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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 20

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 21, 2008

## Hundreds Turn Out for 'Town Meeting' on Iran

**ALEX GOTTSCHALK HADLEY** - The Pioneer Valley Coalition to Prevent War In Iran held a 'town meeting' with Congressmen John Olver (D - Amherst) and Richard Neal (D - Springfield) at the American Legion hall in Hadley on Wednesday, February 20th. Nearly three hundred area citizens jammed into the room to hear six speakers, and to take part in a question and answer session about the possibility of the United State initiating a second pre-emptive war in the Persian Gulf, this time against the nuclear enriched mullahs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"Basically we're holding this town meeting because of our deep concern that the Bush administration is planning to launch a military attack on Iran, and that this would cause vast human suffering and damage U.S. national interests," said Dr. Ira Helfand, former president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, one of the night's speakers.

see IRAN pg 16



Site of the future 3-D Collaborative on Canal Street, one of this year's RiverCulture partnerships that will benefit from the next round of Adams Art Program grant funding.

## Turners Falls RiverCulture Scores (Another) Adams Grant \$40,000 FOR FIRST YEAR OF TWO-YEAR ARTS DEVELOPMENT GRANT

**BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO**

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Massachusetts Cultural Council's John and Abigail Adams Art Program grant website does not mince words: "The grant application process is highly competitive and not all applicants are likely to be funded." If you scroll down the page, the truth of this warning becomes more evident. Only two organizations in Franklin County were awarded funding this year. One of them, for the third straight year in a row, was our own Turners Falls RiverCulture.

Lisa Davol, RiverCulture coordinator, couldn't be more pleased that Turners will be receiving grants for each of the next two years to support arts based economic development in the downtown. (Full disclosure: I am married to a member of the RiverCulture executive committee,

Patricia Pruitt, and Davol is the partner of my editor, David Detmold.) Funding for the first year is set at \$40,000, and according to Davol, should stay the same for the following year. But she added that she was told by the state that should there be a major economic downturn, the grant amount for the second year might be decreased.

The Adams Art Program panel felt so strongly about RiverCulture's application that they ranked it third out of all the applications in the state (only organizations in Boston and Lowell outranked RiverCulture.) Montague town planner Dan Laroche noted that RiverCulture was competing against some really big projects, including Museums 10 and large art agencies across the state. "For us to place third shows how well we are doing, but see ART pg 11

## Town Ambulance Service Proposed for Montague

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - The prudential committee of the Turners Falls Fire Department is looking into the possibility of adding a municipal ambulance service, and will be meeting with the Montague selectboard in the weeks to come to discuss that possibility. Prudential committee member Mark Allen, said his committee is exploring the idea for two reasons: to increase the level of service the fire department can provide to Montague residents in a medical emergency, and to increase revenues for the fire department.

At the selectboard meeting on February 19th, chair Pat Allen (who is married to Mark Allen) said the idea of adding a town ambulance service, "Makes sense to me," and, referring to the selectboard, said, "Obviously, we have to be involved."

During the run-up to last year's townwide vote in favor of building a new police station next to the Turners Fire Department on Turnpike Road, to create a safety complex cen-

trally located for all five villages, Turners fire chief Ray Godin and police chief Ray Zukowski said the new facility would be large enough to handle the addition of an ambulance service. At a public meeting on the new safety complex held in Millers Falls in September of 2007, Godin pointed to the success the Orange fire department has had operating a municipal ambulance service, saying that service was bringing in \$400,000 a year in revenue to the department, a figure Orange fire chief Dennis Annear confirmed this week.

Annear said it was difficult to separate the cost of maintaining full paramedic service, and a fleet of three ambulances to cover four and a half towns (Warwick, Wendell, New Salem, Orange and half of Erving) and a hundred square miles, from the cost of maintaining the fire department itself. Annear said two fulltime staff have been added and hours increased in recent years to provide ambulance service. **AMBULANCE pg 10**

## THEATER REVIEW

### Phenomenal High School Musical

At the Shea, directed by Kimberly Waynelovich, Ja'Duke Productions  
**REVIEWED BY NICOLE KAPISE**

It's freezing here in Turners Falls. I for one am ready for spring. Evening strolls are out of the question, so Friday night options are zoning out in front of the television or taking eight-year-old AlysonRose to see Ja'Duke's presentation of Disney's *High School Musical* at the Shea.

I ask her if she'd like to go and she looks at me as if I've grown a couple of extra heads. "High School Musical is sooo cool, Momma!" It's off to the



Caylin Lee as Sharpay Evans & Tyler Conroy as Ryan Evans in "High School Musical" at the Shea Theater.

theater we go.

Ja'Duke's shows are always a triumph, and tonight is no exception. Twenty minutes before curtain time the house is nearly full. Children, teens and adults jam the

hall, anticipating the latest cultural craze. AlysonRose will accept nothing less than front row seats, and we settle in. She could very nearly touch the stage.

All I know of *High School Musical* is that every child

under ten loves it. The second graders I work with sing the show's tunes as they do math; they compare favorite characters at lunch. Whatever this is, it's big. The lights see SHEA pg 12

## Zoning Board Mulls Decision on the Gill Store



DETMOLD PHOTO

**ALEX GOTTSCHALK GILL** - Over two dozen residents of Gill showed up for the zoning board meeting at town hall on February 18th, bringing heartfelt testimonials to the importance of the store, along with reasoned concerns about the new plans that owners Alden Booth and

Elisabeth Greenough have for the space.

The store closed at the end of July, 2007, during a period of seemingly endless detours around the center of town during the year-long reconstruction of Main Road. Booth and Greenough are now proposing to re-open the store with what Booth

referred to as "some expansion, but nothing dramatically different. We want to see whatever works for the community. We'd like the option to be open for dinner three or four, maybe five nights a week. It would be informal, the food would be simple."

In addition to a restaurant, the Gill Store would resume its previous service of selling basic groceries, as well as offering the coffee, baked goods, breakfast, lunch and deli items it was known for.

see GILL pg 11

**PET OF THE WEEK**  
Mellow & Smart



**Barbara**

My name is Barbara, and I am a four-year-old female greyhound in need of a good home. People always talk about brains vs. brawn as if you could only be smart or athletic, not both. Greyhounds always laugh about this, because we are athletic dogs (even if we are a little lazy) gifted with exceptional brains. Even if I am capable of moving pretty fast, I much prefer to use my dazzling social skills and my sharp mind while resting on a big pillow on the floor. I am mellow and very smart, and I will make an amazing friend! I'll be able to get along with confident cats, and also larger sized dogs. I appear to know about housetraining! Most greyhounds have never lived in a house, so you will need to help me fine-tune my training in a home setting, but I should be fine with a patient, consistent person. Crate-training could also be helpful. I enjoy exercising in a fenced in yard about 10 minutes a day, and I like walks, but I spend most of the day lounging in bed. For more info call the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or leverett@dphs.org.

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**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**  
**Saturday Mother Goose**

BY LINDA HICKMAN - Mother Goose on the Loose will be held Saturday, March 1st, at the Carnegie Library at 10:30 a.m. The program is an interactive mix of guitar and banjo music, rhymes, stories, puppets, and other visuals. The free sessions are designed for babies through preschoolers and are performed by children's librarian Linda Hickman and musician Michael Nix.

The monthly Saturday pro-

grams are held the first Saturday of each month through spring. Hickman also performs the programs solo on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. weekly at the Carnegie Library.

Mother Goose on the Loose is supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. For more information call 863-3214.

**WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS**

**Henry the Juggler to Perform**

The Wendell Free Library will present Henry the Juggler's hilarious show on Saturday, February 23rd at 11 a.m.

Henry the Juggler is considered armed (and legged) and dangerous. He is known to cause spontaneous outbursts of laughter. He speaks little, but says a great deal through his expression and body language. He has in his possession balls, clubs, rings, torches and other apparatus of his trade. He is capable of walking on a thin wire high above the ground.

Warning: Henry involves



innocent bystanders in his act. Henry the Juggler is a professional. He has been seen by tens of thousands up and down the East Coast - at theaters, schools, festivals and town events. He has been performing for over twenty years. He studied physical comedy at California's Dell'Arte School.

The Wendell Free Library and the Wendell Cultural Council are believed to be in cahoots with Henry. They have sponsored his appearance. For more information, please call Rosie Heidkamp at 978-544-3559.

**Rural Development to Hold Office Hours**

TURNERS FALLS - Chong Collette, area loan specialist for the USDA Rural Development program, will be holding office hours at the Montague town hall between 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Monday of every month, starting February 25th. Rural Development is offering loans

to help very low income residents afford home ownership, or to arrange loans or grants to repair their homes, or for income eligible seniors older than 62 years old to afford home repairs. For more information on the program, call Collette at 413-585-1000.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- February 25th - 29th**

**GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center**, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Council-on-Aging Director is Bunny Caldwell. For information or to make reservations, call 863-9357. Meal reservations need to be made a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Mealsite Manager is Chris Richer. The Center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. A reservation is necessary and transportation can be provided.

