snow;
for I had a task that required I ask
how many homes were on that road.

I pushed along, plowing my way,
for I knew I should return
and thus the path would be broken;
less weight, though no less white -
a little more open -

at least that's what I was hoping.

I walked along with my head down,
seeing no home, but in the distance
I heard a sound; a chainsaw buzzing,
a tall tree falling.
So I reckoned on finding
a country man, recreating in his yard,
clearing his lot;
sorting the soft wood from the hard.

Trudging on through winter's largess
I saw no dwelling,
but in an apparent clearing,
a woodsman felling,
and as he paused between his cuts
I raised my arm, waving him near
that he might hear, and distance
would not interfere with my telling.

Over a stone wall
that separated road from field
we had Frostian conversation,
regarding the clearness of the sky,
the season's general progress,
and I explained the reason
I came by to disturb him in his chores,
showing my credentials
and enquiring about my present course.

He was a hired man, to clear the lot,
as to the purpose, he told me not.
But of the nature of my business,
and my search, he was clear,
"You can't get there from here -
not this time of year."
So I thanked him for his help
and we were square.
He returned to his work,
and I to search elsewhere.

—Doug Turner
New Salem

The Eagle Walk...

I step outside the morning air,
crystal clear and beautiful.
I walk down to the ramps
expecting to see the boats.
To my surprise right there in the sky,
is something greater.
I wonder. Have you ever seen something
so beautiful? So courageous?
So free?
It looks so peaceful. And with a
purpose, it soars.
It's not a plane or any man-made thing.
It's not a kite up there with the clouds.
Something strikes me as to what I'm seeing.
America's symbol, soars through
the sky.
Almost touching the mountains.
And with it's journey, it takes on more
than one job.
The bird of the free, the bird of the brave,
flies home to a loving
family, but is not forgotten.

—Ashley Gibson
Turners Falls

Pay Attention

(to me)
Deficit Disorder.
Kitty wants in!
Something is lacking.
On order.
Kitty wants out!
I turned the crickets off.
Kitty wants in!
The oven doesn't broil.
The street lights dim
when you toast.
Kitty wants out!
Free pickle to anyone.
Ah, the prescription, yes.
Kitty wants in!
The cat door's arrived.
You install it.

—Janel Nockleby
Turners Falls



Nicole Kapise is a Turners Falls
resident. She works for Sheffield
School, writes for The Montague
Reporter, and is working on her
first novel.

Ashley Gibson, 14, attends
Great Falls Middle School. She
runs cross country every fall and
loves the Red Sox.

Raymond DiDonato resides in
Wendell with his wife and children.

Doug Turner, 53, married to
Sue, father of two, recently a
granddad. Housepainter,
reporter, writer, poet, navy veter-
an, resident of New Salem since
1987. The poem in this issue is
from his chapbook, Sue City.

Kathryn Flagg, a 60-year resi-
dent of Millers Falls, now resides
with her son and family in
Allendale, New Jersey.

Imogene Pruitt-Spence is a
seventh-grade student at
Greenfield Center School.

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:

the poetry page

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wasted sun rain time and toil
costly corruption

torn sizes passé
machine-cut sheets badly skewed
cringe beneath the spreads

scary shower heat
sudden whistles waning drone
end of routine flight

waxed or unwaxed floss
and the dentist only says
who would wax his teeth

—Kathryn Flagg
Millers Falls and Allendale, NJ



Less Than a Mile From Here

Less than a mile from here
I saw a heron taking wing
over the water -
less than a mile.

Less than a mile from here
I saw a moose,
a big bull moose
crossing my trail,
shaking the ledge
disappear into pine -
less than a mile.

Less than a mile from here,
Sue and I watched
waxwing's aerial ballet,
flittering refractions
of sunlight on a pond
just free of ice -
less than a mile.

Less than a mile,
and half an hours climb,
we looked out through fir
and barren oak,
saw the distant
Quabbin waters shine -
less than a mile from here.

—Doug Turner
New Salem

View From A Parking Lot

There is a veil
Over this forgotten village-
People rushing to work, to school,
To their mistresses and money
Tearing through the fog
They don't see the silver sun
Shining through tree branches,
Parting for black telephone lines
Like lips for a kiss
The library glows
With Carnegie's halo
As mist washes over its marble casements
I'm late for work
I want a camera to preserve the valley's mist,
Watercolors to immortalize its soul
Art isn't for the living
I start the car
I'm off to brick and steel,
Glass that reflects the mist
But won't let it in
This view is for me alone,
Lost as I leave the parking lot

—Nicole Capise
Turners Falls

CORRECTION:

Due to an editing error in the January 19th Poetry Page, a verse was inaccurately attributed to Nicole Kapise instead of the proper poem, titled View from a

Parking Lot, which appears above. We regret the error, and cannot even cite poetic license in begging the author's - and the readers' - forgiveness.

Hallway of Horrors

My floor is my closet

Sometimes
You feel
Like
Someone
Is there

I
Have a
Closet,
But

You turn to
Look and

I'm afraid
To
Open it because
Something

A

Picture falls
Off the wall
And
Joins
The jeans,
And shirts
And fabric scraps

Dead
Could come out
And fall
Right on
My head. I
Hate to

Open any
Kind
Of
Door
Especially when
The hallway
Behind me
Is
Flickering
On
To

Off. And in-between
The light
You can
Feel something
Grim,
Then you
Misstep,
Fall off
The stairs but
You're too
Afraid to
Make a
Noise
Because
If you do
Something could

Come and chop
Your head
Right
Off
And
Put it
In a
Hatbox or
Something,
And
Then you
Would
Be in
The
Closet that you didn't
even
Want
To be
In
In
The first
Place.

—Imogene Pruitt-Spence
Greenfield



Phyllis Loomis moved from Hawaii to Ashfield in 1984 and feel in love with the quiet, natural solitude of Franklin County as well as its people. At home here, she plans to stay put for the rest of her life.

Janel Nockleby recently moved to Turners Falls from Seattle, WA and is attending grad school at UMASS.

the poetry page

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Adam McCarthy
Kara Mulligan
Allison Murphy
Abigail O'Gara
Brianna Pecor
Anna Perry
Rebecca Rollins
Nicole Siano
Andrew Stewart
Anna Truckey
Nathan Underwood

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Melissa Arial
Christopher Bourbeau
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Joseph Therien

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Jose Garcia-Ruiz
Peter Griswold
Jared Johnson
Paul Marguet
Michael Palumbo
Evan Prokovich
Liya Samokhina

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Katelin Bailey
Nicole Couture
Michelle Dame
Elizabeth Downer
Juliana Felton
Richard Gallagher
Benjamin Garber
Julianne Rosewarne
William Shattuck IV
Valeriya Shumilova
Christopher Sicard
Lauren Tela
Haley Trenholm
Samantha Willard
Lauryn Zellmann

HONOR ROLL - GRADE 11

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Rebec Bonnette-Southard
James Deputy
Elizabeth Giknis
Chelsea Isles
Jenna Lapachinski
Daniel Leveille
Lauren Sena
Aimee Shattuck

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Laura Babij
Rachel Banning
Adam Bastarache
Gregory Dorman
Anne Fish
Jason Grimard
Raymond Perkins
Holly Phillips
Scott Rau
Christopher Seymour
Timothy Stockwell
Sean Voudren

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Alix Ackerman
Brian Campbell
Katie Christenson
Sean Crowell
Walter Fitzpatrick
Amanda Golembeski
Corey Leveille
Kayla Pecor
Molly Perry
Tenzin Soepa
Alice Urban
Gina Varuzzo
Katlyn Vear
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Michael Radzuik
Ashlea Rawls
Mercedes St. Marie
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Aaron Cappucci
Jacob Haselton
Kellie Lastowski
Garrett Letourneau
Zachary Little
Amber Marion
Charles Peterson
Veronica Santucci
Corey Shearer
Jeffrey Tela
Kevin Thomas
Courtney Wells
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Samuel Colton
Joshua Gammon
Jodi Hallett
Christopher Humphrey
Nicholas Imbimbo
Kimberly Nelson
Sara Pease
Nicholas Skarzynski
Samantha Wondoloski