- Monday, 25th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
- Tuesday, 26th**  
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Wednesday, 27th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 28th**  
1:00 p.m. Pitch

- Friday, 29th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy 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 413-422-2584.
- Monday, 25th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch
- Tuesday, 26th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting
- Wednesday, 27th**  
9:00 a.m. Line Dancing  
10 a.m. Weight Loss Group



**FACES & PLACES**  
A shaggy shopping cart appeared on the Avenue a few weeks ago. It looks like the carts are evolving camouflage to blend into their environment. This one is obviously an Aries  
ROSE WHITCOMB-DETMOLD PHOTO

**Hoop Shoot Champ**

Congratulations to Jenna Putala, pictured right, representing the Montague Elks #2521 for finishing third in the State Hoop Shoot Competition held at the Maynard Lodge of Elks on Feb. 9th. She finished 3rd among 9 competitors in the State for the 8 to 9 year old girls. She first had to win our own Lodge Hoop Shoot Competition at the Turners Falls High School on Dec. 8th to advance to Greenfield High School on Jan. 27th and win the West Central District division to get to the state Hoop



Jenna Putala  
Shoot. Congratulations, Jenna!

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**JOE GRAVELINE**

# Senior Center Open House

BY DON CLEGG

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Gill - Montague senior center in Turners Falls held a Valentines Day open house on Thursday, February 14th, showing off the center's new interior paint job and wallpaper. The labor for these improvements was provided by the Franklin County sheriff's department, with inmates performing the painting and papering under the supervision of deputy sheriff sergeant Dionne. The supplies for the upstairs wall treatments were provided by the Council on Aging, with the help of a much appreciated discount from Couture Bros. The downstairs kitchen area supplies were funded by the Friends of the Senior Center. The total price tag for the work was approximately \$1,300.

The open house also incorporated the center's monthly coffee and conversation activity, which on Valentines Day, not surprisingly, centered on "Chocolate... fact or fiction?" Any of the dozen or more seniors sampling the different chocolates provided for the occasion would have had an easy time answering that question.

Active conversations are brought to the senior center each month courtesy of Michelle Miner and Applewood Harborside Health Care. With her encouragement, seniors shared chocolate stories, and heard about some of the purported health benefits associated with chocolate. High in antioxidant flavinoids, moderate consumption of dark chocolate or cocoa powder may reduce blood pressure and lead to increased levels of HDL



ANNA VIADERO PHOTO

Jim Greenleaf and Bunnie Caldwell, director of the Gill - Montague Senior Center, at the Center's Valentine's Day Open House

('good') cholesterol. Like we needed to hear that chocolate is good for us! Very interesting and informative hand-outs were available, but no mention was made of my favorite chocolate selection: whoopie pies.

Bunny Caldwell, council on aging director, took the opportunity to explain some of the senior center's other activities. For instance, the center sponsors the senior 'Brown Bag' program, where income eligible seniors are able to pick up approximately 15 pounds of groceries on the first Tuesday of every month, at a cost of just \$3.00. Typically, more than 100 bags of groceries are put together and picked up on Brown Bag Tuesdays. This program is offered at most area senior centers, and is run by the Western Massachusetts Food Bank.

Caldwell also talked about the weekday lunches at the senior center, offered at \$2.00 for seniors and \$2.50 others. Anyone can attend these lunches; just call the day before: 413-

863-9357.

When Caldwell was asked if she could have one thing, what would it be, her response was snappy: a bigger senior center. At the present location, only one event can take place at a time; there are no private rooms for individual assistance and hardly any storage space. Not too far back on the director's wish list, however, is a town nurse. Since the departure last fall of town nurse Joan Pajak, the town's public health needs, and the special health needs of Montague seniors are being provided for by a volunteer nurse, Caldwell said.

If you have never stopped by the Gill-Montague senior center, do yourself a favor. The newly redecorated center, at 62 Fifth Street in Turners Falls has a vibrant atmosphere (especially if you attend one of their aerobic classes), helpful staff, and a community room full of 'Senior Energy.'

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## Essence of Country Coming to TFHS

**TURNERS FALLS** - On April 26 at 7:30 p.m. at the Turners Falls High School Theater, the Gill Montague Education Fund, in partnership with Bear Country 95.3, will present their annual fundraising gala. This year, the gala will feature 'the Essence of Country' with celebrated singer songwriter, Don Campbell. Advance tickets are now on sale through the GMEF web site at [www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org).

Proceeds from the gala will be distributed through mini-grants to all district schools for student enrichment activities. During the 2007-08 school year alone, all children in the elementary schools of Gill and Montague will benefit from enrichment programs funded by the Gill-Montague Education Fund. Over the last three and a half years, more than \$40,000 has been distributed to elementary, middle and high school students, for programs in academics, music,

art and athletics.

In addition, the GMEF in 2007 distributed gifts of appreciation to all classroom teachers, which further enriched students with the purchase of materials for special projects and to enhance their classrooms.

The public's continued support and contributions will benefit the students and staff of the Gill-Montague schools in 2008-09. For more information on how to become an advertiser or tier-giver at the GMEF gala, visit [www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org).

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### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

#### Hit and Run Accidents and OUIs

**Wednesday, 2/13**

11:50 a.m. Report of hit and run accident at Exxon, 132 Third Street, Turners Falls.

**Thursday, 2/14**

9:38 p.m. Unwanted person on Turners Falls Road, Montague. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted], charged with assault and battery and possession of class D substance.

**Friday, 2/15**

11:35 a.m. Arrest of [redacted] on a default warrant.

**Saturday, 2/16**

11:55 a.m. Walk-in report of vandalism on Bridge Street, Millers Falls.  
5:01 p.m. Report of hit and run acci-

dent in the area of Seth and Eva's, Avenue A, Turners Falls.

**Sunday, 2/17**

6:13 p.m. Hit and run accident on Turnpike Road near Dell Street, Turners Falls. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with lane violation, OUI liquor (third offense), leaving the scene of an accident with property damage and speeding.

**Tuesday, 2/19**

12:39 a.m. Motor vehicle stop on Third Street, Turners Falls. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with OUI liquor, operating to endanger, failure to wear seatbelt, open container in motor vehicle.

## Sleeping Seeds

February 29th from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. for a workshop featuring hands-on art and science activities exploring seeds in wintertime.

No pre-registration required. For more info: call 413-774-7290.

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KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

## Help Your Neighbor

BY DON CLEGG

**MONTAGUE CITY** - On Thursdays I have the pleasure of delivering the *Montague Reporter* to Turners Falls and Montague City residents. This past Thursday, I came upon what appeared to be a 90-year-old man chopping ice from his sidewalks.

In my usual smooth manner I approached him and asked, "What the hell are you doing, sir?" With a big smile he says,

dering why no one came to help this couple. So I asked, "Sir, what's up with your neighbors? They don't believe in helping out seniors?"

The man responded, "Neighborhood is not what it use to be. Me and Katie have lived here over 40 years. Don't really know a soul around here anymore." I told him that my parents had the same experience. They built their home and lived in it for over 40 years,



DETMOLD PHOTO

*Climbing to new heights to help his neighbors, Don Clegg of Montague City.*

"I am clearing the sidewalk so my sweetie can get to the store." Starting to laugh, I said, "It's cold and icy. What's so important at the store?" He told me, "It's Valentines Day, and because of the storm on Wednesday she couldn't get to the store." For the next half hour I helped the man chop and shovel.

While enjoying this experience I could not help but notice that all the neighbors' homes were neatly shoveled and sanded, and I could not stop won-

until they lost touch with their own neighborhood.

After this discussion we moved on to general conversation, tall tales and a couple of laughs. I was sure I was going to get the same story my Dad used to tell my children about how hard life used to be and how easy they have it now. You know the part about walking to school five miles in a blizzard, uphill both ways? But his stories were pretty light, and I enjoyed them all. Soon the chopping was done and we

shook hands and I waved to his 'sweetie' who had been watching us from their front window, and away I went.

Across the street from us the whole time were four teenagers, who apparently had no intention of helping the man in the first place. He told me they just hang out there all the time. Seeing those teenagers and looking at all the other homes shoveled out made me think about how we just seem to take care of ourselves and forget or ignore our neighbors.

However, after those serious thoughts, I realized what a great experience I had just had. I was witness to a pure act of love by this man shoveling the sidewalk so his 'sweetie' could make it to the store on Valentines Day, and Katie watching him from their front window the whole time. This is an experience I won't soon forget.

So, someday, help your neighbor. There just might be a rewarding experience in it for you. It's the neighborly thing to do.

## Montague Nomination Papers Available

Nomination papers for the annual town election, Monday, May 19th are now available at the town clerk's office, until Friday, March 28th. Nominating papers for town offices must be returned no later than Monday, March 31st, by 5:00 p.m.

Positions are as follows:

- Selectman, assessor, board of health, and parks & recreation, each for a three-year term.
- Library trustees, 3 positions, each for a three-year term.
- Soldier's memorial trustees, 1 veteran and 1 non-veteran position, each for a three-year term.

• Montague Housing Authority for a five-year term.

Nomination papers are also available for town meeting members for the six precincts of Montague.

The annual town election will be held on Monday, May 19th, 2008. The deadline to register to vote in that election is Tuesday, April 29th.

Nomination papers for school committee seats are provided by the Gill-Montague Superintendent of Schools at 35 Crocker Avenue.

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

## Montague Dog Licenses

Montague dog licenses are now available at the town clerk's office. All dogs six months and older must be licensed and tagged each year.

A license for a neutered or spayed dog is \$5.00. A license for an unaltered dog is \$10.00.

The clerk's office requires proof of rabies vaccination and also requires proof of spaying or neutering, unless previously provided.

There is a late fee of \$20.00 to license your dog after May 31st.

The town clerk's office is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more

information, contact the office at 863-3200, ext 203.

**We Welcome Your Letters!**

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**American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 2/19/08**



(Casualty sign temporarily located next to Wagon Wheel Restaurant on Rte. 2 in Gill)

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VIEW FROM THE STATE HOUSE

# More Than One Way to Bridge a \$1.3 Billion Budget Gap

BY REP. STEPHEN KULIK (D-WORTHINGTON)



Work is well underway on the state budget for the fiscal year 2009 (FY09), which begins just four months from now on July 1st. This process happens concurrently with the budget planning our communities are going through, and as we all know, what happens on Beacon Hill has a big impact on the local budgets for our towns and schools.

Governor Patrick formally kicked off the budget season when he unveiled his budget proposal on January 23rd. Although it grows by 3.5% and totals \$28.2 billion, it is constrained by the fact that the Commonwealth is facing an estimated budget shortfall of \$1.3 billion. Such shortfalls have become common in recent years, as state revenues are only expanding at a modest rate and costs for some state services (especially health care) are rising more quickly. This is also happening at the local level, which is why the state's budget decisions on local aid become more important each year.

Add to the mix the fact that economists are predicting at least a mild recession for Massachusetts, and we have to be very concerned about the ability of both the state and the municipi-

palities to deliver basic services people rely on. Fortunately, it is clear from both the Governor's budget and statements from Speaker of the House Salvatore DiMasi that local aid is a priority for FY09, and that it is projected to increase by 5.1%. This is a strong signal that cities and towns will be able to rely upon the full expected amounts for both Chapter 70 school aid and lottery aid.

For Chapter 70, this will include the third year increase of a projected five-year growth plan for education aid. For FY09, this statewide increase will be \$223 million. For the lottery, the distribution will total \$935 million, level funded from the current fiscal year. Given that lottery sales and revenues are declining, this is a major victory for local governments.

Although both the Governor and House leaders support this amount, there is a big difference in how we get there. In his budget, Governor Patrick relied on \$140 million of non-existent and speculative revenues from his proposal to establish casino gambling in the state in order to fully fund the lottery aid. Given that the legislature has not yet considered his casino plan, and given that any prospective gambling revenue would not be available in FY09, this is an irresponsible gamble to take in the state budget.

Last week, Speaker DiMasi announced that the House will fully fund lottery aid by using reserves rather than the casino money. Combined with the commitment to fully fund the increase in Chapter 70, the House

is essentially going on record early as to what its core local aid package will be. In fact, discussions are underway with the Senate leadership on approving a formal "Local Aid Resolution" in the next few weeks. This would give municipal and school budget planners some hard numbers to work with now, without waiting for the rest of the state budget to be completed late in the spring. A few municipal items, such as PILOT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) and Regional School Transportation will have to wait for a completed budget. These are both priorities of mine in the budget, and I am working to

"Local aid is... projected to increase by 5.1%. This is a strong signal that cities and towns will be able to rely upon the full expected amounts for both Chapter 70 school aid and lottery aid."  
- Rep. Stephen Kulik

increase them as near as possible to full funding.

The House has also announced an overall framework for closing the budget shortfall, including raising revenue through the closure of corporate tax loopholes. These are measures that I have long supported, and are basic issues of tax fairness. Large corporations should not be able to hide profits in other states and use accounting gimmicks to avoid paying their fair

contribution for our shared public services. Although this proposal is coupled with a drop in the corporate tax rate, it will result in a net increase over time in the amount of taxes large corporations will contribute to the Commonwealth. This will be one component in the House plan to reach a balanced budget, along with the use of reserves, some spending cuts, and other savings.

This will be a challenging year for the state budget, but I expect it will be on the Governor's desk before the start of the new fiscal year.

There are many other high profile issues moving through the legislative process, including capital spending bills for transportation, the environment, housing, higher education, and other investments such as the renovation of the Franklin County Courthouse. The governor's proposed life sciences initiative received committee approval last week, and is expected to reach the House floor next week.

Looming large above all of these initiatives is the Governor's proposal to build three casinos across the state, including one here in western Massachusetts. Governor Patrick is pushing hard on this, and organized labor and some mayors are starting a public campaign to win its approval in the legislature. A hearing on the bill will be held this spring, and it is very hard to know how it will end up. I continue to oppose the plan, as I believe it is not based on sound financial analysis of the negative impact casinos will have on regional economies. If it were not

such a serious subject, it would be funny to see how the casino moguls and lobbyists are tripping over themselves in the greedy rush for the promise of quick and easy money.

Finally, I want to mention that we are making real progress in bringing broadband service to the unserved and underserved communities of western Massachusetts. Last week, the Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets held a hearing on the governor's bill to make ubiquitous broadband a reality by 2010. I testified in favor of the bill, followed by Governor Patrick and his administration. I give the Governor great credit for taking this issue on, and realizing how crucial equity in high speed telecommunication service is for the social and economic health of our small towns.

This bill will create a Broadband Institute at the Mass Technology Collaborative, and authorize it to invest up to \$25 million in assets such as fiber, conduits, and towers that will spur additional investment by private companies to build strong and competitive broadband networks in communities like Wendell and Leverett. We all know that this effort is long overdue, but it builds on the good work done in recent years by town broadband committees and Pioneer Valley Connect. I expect this legislation will become law well before the end of the session, and we will be on our way to addressing one of the most serious inequities that exists between eastern and western Massachusetts.

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# Snowbirds

BY FRAN HEMOND

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - Snowbirds, Snowflakes, Snow buntings, call them what you will, the snowbirds have arrived. Wheeling white flakes of little snow buntings have come south from the Arctic for a bit of the winter. They add action to our sleeping world, and find our meadow grasses and weeds good eating.

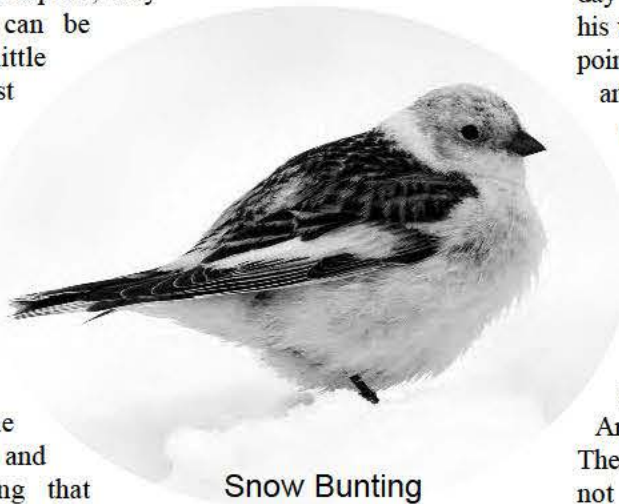
Tall weeds like foxtail, which has a long stem that holds its seed head above the snow, justifies its existence by offering a tasty lunch for our winter birds.

As the buntings are feeding

on the ground, the color on their backs modifies the white of their wings, and they look a little tan. According to the experts, they are tough and can be scrappy little songbirds that nest even north of the Eskimos. One quote s Thoreau as writing that the snow buntings and tree sparrows are "the true spirits of the snowstorm," and another observing that

they relish blowing snow, bathe in the soft and fluffy precipitation and can survive at 40 degrees below zero.

A couple of generations ago it was not frowned upon to just call them Snowbirds, and perhaps to call our black and white snowbirds Dark



Snow Bunting

Snowbirds. And that is the way my grandmother pointed them out to me. As the scientific world made inroads on the poetic, the general terms became sticky, and junco became solely favored. It's the Latin word for seed.