HONOR ROLL - GRADE 9

Second Honors

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Emma Banning
Jordan Boisvert
Juliana Coyle
Theodore Dunbar
Nadezhda Filobokova
Kimberlee Fritz
Kelsey Kane
Erin Kelley
Shelby Sadler

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Leah Booker
Adrian Cook
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Shamari Kelly
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FINDING BALANCE: HEALTH TIPS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

Happy Feet, Happy You

BY JENNY CHAPIN

MONTAGUE CITY Most of us spend hours a day on our feet - doing errands, doing chores, walking the dog, standing at work, standing in lines, standing at the stove. We expect our feet to get us where we need to go, and we'd sure love it if they didn't complain, because we feel there's too much else to take care of without adding our feet into the mix.

But if you could give your feet five minutes a day, with the fun, easy, and quick massage exercises outlined below, they'll be more than happy - they'll be ecstatic! You might be surprised to find that your emotional state and outlook on life will also feel much better.

Feet are the foundation of the body. When the foot doesn't work properly, all the structures above it are affected - ankles, knees, hips, low back, shoul-

ders, jaw, neck. Good posture, and a healthy body overall, starts with the feet.

The foot contains 26 bones (one-quarter of the bones in the human body), 33 joints, and more than 100 muscles, tendons, and ligaments. Working together, they provide balance, support, and mobility. They act as shock absorbers, and furnish us with proprioception, letting us know what is underneath us and allowing us to adjust accordingly when that shifts.

Building strength and flexibility in the feet can improve alignment and health in the rest of the body. A great way to do this is to walk, especially on uneven surfaces. Walking improves circulation, encourages bone and muscle development, and improves strength and flexibility in the supporting muscles of the shins, calves, and front thighs. Yoga is really good



for our feet, as is going bare-foot.

Bigger bones indicate where the weight-bearing should be; in the foot, that means the heel. The toes should fan out to help you balance. Many of us tend to lean forward, and shoes with heels make this worse. To find your center, and also bring you more onto your heels, engage the four corners of the feet: from standing, press down through the big toe mound; from there, draw back along the inner edge of the foot and press the inner heel into the floor; next press the pinky toe mound down, then the outer heel.

Engaging the feet wakes up

your body, brain, and eyes. Try a before-and-after with the following exercises: stand up, and notice your breathing, sense of balance, and alertness. Then sit down, either on a chair or on the floor, to do the foot massage listed below. Stand up and notice what's different: you may find that you're taking fuller, deeper breaths, and that you feel both more grounded, and more alert. You might even be taller!

Foot massage

1. Bend your right leg and rest your right foot on your left thigh. Entwine the fingers of your left hand in-between the toes of your right foot; a) move foot in circles (using your hand, not your ankle, to move the foot); b) draw toes back toward shin; c) push toes into point; d) pull on and wiggle each toe.

2. a) massage foot with both hands; b) clap hands on foot; c) drum roll on sole; d) rub sole

back and forth with knuckles of fist.

3. Once more, wriggle fingers between toes, make a waving motion with the toes and ball of foot, then a wagging motion side to side.

4. Switch sides, wriggling the right fingers in-between the left toes, and repeat.

Five minutes a day, to pamper and enliven your feet - see what a fabulous difference it can make not only for the happiness of your feet, but through your whole body. Even your smile muscles will improve!

Jenny Chapin is a resident of Montague City, and a certified acupuncturist, Zero Balancer, and yoga teacher, practicing in Franklin County for seven years. If you have a topic of interest about holistic health, email to: jgchapin@crocker.com

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Preventing Back Pain

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - This is the second part of a three-part series on back pain. The first column was about causes. This one is about prevention.