A writer of the time rues the day when a child would look out his window at Christmastime to point out the juncos, as the soft and poetic name gave way to orderly rule. The friendly juncos at my feeder are probably from the Vermont hills, and do not have hazardous journeys and the romantic life of the fabulous buntings.

Another bird wintering south in Montague from the Arctic is the common redpoll. They appear some winters and not others, apparently

depending on the food supplies available. They do patronize feeders, and this year Pat Carlisle's feeder on the high banks of the river has hosted 40-odd birds that find the thistle seed so attractive that they have forgone their usual pattern of 'come and go'.

The Snowbirds, that hardy group. The juncos are the old standbys. They come to the feeders and they efficiently clean up the scatterings of chickadees and nuthatches on the snow below. Their neat dark back and white belly give the resident cardinal (who was strictly a southern bird some 60 years ago) a chorus line to dominate. The buntings and other little toughies are delightful chance sightings on our winter fields, bright spirits in a gray season.

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - Ever since I almost killed myself (and potentially others), I've been a white-knuckle winter driver.

What happened was that driving along Wildwood Avenue in Greenfield, heading east towards Route 2A, I hit a patch of black ice near the stop sign and kept going.

I also closed my eyes.

Soon afterwards I found I had safely merged into ongoing traffic having neither hit anyone nor having been hit myself. I pulled out of the lane and stopped at the edge of the highway until my heart resumed something like its normal rhythm and my hands stopped shaking.

Recent weather reports have warned of increasing winds, dangerous snow squalls, whiteouts and sudden icy conditions. When I hear reports like these, I keep a weather-eye to the sky and the roads. The weekend before last, just before noon, I determined the driving conditions to be fine for a slushy foray from Montague City to downtown Greenfield.

As I climbed Mountain

Road, it looked white between the trees on the skyline and I thought: it must be snowing harder in Greenfield than at home. As I came to the intersection of Maple and High streets, we were suddenly in white-out conditions with blowing, heavy snow. Too late to go back. I pressed forward, crawling slowly to a parking space in front of Green Fields Market.

Ten minutes later, I emerged with my shopping to find a good inch or more of fluffy snow covering the car. The snow had reduced to flurries. I brushed off the car and turned on the engine. The windshield was fogged over, so I ran the fan on high until I could see again. I backed into the roadway and discovered that in less than a few minutes, the slush in the tracks of car and truck tires had frozen into an icy roadway.

Snow squall with wind and rapidly dropping tempera-tures.

To make matters worse, folks just coming into town or just leaving had no clue. They were driving quickly, braking suddenly as the vehicle ahead put on its brakes.

I elected to slide down Main Street to the intersection at Dunkin Doughnuts and then crawl home on the flats. Traffic was backed up at the intersection with Colrain Street where a fender-bender had occurred. I put the car in second, groaned down to the stop light still showing green, and hung a left on Green River Street to Mill.

I made the rest of the journey at a speed of twenty to thirty miles per hour. I could hear the impatient exhalations of the driver in the SUV behind me, but I didn't care. I felt in control of the car and safely on my way home. At the Cheapside turn, everyone behind me let out a collective sigh of relief as they proceeded south on Routes 5 and 10.

# HEADING SOUTH

woodstove, I cranked up the heat in the sunroom and sat there watching the developing blue rim of the bowl of the sky.

Then I called my mother-in-law in Florida to confirm the details of my trip for the coming school vacation.

I pulled into my driveway and put the car into the garage. After putting a log on the

## THIS WILD PLACE

# February Passions

BY KARL MEYER

**GREENFIELD** - The snow arrived like a freight train, on 45-mile-per hour southeast gusts that ratcheted around to west, then north, in the space of 20 minutes. Visibility plummeted to 500 feet. Temperatures plunged ten degrees in the space five minutes. Ninety foot maples swayed and creaked; branches skittered against the house.

I was grateful to be indoors, with a clean view on what wind and clashing air masses can do. All life seemed to



JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO

Footprint in the Snow

see **WILD** pg 7

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WEST ALONG THE RIVER

# Ice Fishing on the Arctic Circle

BY DAVID BRULE

**ERVINGSIDE** - Just when we were thinking we'd have an early spring, with the February thaw at the beginning of the month, a blast of frigid weather blew down from the plains of Quebec with 0 degree temperatures and swirling white-out conditions. And now, in the last part of February, it's still up and down in the 50s with a promise of another roller-coaster plunge into the teens. Such is New England weather.

This has been the Winter of the Jay here in Millers Falls. Every morning they pour out of the sky, some 30 strong, flooding the snowscaped garden with blue. Waking from the sea of pines on Mineral Mountain, and from the marsh island grove they come, brash and bold in the steel grey cold of a February morning. Others may boast of their redpolls and grosbeaks, but we can boast of our jays. The very spirit of winter here on the edge of the woods - clannish and jaunty survivors, flashy and proud - they wing in like clockwork, resilient and undaunted by the cold and icy rain or the snow squall, they bob and leap over the corn on the February snow crust.

These winter thoughts, plus

an occasional hour spent on the H. D. Thoreau journals from Walden, put me in the mind for a saunter, as Thoreau took daily. So it's off again to Barton's frozen Cove for a late afternoon's winter walk. Standing out on the ice among the fishing shacks, with the sun going down over the windswept tundra surface of the Cove, and the sweep and sway of the lofty pines on the far shore, suddenly I hear, welling up from the frozen landscape, the tinkling sound of the *balalaika*, the rising chorus of the theme from Zhivago that echoes over the emptiness. My saunter comes to a halt, and I catch myself beginning to want to rise up on my toes to dance and spin in a waltz when... Whoa! Stop the music! This isn't a movie; this isn't Karelia; it's only the frozen Cove.

But it's already too late, my Thoreau saunter has turned into a train ride through the dark, plunging into northern Russia.

Somewhere in between the *glasnost* and *perestroika* of the 90s, I wound up on that train on the Murmansk - St. Petersburg line, whistling through the Russian winter night, with legendary Russian teacher Jude Wobst of Leverett and twelve

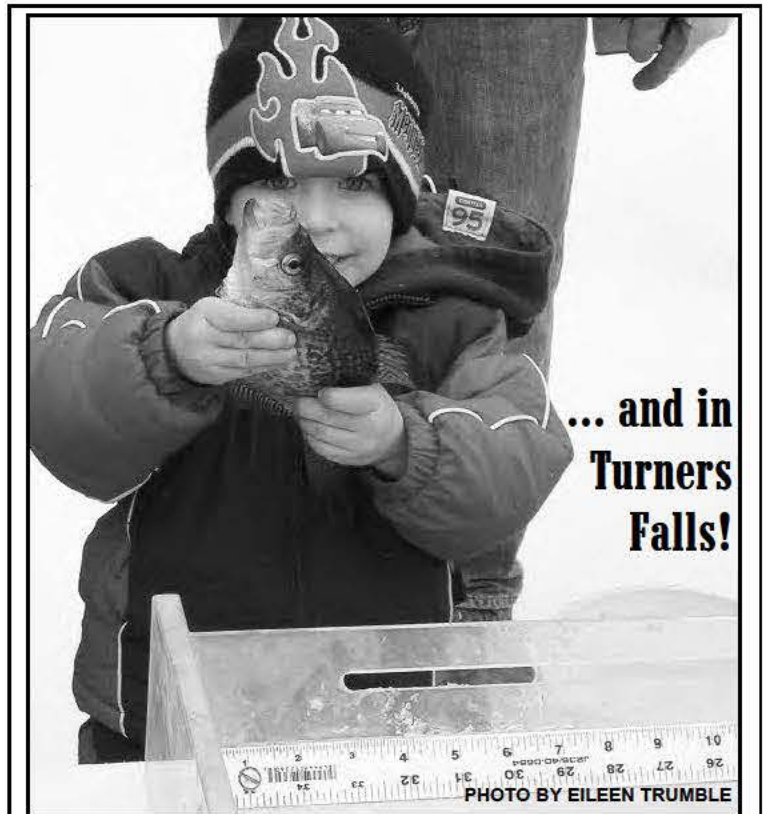
exchange students in what was becoming the post-Soviet Union. We were on our last leg of a journey to Karelia, with jet lag pulling us deeper into hallucination. We had bunks on the train, but we couldn't sleep: we were traveling in a car with an itinerant gypsy circus, so the night was filled with music, performing dogs, cognac, and hilarious stories in an incomprehensible tongue! The only break in the action was a sudden halt in the middle of nowhere because our car was suddenly full of smoke.

We all piled out onto the windy steppe lands wondering if in this corner of Russia, the Cold War was alive and well and we were about to be transferred to Siberia, or worse. It turned out that a grandmotherly peasant woman (*a babushka*) had felt it was time for tea and had fired up her samovar in the corridor - that had sent the smoke through the car and stopped the train.

Back into the smoky car we went, the gypsy *joie de vivre* recommenced, with more stories and dance. And this was only our first day in Russia!