Back pain is very common. It affects about eight out of ten people. But there are many steps you can take to avoid it. One of the best things you can do to prevent back pain is to exercise regularly and keep your back and abdominal muscles strong.

A program of regular low-impact exercises such as walking, swimming, or riding a bike - mobile or stationary - will be beneficial. Yoga can also help stretch and strengthen muscles and improve posture. Ask your doctor for a list of exercises appropriate for your age and physical condition.

Here are some quick pointers to prevent back problems:

Always stretch before any strenuous physical activity.

Don't slouch when standing or sitting. When standing, keep your weight balanced on your feet. Curvature of the spine puts stress on back muscles.

Sit in chairs or car seats with good lumbar support. Switch sitting positions often and periodically walk around or gently stretch muscles to relieve tension.

Don't bend over without supporting your back. For example, don't lean over a low sink without bracing yourself with your hand. Also, don't reach and lift an object out of a car trunk; first slide the object to the edge of the trunk.

Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

Sleep on your side to reduce any curve in your spine. Always sleep on a firm surface.

Don't try to lift objects too heavy for you. Lift with your legs keeping your back straight. Keep the object close to your body. Do not twist when lifting.

Try to control your weight, especially weight around the

waistline that taxes lower back muscles.

If you smoke, quit. Smoking reduces blood flow to the lower spine and causes the spinal discs to degenerate. To keep your spine strong, as with all bones, you need to get enough calcium and vitamin D every day. These nutrients help prevent osteoporosis, which is responsible for a lot of the bone fractures that lead to back pain.

Calcium is found in dairy products; green, leafy vegetables; and fortified products, like orange juice. Your skin makes vitamin D when you are in the sun. If you are not outside much, you can obtain vitamin D from your diet: almost all milk and some other foods are fortified with this nutrient. Most adults don't get enough calcium and vitamin D, so talk to your

doctor about how much you need per day.

In most cases, it is not necessary to see a doctor for back pain because pain usually goes away with or without treatment. However, a trip to the doctor is a good idea if your pain is severe and doesn't improve, or if you have pain after a fall or an injury.

It is important to see your doctor if you have pain along with any of the following problems: trouble urinating; weakness, pain or numbness in your legs; fever; or unintentional weight loss. Such symptoms could signal a serious problem that requires treatment soon.

If you have a question, please write to fredcicetti@gmail.com

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHILIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH
John Sullivan rock and roll show at the Route. 63 Roadhouse, Federal St., Millers Falls. For more info call (413) 659-3384.

Contra Dance with *Tomczak Productions* at Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 p.m. to midnight. 802-387-9380.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17TH & 18TH
Ja'Duke Productions presents *Annie*, one of the world's best-loved musicals. Performances at The Shea Theater, Ave. A, Turners Falls. 8:00 p.m. 413-863-2281 x2, also Friday and Saturday, February 24th & 25th.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

Salsa Dance! in Wendell from 7 till 11 p.m. at the town hall. Listen for the beat of Conga drums! At 7 p.m. Marilyn Marks and Richard Adams will teach beginners this saucy Latin dance. So come out and dance those winter blues away. This event is a fundraiser for the Wendell Free Library. Admission price is on a sliding scale: \$5-10. This dance is sponsored by Friends of the Wendell Library and Community Policing.

Folksinger and songwriter Terry Kitchen will perform at The Echo Lake Coffee House at Leverett town hall, 9 Montague Road, Leverett. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m., admission \$10 (\$8 for seniors). For more information call The Echo Lake Coffee House at 413-548-9394, email diacrowe@yahoo.com. For more information on Terry Kitchen visit www.terrykitchen.com.

Pioneer Valley Symphony & Chorus presents American Portraits featuring Larry Schipull, organist. Works of Ives, Barber, Hecker and Copland at John M. Greene Hall, Smith College campus in Northampton. Performance at 7:30 p.m. 800-681-7870 or 413-773-3664.