Days and weeks flew by that

see **FISHING** pg 8



... and in Turners Falls!

*Corbin Leb, age three, placed third for the largest fish, a Calico that was 10.75 inches long, during the annual Ice Fishing Derby held by the Montague Elks Lodge #2521 in Turners Falls on Sunday, February 17th from 8 a.m. to noon. The competition was for children up to the age of 14. Twenty nine children competed, with the youngest being 13 months old. Following the derby a luncheon was served at the Lodge with cheese burgers, hot dogs and potato chips. After the luncheon, annual event chair Paul Demers presented plaques to all of the children; those who caught fish and those who did not. In addition, cash prizes and gift certificates were awarded to the children. It was a nice day with some early sun, low wind, temperatures in the 20s, and bald eagles flying nearby.*

**WILD** from page 6

have stopped within the blasting squall. But a tiny movement caught my eye on a tree trunk just 40 feet away. I waited for a wall of snow to roar by on a powerful gust, and then fixed my eyes on the tiny, halting movements of a white breasted nuthatch as it fed, nonchalantly and upside down, picking cached seeds and spider eggs from the tree bark, as a hurricane swirled about it.

It's always hard to pin down February. It's a transition month in the way that March has always been touted. February can blast a winter blanket across the landscape, or spread mild, afternoon sun across a windless day, offering a most exquisite promise of spring. From a landscape perspective this month has been a real challenge - snow, thaw, pounding rain, ice. It's been a slog for animals and humans alike.

Yet for a nuthatch this day's

fury seemed like a mere speed bump. It was built for just such weather. With a cylinder of wood for habitat, it navigated that tree bark like an ancient mariner, keeping in the lee of the wind as its fury shifted to cover nearly all points of the compass. Only for a moment or two did I ever notice the little gray and white gravy boat halt as the snow swirled, but then it began scratching up and down the tree bark again, in the calm, jerky movements that so inimitably make nuthatches themselves. It shifted around my idea of a bird that I sometimes view, unfairly, as a dim but amusing bulb.

Despite February's weather, or more likely because of it, this is the month that animal passions are renewed. It's pairing and mating time for many creatures. Those simmering longings cloaked in St. Valentines Day have a deep connection to our pagan, animal evolution. For some

animals those passions begin even earlier. I noted a pair of bald eagles soaring languidly over Greenfield as I stood on the common on Saturday, January 19th.

Of other pairings that are easy to note in February, red-tailed hawks sit side by side on branches along highway strips at this time. They'll be warming eggs by late March. Great horned owls are likely already doing so, and ravens can be spotted in soaring and searing display flight, trying to impress potential mates along steep banks and mountainsides.

Skunks, raccoons, and squirrels are all pairing at this time of year. Watch for the active, hand-like tracks of raccoons in neighborhoods and along streams, while the dainty, finger-sized trails of skunks, along with their lingering perfume, may show up around basement foundations and trash bins. Gray squirrels are fun to watch now as they

perform their fluid, acrobatic chases across arboreal highways. It's mating time. Down on the snow pack the more delicate tracks of gray and red foxes wind through woods and field-openings in pairs. These canines are bonding and searching out potential south-facing den sites to excavate for their pups, which will come in early spring. Coyotes, too, follow a similar pairing and breeding cycle: their larger tracks are intertwining puzzles in the February woods.

With the thick crust on the snow it's not a bad time to have claws if you're a forest hunter. And for bobcats and fishers, there is always the option of stalking, hunting, and pouncing from trees. Both of these creatures mate this month.

Of the larger forest dwellers, it's hard not to sympathize with white-tailed deer. If you watch their tracks across this year's glaze you can

see where hooves leave long scratches on the snow pack, failing to gain footing as they move uphill. It's toughest perhaps for the pregnant does. February is when this small-hooved species seems least adapted to northern winters. They make up for it, though, by breaking well-used deer trails through the crust, and visiting sunny, tamped-down deer yards to rest.

As a symbol of February's great and rising passions, maple sugaring gets underway this month. Watch for the drips of sap onto pavement from the broken branches of roadside maples on warm afternoons. If you're lucky you might find the flutterings of chickadees and kinglets hovering momentarily to sip sweet drips from the end of a broken branch.

*Cooling thought: Get your own local sap at one of those sugar shacks.*



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**FISHING** from pg 7

February. Nights filled with music and dance, days were taken up by classes at our partner School #17 in Petrozavodsk, the capital of Karelia. At one point in our month-long stay, my hosts determined it was time for me to go ice-fishing. Being in Karelia, whose nearest neighbor is Finland (indeed this region has changed hands so much over the centuries that most people speak both Finnish and Russian, just in case), ice fishing, even if we were near the Arctic Circle, appeared to be a little less weird than the other things they had had me do so far, so I figured, why not?

So Jude and I headed north. (As if you could go farther north! You mean there's more?) We were already closer

to Murmansk than I thought was necessary. We made our way in the Russian-manufactured car through the frozen emptiness to a small village set in the vast whiteness on the edge of a lake. On go my Sorel Arctic Pack boots, my good-for-30-below down jacket, a heavy wool ski hat made in Quebec, union suit underneath all that, and off we go? Not so fast, *tovarich!* My Russian hosts felt my clothes were not suitable for the climate, so, off came Sorel boots, my good-for-30-below down jacket, my French-Canadian ski hat. They let me keep my long johns, though. Onto my head was placed a huge Russian fur hat (with the ear flaps loose, of course, and ready to flop in the air with every frozen step). My down jacket was replaced with a big sheepskin affair, and my

Sorels became knee-high *valenki*. These were thick felt peasant boots that actually were fun to wear in the freeze-dried snow. Thus clad, out I went onto the frozen lake.

Slowly it dawned on me that my jovial hosts were laughing and gesticulating in a Russian I couldn't understand, but I was beginning to get the point. They were totally attired from head to foot with the latest hi-tech Arctic gear, ready for fishing in the frozen North, and I looked like a survivor from the 19th century or at least ten years ago, which is just about the same, in Russia. After walking a half mile out on the ice, and after the hilarity had died down, we checked the various fishing holes where lines, and even nets, had been sitting for a while. We jigged and re-baited, sat on pails for awhile, caught a few perch-like fish and some unappetizing sucker-like things, declared it a good day on the ice and went home... to the sauna. Something I hadn't expected. So for the next hour, I burned in searing dry heat, got flailed with stingingly refreshing birch branches by the other guys (was this a kind of revenge for us winning the Cold War?), then a heart-stopping roll in the snow. By then the sun, which never did

get more than a foot over the horizon, was slipping even lower, and I was ready for a drink. I figured I had earned it.

So back we trudged to the wooden cottage in the wooden village where the women had spent the day drinking tea, telling stories, and waiting. Like horses to the barn, my hosts headed to the warm kitchen and the vodka. So, alternating cups of tea and glasses of homemade vodka, along with pickles and *pirozki*, the rest of the afternoon slipped by, and eventually we headed back, a few miles south, to what was at that time considered civilization.

The sequel to the fishing adventure came a week later at our farewell ceremony. I had practiced my speech in Russian for weeks. Never one to fail to grasp the obvious significance of the moment, I realized who I was giving my speech to. They were Russians, recent Communists of some shade or another, and they were my age, with children in our program. I evoked growing up in a small town on the Connecticut River in the 50s and 60s, growing up under the fear of nuclear annihilation. My Russian counterparts grew up under the same fears too. Only, where I was haunted by Russian Communists, they

were convinced the Americans would one day come to kill them. Yet, I was stunned by the fact that there I was, talking to them in my halting Russian, of how important it was that we were all there in that same room, and that having feared each other all our lives, we had been finally able to discover that we had shared the same fears and now shared the same hopes for the future of our children. It was as though the door had been opened and we could see into the room that had been closed for so long.

What were the odds that we would meet face to face in a schoolroom, after a lifetime of Iron Curtain, Brinkmanship, a policy actually called MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction), the Cuban Missile Crisis, Krushchev assuring us "We will bury you!" and those grim-faced party leaders on the Kremlin Wall, with their parade of missiles on Red Square? Yet there we were. Talking about the new peace, making plans, embracing new friends for life.

From there, we went straight to the Stalin-era train station, still adorned with the hammer and sickle, clouds of smoke and noise rising up as we boarded the train for Moscow. Our new friends ran alongside the train as we pulled away, waving and blowing kisses, like in the movies...

Those images fade in slow motion, I find myself back on the ice alone, wind and snow squall rising. Dusk is falling on the Cove; there's just me out there among the fishing shanties, as the eagle settles in a bare tree on the edge of the ice and a few crows head for the shelter of the pines for the night. Walking back to shore, with the Russian vision still in my head, I think of our two countries again, now run by two angry little men, when we need giants. In the gathering dark, I swear I can hear the distant sound of a door closing.