Four on the Floor, rock and roll cover band playing Aerosmith to Zeppelin at Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Federal St., Millers Falls. For more info call (413) 659-3384.

Contra Dance with Blue Sky at Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401

Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 to 11:30 p.m. 413-774-2830.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD

Open Mic at Rt. 63 Roadhouse with Peter Kim, Jimmy Arnold and Mary Kate, no cover. Federal St., Millers Falls. For more info call (413) 659-3384.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH

Mason Jennings solo acoustic at Memorial Hall in Shelburne Falls with Birdie. 7:30 p.m. Mason Jennings is one of the most original and non-formulaic song writers of our day. His poetic lyrics demonstrate an independence of thought and expression, and his song structures and melodies are somehow equally catchy and unconventional. (www.masonjennings.com) \$17 advance/ \$20 door

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH

Mardi Gras Celebration at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church at the corner of Hope and Main St., Greenfield. Take a stroll down Bourbon St. All Souls Unitarian-Universalist Church is transformed into the bustling French Quarter for its yearly dinner and auction fundraiser. Complete with Cajun cuisine, live jazz with Dick Hurlburt and Gene Clark, mask making, a New Orleans café, a children's costume parade and more. Bid on live and silent auction items, get a tattoo, or visit the fortuneteller in one of the many colorful theme rooms. A portion of the proceeds will go towards ongoing Gulf Coast hurricane relief efforts. Mardi Gras starts at 5:30 pm with hors d'oeuvres, music and viewing of auction items. Live and silent auction follows dinner. Tickets are \$15 in advance; \$17 at the door; \$5 for children 12 and under. Free for children under 5. Admission includes the multi-course meal, entertainment and Mardi Gras beads. Young and old are encouraged to dress in festive green, purple and gold costume, the traditional colors of Mardi Gras. For more information or to purchase tickets,



Terry Kitchen
7:30 p.m., Saturday
February 18th
Echo Lake Coffee House
Leverett Town Hall
see below

call 413-773-5018 or visit www.uugreenfield.org/mardi-gras/. Tickets will also be available after February 13th at World Eye Bookshop. The snow date for the event is Sunday, February 26th.

Orion String Quartet performs works of Mendelssohn, Dubussy and Zwilich. Concert preceded by Concert Conversation in Earle Recital Hall (broad overview of the

North Quabbin region.

Family Contra Dance featuring Tim Van Egmond at the Montague Grange #141, Montague Center. 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

NOW THRU FEBRUARY

Nature Remembered by Chuck Braun, illustrator, designer and painter. Works on display at Great Falls Discovery Center through this month.

NOW THRU APRIL 2ND

Inaugural Exhibition: Barbara Bordnick - The Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography has been established as an exhibition venue for fine photography on loan from some of the most creative and exciting photographers of our day - established, well-known, and emerging artists - as well as housing permanent and loan collections of work executed since 1975. The museum's inaugural exhibition will be photographs by New York-based portrait and fashion photographer Barbara Bordnick. Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography is located in the former Colle Opera House at 85 Avenue A in Turners Falls. Hours: Thursday to Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. (413) 863-0009.



John Sullivan Friday night at Rt. 63 Roadhouse. See above

music and how the musicians interpret the music performed at the concert - 7:00 p.m.). Sweeney Concert Hall, Smith College campus, Northampton (8:00 p.m.). 413-774-4200

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

MANY SPLENDORED THING

Across	23. APHRODISIAC	7. CLADDAGH
1. DR RUTH	25. PAUL	9. AL CAPONE
5. HEART	26. LIPS	11. COURTSHIP
6. BEAU	30. ROMEO	12. CANDLE
8. MARIAN	31. SKIRTS	14. THEKISS
10. ELVIS	32. JEWELRY	15. FABIO
11. CUPID	33. BROWNING	20. VALENTINE
13. CASANOVA	34. ENDORPHINS	22. CHOCOLAT
16. CHIVALRY		24. OVID
17. ROSE	Down	27. SQUEEZE
18. HELEN	2. ROMANTIC	28. FACE
19. GEORGIA	3. TRYST	29. DIDO
21. ITCH	4. VIRGINIA	

FRIDAY, MARCH 3RD

2nd Annual Hold 'em for Hospice Texas Hold 'em Poker Tournament held at St. Kaziermarz Hall located 179 Avenue A in Turners Falls. 50% of the registration fee will be awarded in cash prizes and 50% will be donated to Hospice of Franklin County. 413-774-2400

Contra Dance with Moving Violations at the Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 to 11:30 p.m. 413-549-1913.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY MARCH 3RD & 4TH

Pottery Seconds & More Sale sponsored by Artspace Community Arts Center. Featuring potters, woodworkers, glassblowers and others. Held at Greenfield High School, Lenox Ave., Greenfield. Friday 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 p.m. 413-772-6811.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16TH

Back to the Land film series in Wendell features *Ruth Stout's Garden* (about no-dig gardening) Discussion after each film in the series. Free at the Senior Center, 7 p.m. in Wendell center. Next film April 20th, *The Close to Nature Garden* (about Fukuoka's One-Straw Revolution)

Sunday at 7
THE DEAD OF WINTER
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&
CULT CULTURE: THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE
Funny look at the film's rabid enthusiasts
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- 1. CURIOUS GEORGE** G DAILY 6:30 8:30 MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:00 2:00 4:00
- 2. DATE MOVIE** PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 6:30 9:30 MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:30 3:30
- 3. BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN** DAILY 7:30 R MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:00 3:45
- 4. FIREWALL** PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15 MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:15 3:15
- 5. WHEN A STRANGER CALLS** DAILY 6:45 9:15 PG13 MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:15 3:15
- 6. THE PINK PANTHER** DAILY 7:00 9:00 PG in DTS sound MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:00 3:00
- 7. EIGHT BELOW** PG in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:00 MAT 2/20 thru 2/26 12:00 3:00

Books of Promise

**BY FRAN HEMOND
MONTAGUE CENTER**

The offerings are fabulous, colorful pictures replace the gray winter landscape, and bright beauty and opulence seems within our reach. The seed catalogues have arrived. The requirements seem simple in February. Find the right spot, dig a little, feed and water a little, weed a little, beseech a little, and a colorful world is ours. The flowers, reds and blues, oranges, yellows, greens and purples are designed in a variety of circles, big, little, single and multi-faceted that lure bees and birds and keep the earth a-going. We can be the servants of creation.

Here desire and practicality face off. Shall we order every lovely and tasty item we find attractive, or shall we remember that last year a forlorn few packets never saw the dark of earth. But consider, too, the favorite

variety of corn that was no longer available when we finally came to order it. Those wonderful meals when the luscious ears have been picked from your own field just minutes before eating must not be only a dream.

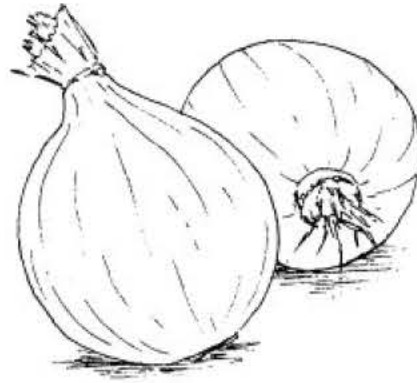
The vegetables are often first in the booklets. And tomatoes, whose varieties have multiplied with the years, get the first look. Sungold, that lovely little yellow cherry tomato that wandered in and out of the catalogues and then back in again, seems to have established itself as a goodie. Some of us think the yellows are less acid. First Lady, a fine red salad tomato, has found good favor here too. The indeterminate tomatoes that need staking, but keep on growing and producing through a longer season than determinate tomatoes, seem worth the effort to put them in cages, perhaps because we have been annoyed

by a favorite determinate that quit early. A good old standard favorite here in Western Massachusetts is Jet Star, a tomato that seems to please everyone.