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~ J.R.R. Tolkien

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**NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD**

# Credit Cards, Security and Energy on Gill's Agenda

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

In addition to considering the same financial woes faced by many towns in Franklin County, the Gill selectboard spent part of their Tuesday, February 19th meeting weighing the possibility of identity theft and the need for security at town hall.

In recent months, members of the Gill police department have requested a town credit card for departmental purchases, to avoid the tedious reimbursement process for money spent on town related activities and training. When this topic was last brought to the selectboard's attention, they

decided town administrative assistant Tracy Rogers would apply for a card in her name, to be kept at the town hall. However, due to the possible issue of identity theft, this idea was nixed.

Subsequently, the idea of having three different cards in the names of the three different town employees who might need them was also turned down. "This gets too involved," said selectboard member Nancy Griswold. "We just have to go with reimbursement, unfortunately," agreed board member Ann Banash.

This led to a discussion of security for town hall, perhaps

recalling the recent city hall shooting in Kirkwood, MO. In Gill, when town or board meetings take place, there can be a steady flow of foot traffic that is hard for town employees or board members to monitor. The other side of the coin are the nights when town employees are working late in the building by themselves. "It can be kind of an eerie thing when you're here by yourself," said Griswold, who also serves on the board of assessors.

While a town employee can simply lock the doors if they are working in town hall by themselves, state law dictates that a public meeting place must

be accessible during open meetings.

The proposed solution is to install doorbells in the hall to help keep track of public comings and goings during scheduled meetings. "Having a door bell is really kind of a good idea anyway," added Griswold.

**In Other News**

The Franklin Regional Council Of Governments has presented towns in the area with the "Pioneer Valley Clean Energy Plan," which encourages local governments to adopt green policies for their towns. The plan includes energy audits for town residents as well as

setting up local energy committees, two ideas Gill had already been considering prior to receiving the proposal. The proposal also encourages the use of energy efficient vehicles and green municipal construction.

On the topic of energy use, the Sandri Oil Company recently sent a bill to the town for work on the boiler that heats town hall. However, the selectboard felt the work would not have been necessary had Sandri cleaned the boiler in the first place, as they had been contracted to do. The town will honor their payment for the cleaning, but will dispute payment for the maintenance work on the boiler.

## Sheffield Read-a-thon in Full Swing

BY BRIDGET SWEET

**TURNERS FALLS** - Sheffield Elementary School has had their own read-a-thon going on. Laurel Rollins, reading specialist at Sheffield said her students had read, "about 2,600 books" in the past six weeks. She hopes the students there will be able to read ten thousand books by the end of the school year.

Tarrah and Ciara of Mrs. Hazlett's class are student

helpers for Rollins, along with Rileigh of Mrs. LeBlanc's class. They spend recess time and morning free time to tally the books. "It's fun to do," said Rileigh. Tarrah initiated the tally, after she kept a similar record of books read during her years at Hillcrest.

Students can continue to read over vacation and bring their reading logs in when school resumes. Tarrah added, "You can write it on blank paper, not just

reading log paper."

Carol Star, Sheffield librarian, said she would give the students in the class that tallies the most books read a free book at the March book fair. There will also be an ice cream celebration, two weeks after winter vacation.

Like their counterparts at Hillcrest, Sheffield students are donating a penny per title for the books they read, with the proceeds going to the Greenfield Family Inn.

## Hillcrest Reads

BY BRIDGET SWEET

**TURNERS FALLS** - Hillcrest Elementary students read 6,539 books within six weeks! Last Friday, they gobbled down bowls of ice cream in celebration, as principal Chris Jutres congratulated everyone warmly.

Mrs. Saylor's first grade class read the most books: 1250. Saylor said, "Everyday (they) read and write in their reading logs. They read at every free minute. We've done this since January. We're proud of the accomplishment."

Asked how it felt to be in the winning class, a student named Keltyn said, "I would like to scream 'cuz I'm so happy! (I) never read that many books in my whole life."

She and four peers stirred their vanilla, oreo and Neopolitan ice cream sundaes in excitement.

Mrs. Funkhouser said her students are still writing down the books they read, even though the six-week read-a-thon is officially over. Her students loved all that reading. *The Berenstain Bears* series were a favorite.

One student in Mrs. Tucker's class admitted shyly, "I read for the ice cream." Whatever the reason, the read-a-thon was a success.

Students gave a penny a book title. The money raised will be donated to the Greenfield Family Inn, with check handed over at Hillcrest's All School Meeting on Wednesday, February 27th.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG**

### Weather Related Accidents

**Wednesday, 2-13**

4:58 p.m. Officer responded to a motor vehicle crash on Main Road in the area of the Gill Store. Arrested [redacted] for operating under the influence of alcohol.

**Thursday, 2-14**

6:25 p.m. Officer responded to a one car motor vehicle crash. One junior operator transported to FMC.

**Friday, 2-15**

6:10 p.m. Officer sent for mutual aid in Erving. Officer assisted in the removal of an unwanted person from a residence.

10:25 p.m. Officer called to a Chappell Drive residence regarding a family dispute. Found to be verbal; no

no action was required.

**Saturday, 2-16**

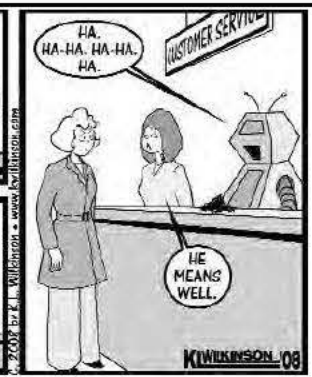
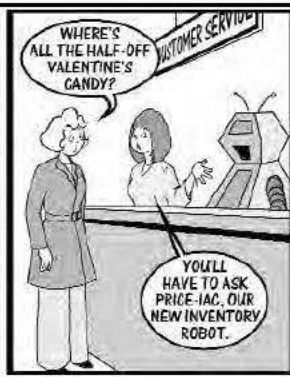
4:20 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on French King Highway in the area of Factory Hollow.

**Sunday, 2-17**

8:50 p.m. Officer requested to a

French King Highway residence regarding an ice fishing complaint. Officer arrived and incident was over with. Report taken.

9:35 p.m. Officer called to Mountain Road regarding a truck in a snow bank. Officer unable to make it up the hill due to icy roads. Tow was contacted. No injuries reported.



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# A Brief History of the Turners Falls High School

BY SANDY MINER

**ERVINGSIDE** - With all the current hoopla on the school budget, elementary reconfiguration, and other crises taking place within the Gill - Montague regional schools, I thought a brief history of the Turners Falls High School adapted from the *Junior Scribe* bicentennial edition in 1954 (compiled by Carolyn Lee Davis) might be of interest to all. The Turners Falls High School was formerly located on Crocker Avenue, where the administrative offices of the Gill-Montague regional schools are now located, in Sheffield School.

## OUR TURNERS FALLS HIGH SCHOOL

In 1781 a high school was proposed. Up until then, there had been no high school in Montague. The school was completed in 1784.

At first there were only 50 students. Their teacher was Miss Rowley and their principal was Mr. J. Bailey. The school was located in Montague Center.

Later, in 1881 there were two high schools, one in Montague Center and one in Turners Falls.

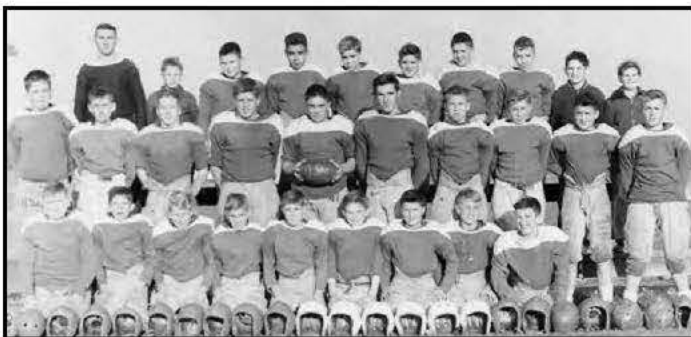
In 1900, more room was needed at the Turners Falls High School. For \$50,000, the Thomas Brothers built another high school. By 1937, it held eight rooms, with a gym and an auditorium to accommodate 800 pupils added to the original building.

The early studies were Greek, Latin, Geology, Physiology and Philosophy. The first school paper was started in 1904. A Girls Glee Club was started in 1907 and Boys Glee Club in 1923. Extra activities, such as a band and orchestra were started later.

The Turners Falls High School moved from Crocker Avenue to its new location on Turnpike Road in September of 1973.

Here are the names of some of the high school principals:

- 1881 F. H. Brown
- 1885-88 Charles S. Davis
- 1889 - 91 Charles Patterson



This photo of the Turners Falls 7th and 8th grade football team was taken in 1953. Pictured are front row, left to right: David Yez, Louis Rudinski, Neil Hale, Gary Lamoureux, Dickie Haigis, Peter McClelland, Chucky Martineau, David Loveland and Rich Koscinski. Middle row: Walter Cyhowski, David Moylau, Doug Oauphinals, Bobby Martin, Capt. Stan Dobosz, Donald Chagnon, Lenny Doton, Wallace Desautels, Tommy Simons and Chester Malinowski. Top row: Coach George Bush, Mgr. Eric Schuhle, Richard Rugg, Paul Letourneau, Francis Charest, Jimmy Richotte, Bobby Miner, Raymond Smith, Mgr. John Kobera and Mgr. Dickie Bourdeaux.

- 1891 - 93 Mark S. Jefferson
- 1893 - 94 Lewis N. Crane
- 1894 - 1903 Lucas Lee Baker
- 1903 - 07 J. D. W. Chester
- 1907 - 10 Arthur C. Monahan
- 1910 - 11 Matthew W. McCann
- 1911 - 14 Robert Cushman
- 1914 - 15 Charles B. Sylvester
- 1915 - 23 Joseph S. Keating - absent 1917 -18 for war work
- 1917 - 18 William K. Schuster
- 1924 - 26 Harry Rollins

- 1926 - 27 Arthur E. Burke
  - 1937 - George F. Wrightson
- At the time this was first printed, Arthur E. Burke was the superintendent of schools and George F. Wrightson was the principal of Turners Falls High School.
- Thanks to MaryAnne Packard and Pat Saczawa at the Carnegie Library for additional research on this article.

## TFHS Honor Society Fashion Show: Feb. 27th

**TURNERS FALLS**—Members of the George F. Wrightson Chapter of the National Honor Society will host a Prom Fashion Show on Wednesday, February 27th, at 7 p.m. in the high school theater at 222 Turnpike Road. The show was rescheduled because of a storm on the original date.

Aliber's Bridal Shop in Greenfield will provide the latest in prom fashions to be modeled by members of the honor society. Local hair stylists will provide styling services.

The fundraiser will benefit Invisible Children Inc., whose goal is to create awareness regarding the plight of the people of Northern Uganda, caught in the midst of a civil war between the government and Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group that makes extensive use of kidnapping children and making child soldiers.

The juniors and seniors who make up the Turners Falls High School honor society are academically gifted students involved in extra-curricular and community activities. The fashion show is one of their community services.

Tickets for the fashion show are \$5 each and will be available at the door.

For more information, call Turners Falls High School at 863-7200.

## SERVICE from pg 1

lance service for those communities. Depending on how the terms of the lease-to-buy contracts for the ambulances are written, and even figuring the added costs of insurance, training, licenses and fees, it's still fair to say the ambulance service brings in more than double what it costs to run for his department, Annear said.

Annear said his total operating budget request for the fire department and ambulance service for the coming fiscal year is about \$820,000. He said the \$400,000 in revenue brought in annually by the ambulance service "is a big help" in meeting the department's overall budget needs, and enabled the fire department "to lower the effect on the overall tax rate by \$1," when full paramedic service was added in the early 1990s. The town of Orange has "basically always had municipal

ambulance service," he said, with the police running the service before the fire department took it over in the 60s.

Annear said that 61% of the 2200 calls that came into the Orange fire department last year were for ambulance rescue or EMS service.

In Turners Falls, Mark Allen said, "More than half the times we are called out at the fire department, it's a medical problem or a medical emergency." When these calls come in, the Turners Falls fire department is often the first responder to the scene, Allen continued, but state regulations limit the role the department can play. In responding to a medical emergency, the fire department can provide services like resuscitation or defibrillation, for example, but it cannot transport the person suffering an emergency to the hospital. They must wait for the BHS

Ambulance Service to arrive; that is the Greenfield company the town contracts with presently.

Allen said if the prudential committee decides to add an ambulance service for Montague, it will result in additional calls to the department, since some Montague medical calls are now routinely directed to BHS. He said it would likely result in increased hours for staffing, and at least one new vehicle, with attendant insurance, training, and related costs. But he maintained it would be a money-maker for the department.

In developing the proposal, Allen said he and other members of the committee called fire departments that maintain ambulance services in other Massachusetts towns, to see how the arrangement worked for them. Allen was given the Worcester county town of Douglas to research. He said the

chief there was very satisfied with the dual responsibility of running a fire department and the town ambulance service. In fact, Allen said, "The chief said very clearly the ambulance service is supporting the fire department."

Allen said that the Prudential Committee first began looking into the possibility of establishing an ambulance service for the town of Montague in June of last year, shortly after he was elected. They began by looking into the feasibility of cutting staff and hours at the fire department to reduce expenses, but soon decided to focus on ways of increasing revenue instead, and the idea of forming a town ambulance service topped that list.

Asked what role the Montague Fire Department would play in a townwide ambulance service, Allen said the Turners Falls Fire Department would provide ambulance ser-

vice for the entire town, and hoped to set up a meeting with the Montague Fire Department to discuss the details of that. He said the Turners Falls department would provide the outlay for vehicle, staffing and equipment, and related expenses, and would consequently keep the profit from the revenue generated by the ambulance service.

Montague Fire Department chief John Greene expressed doubts about the plan. "It would be way too expensive," he said. "The service we're getting now is at a reasonable price, and it's good service. The number of people they would have to add, and the equipment they would have to buy, it would be way too expensive. That's my personal opinion."

Greene said he would be happy to meet with the Turners Falls department to go over details of the plan.

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**ART** from pg 1

also how well the state believes we can do. I commend the work Lisa did on the grant application."

The jurors felt much the same way. Among the many laudatory comments were these: "A great sense of grassroots energy came through in the proposal;" "the project partners are to be commended for supporting and engaging arts related businesses and artists;" "the effects of cultural economic development efforts were clearly becoming more evident and were having a positive impact on the town."

Although she had hoped for slightly larger dollar amounts, Davol said she was not unhappy about getting almost all she had asked for in her application. "I'm quite pleased we got as much as we did." But she also pointed out that at least 80 per cent of the \$40,000 must be matched by other sources, with 20 per cent from in-kind contributions. She feels confident that, as they have

over the last two years, RiverCulture will be able to raise 100 percent of the matching funds. So far the town of Montague has committed matching funds of \$20,000 for this year and \$15,000 for next year. Businesses are also expected to continue their support for RiverCulture.

According to Davol, RiverCulture has "lots of exciting plans for the coming year." Among the events the community can look forward to is another block party. Last year's party was a terrific hit in the community, and Davol is looking forward to making it bigger and better this year. She's even thinking about reprising the fabled Avenue A Dog Parade, an Ariel Jones production from August of 2002. Perhaps this year, the temperature will stay below 100 degrees. If not, we'll need more water bowls.

As usual, Davol added she is hoping volunteers will come forward to work on both the block party and the parade. "Our great

volunteers, some who serve on committees, some who just come out to work on one event, make RiverCulture what it is," said Davol.

Other planned activities include a series of concerts in Peskeomskut Park, and a sculpture park and 3-D workshop. Of course, the activities such as the triennial art walks, Hallmark Museum talks, and events in partnership with the Discovery Center and the Brick House will continue, and RiverCulture will support the production of a general purpose program guide for the Shea Theater.

The creation of a sculpture park will take place on the site of what was formerly the Dubois Garage (now owned by the town) at the corner of Third Street and Canal. Last year, the site was cleared with the assistance of the Montague DPW, but winter delayed further progress on the sculpture park. But this year, the hope of the sculptors involved, among them Jack Nelson, Joe Landry and Jay Pope, is to spon-

sor a series of 3-D workshops for local teens, and to see some locally-produced sculpture erected on location.

It's these kinds of events, not to mention the laundromat fashion show at Suzee's, that sparked the awards panel to note they "were confident that the combination of programs with a successful track record, and the introduction of new ones, would grow the audience for cultural activities in the town." Growing the audience for cultural events is, in fact, a major aim of RiverCulture. To this end, RiverCulture intends to use some of its funding to hire a marketing consultant to assess how RiverCulture can best market itself. A separate marketing study is also planned for the Shea. Davol also said she is pursuing making RiverCulture a non-profit (501C-3) corporation. This would allow the organization to receive other grant money, and allow donors to get a tax write-off.

It's not just Davol who is

delighted with the award; Eileen Dowd, a member of the steering committee, said she was "excited and pleased" that the Adams Program had seen fit to award RiverCulture another two years of funding. "This is a compliment to Lisa's hard work, and that of the many volunteers who have made RiverCulture a success. Everyone deserves kudos." She added, "I also want to thank Ann Hamilton, of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, who has offered her support, knowledge and expertise every step of the way."