The catalogues are a mine of information and every year something new can be learned. In good tips about onions the reader is warned not to plant long day onions south of 38 degrees north latitude. The onions will not develop a bulb because the length of daylight is not sufficient. Here we are further north at 42 degrees north latitude and a proper place to grow them. How could the country south of us have less daylight than we?

The intricate design of our good planet Earth has taken over. Everybody has heard that at the summer solstice the North Pole is light day and night. In the same way, it must be that

our globe's tipping relationship with the sun gives us here in Montague more light per day in mid-summer than it does our



more southerly neighbors. Charlotte, NC is near the magic 38 degrees north latitude, so our friends in North Carolina should not plant 'long day' onions. It is more than plant and weed and harvest!

To specifically find out just how much more light we might

have in Montague than in Charlotte, we picked June 24th, just after the solstice. It is the 'traditional midsummer day' we read about, (maybe from Old England) and so named, says the Old Farmers Almanac, because "to the farmer this is midway between the planting and harvest and an occasion for festivity." On this day, Boston has daylight for 15 hours and 16 minutes, from the almanac, and Charlotte, NC has a transposed value of 14 hours and 34 minutes, (according to some suspect figuring by a non-mathematical soul using data from the same source).

Indeed the catalogues educated us in the diversity of places and things and remind us that one size does not fit all. Follow the rules and the rewards can be great.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

What about Becoming a House Sitter?

BY FLORE - Are you on the verge of giving up on the desultory clime of New England in February? Shaking at the thought of getting up in a room that has become a real igloo?

Adding layers of clothing to protect yourself from the cold wind?

Feeling your strained muscles, after piling cord after cord in the woodstove each winter?

Testing out your Eskimo qualities, will they prevent you from succumbing to the temptation of total hibernation? Have you caught yourself saying out loud, "People, I'll sleep through it! See you next spring!"

Or perhaps asking around, as an alternative, how you might enjoy, at moderate cost, the warm Bahama skies?

Checking out the prices for discount air fares still does not sound very hopeful!

What's left? Picking oranges in Florida? Non, Merci, you are not that desperate! Squeezing pineapples at the Dole factories in Hawaii? I had a friend who did that one year. She could not look at a pineapple straight in the eyes, for a while...

Now, here is your chance, a gratifying one, that could prevent more drastic changes!

Can't you guess? How about becoming a house sitter for a while!

As a rule, the best set ups are from friend to friend, who knows someone, who needs a person to watch a house, and feed the animals while they

are away. If you are the exploring kind, you might find yourself travel-



Situation available in Bavaria

ing to the four corners of the planet! You might even be asked to watch a castle in Spain, a villa in Tuscany, a ranch in the

Wild West of the old US of A, a domain in Saint Martin, or read to a lady in Buckingham Palace: in other words, the whole earth could be yours!

Be specific though about being furnished with all the valid data. Where is the nearest town, where are the grocery stores, the doctors, the vets. Else you might find yourself in the 'boondocks.'

I discovered three sites that will meet all expectations, providing you are free as the wind, and able to travel abroad too.

The first: www.house-sit-world.com is an international directory based in Australia, assessed by country. The housesitters pay a yearly subscription fee of \$40 to place a profile

and location preferences. The homeowners, on the other hand, advertise free.

The second: www.housecarers.com is also Australian based. (Those Aussies must be eager to get off their island every so often!) This site presents an international listing by country and city, with a registry of housesitters' profiles. Instant notification of new opportunities, articles and sample housesitting agreements.

Homeowners advertise free. There is a \$32 yearly subscription for the sitters.

Thirdly: www.caretaker.org, a Texas-based publication. It includes some 150 international housesitting offerings. Some hundreds of US caretaking ads per issue.

Prospective caretakers pay a yearly subscription of \$29.95, for six issues of listings.

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