Selectboard member Patricia Pruitt, who serves on both RiverCulture's executive and steering committees, noted the news of the award "was wonderful for Montague and Turners Falls. It assures the continuity of a vibrant cultural life in downtown Turners, which is a benefit to the whole town. I'd like to say thank you to Lisa and to everybody who has volunteered to make RiverCulture happen."



**GILL** from 1

"We want to satisfy as many needs as possible," Booth said. The Gill Store is currently zoned for retail use, and will need a special permit from the ZBA to re-open with more of a restaurant focus, serving dinner.

For the most part, the residents who showed up at the hearing were enthusiastic in their support of the plan. "Since the store closed, it's felt like a ghost town when I drive through Gill Center. It really added a sense of community, and I miss it a lot," said Lynn Tomb.

Echoing her remarks, Jeff Coulson added that there has "always" been a store at 326 Main Road. "As a town, that has been our heart. It has always been there, since I moved here 40 years ago. A month after it closed, it was an instinct for me to stop by, even if I didn't need milk or bread. I think we need to try and find a solution that works for everyone."

However, some hesitation was registered about Booth and

Greenough's new plan for the store, which could possibly increase traffic, as well as exacerbate issues that had been present before the store closed, specifically idling delivery trucks and the crowded parking situation in the center of town. Jim Tomasi commented, "I've been here twenty-five years; I've brought up three kids here. I'm very supportive of having a store, but what he wants to do, I just don't think this is the area for it."

Tomasi, who lives across the street from the store, went on to express concern about idling delivery trucks that blocked his view when he pulled out of his driveway, and the possibility of poor behavior on the part of patrons. Tim McCabe, who also lives in the center of town, took a similar stance. "I'm the closest thing there is to another abutter to the store. There aren't a lot of you who will be on the receiving end if something goes wrong. My inclination is to say, 'Yeah, let's do this,' but I hope we'll be listened to as neighbors."

Along with questions about traffic and parking, the issue of the wine and beer pouring permit that Booth and Greenough had applied for was a source of concern for some. Zoning board member Larry Underwood stated, "At the risk of appearing like a prude, I'd rather have people package up [their alcohol] than be carted home in a wheelbarrow."

Under Greenough and Booth's ownership, the store had a package license for beer and wine, but they recently allowed the package license to lapse. Tomasi said, "No one will want to live here if there is a pub across the street. What is it going to do to property values?"

In response, Booth said, "Just because we're serving alcohol doesn't mean it will be out of control. I'd like it to be a classy place. You have given me a lot of good advice and we want to work as closely with our neighbors as we can."

Alluding to Underwood's comment, fellow ZBA member

Tupper Brown said, "I pick up many cans and bottles alongside the road, from people buying beer and nips up at Jan's Package Store and then throwing the empties out their car window so no one will know what they've been up to."

Some at the meeting noted Booth and Greenough are locals with a personal stake in the community. "If these owners can't make a go of it, who is the property going to be sold to and for what use? The store is something that made a lot of us very happy. I think we can make our neighbors happy, make sure the parking and traffic is safe. I really think it's important for our town," said Dorothy Storrow. "Alden and Lissa are the ones who are taking the greatest risk; they were hit pretty hard by the road construction," added Coulson. "If they sell it, who knows who the next people in these chairs will be?" added Peter Jenkins.

Later, Brown said, "My view, from the perspective of an

increasingly ancient person, is there is something valuable about having a store you can walk to, or even get a meal. I think we have the facts here, and I urge us to keep moving forward on it."

The hearing went on for two and a half hours, until all had spoken. As it stands, the zoning board of appeals will review the information presented to them, and will continue the hearing at a later date.



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**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG**

**Subject Located**

**Tuesday, 2/12**  
10:30 a.m. Medical emergency on North Street. Assisted ambulance.  
Wednesday, 2/13  
4:40 p.m. Report of street flooding in area of High Street. Town Hwy Dept. notified.  
**Thursday, 2/14**  
11:45 p.m. Report of loud snowmobiles in area of Mountain Road.  
Friday, 2/15  
6:00 p.m. Disturbance on Ridge Road. Matter handled.  
**Saturday, 2/16**  
2:15 a.m. Suspicious person in woods on Ridge Road, yelling and causing a disturbance. Unable to locate same.

**Sunday, 2/17**  
11:35 p.m. Report of motor vehicle accident in Erving Paper Mill parking lot.  
**Monday, 2/18**  
1:20 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on Lester Street at River Street.  
6:15 p.m. Report of male subject blocking traffic at Ridge Road. Subject located and advised to stay out of the road.  
**Tuesday, 2/19**  
12:12 a.m. Criminal application issued to [REDACTED] for operating a motor vehicle without insurance, without an inspection sticker and with a revoked registration.

**SHEA** from pg 1

go down, and we're off to a not so distant land, somewhere between Turnpike Road and Albuquerque.

Back flipping teens, twirling cheerleaders and a chorus of middle- and high-school-aged singers open the action. In a *Grease*-reminiscent twist, stars Gabrielle Montez (Kristina Boguslawski) and Troy Bolton (A.J. Maroney) tell classmates about the winter break, which included meeting a new love interest. Audience members behind us quietly sing along to the opening song as Gabrielle and Troy remember New Year's Eve.

In their quest to meet up again the two run afoul of the deliciously eccentric high school drama instructor, Ms. Darbus (played by Michelle Rooks). She's flamboyant, she's dramatic, she's over the top, and simply marvelous.

Bubbly, fluffy Sharpay Evans (Caylin Lee) provides comic relief in her sheer cattiness, but Gabrielle manages to hold her own, focusing on her own considerable strengths.

Detention finds Chad Danforth (Aaron Johnson) inch worming across the stage as Troy monkeys around and Gabrielle reluctantly joins the

Science Team. The "Ball of Noise" defies definition. Go see (and laugh) for yourself.

As the song "What I've Been Looking For" opens, AlysonRose's eyes grow ever bigger. "I know this song, Momma!" And my daughter is now the one singing along.

Students in East High begin breaking out of molds as the cute brainy girl and the basketball star become stars of the high school musical, causing Sharpay and her brother Ryan (Tyler Conroy) to seek a way to fix everything. The result? Sharpay with pie in her eye.

Gabrielle and Troy each come to realize they have found a treasure in the other - a true friend who accepts you for who you are - something very rare in high school. As in high school, however, heartbreak goes hand-in-hand with triumph, but in the end Gabrielle and Troy prove that being true to yourself is the only truth that matters.

Ja'Duke's production met with a rapturous audience response. Eight-year-old Bella reported, it's "kind of different from the movie, but I really liked it."

"It's really fun," agreed nine-year-old Julia, who's seen the Disney original and the sequel made for TV movies.


The teeniest theater-goer,

four-month-old August, didn't make a peep through the entire show. "It's the soundtrack to our lives," his mother confided. "His sisters listen to the music all the time. He was bouncing right along to the songs."

Director Kimberly Waynelovich was very pleased with the performance. "It went really well," she said. "To have kids this age perform, kids in high school, they have to be able to act, sing and dance, and that shows their training, and how hard they work.."

Asked what made her bring *High School Musical* to the Shea, Waynelovich said the students first brought it to her attention. "They brought the CD in, and a lot of them were wanting to do it."

She said that all of the kids in the show are students of the Ja'Duke Center for Performing Arts, and the studio is always open for new students. "Having students be able to get out and see live shows, and having the opportunity to act is just great. There's a need for the arts, and kids can be part of it."

Ja'Duke's production of Disney's *High School Musical* will run for a second weekend, Friday, February 22nd and Saturday, February 23rd at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, February 24th at 2:00 p.m. 

**MCTV Schedule: Channel 17 Feb. 22nd - 28th**

Eagle Cam:  
Friday 1P-5P; Saturday 130P-5P; Sunday 130P-5P; Monday 1230P-5P; Tuesday 12P-5P; Wednesday 11A-5P; Thursday 1P-5P  
If We Have a Signal You Will Have a Picture  
**Friday, February 22**  
8:00 am Common Man: Stephanie Marshall  
9:00 am Montague Select Board (2/19/08)  
10:30 am Underground Credits  
12:00 pm Western Mass Democrat: Chris Forgey  
6:00 pm Bermanke  
7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting (1/29/08)  
9:00 pm Chronicles of Czesostochowa: Vol 28  
9:30 pm The Dancing Princess  
10:30 pm Eaton: Do Ryu Ichi San  
**Saturday, February 23**  
8:00 am Bermanke  
9:00 am GMRSD Meeting (1/29/08)  
11:00 am Chronicles of Czesostochowa: Vol 28  
11:30 am The Dancing Princess  
12:30 pm Eaton: Do Ryu Ichi San  
6:00 pm Montague Update  
7:00 pm Community Land Trusts in Action  
8:00 pm Denmark the View the Vision  
8:30 pm Discovery Center: Fossil Tracks  
9:30 pm Independent Voices 42  
10:00 pm Flight  
10:30 pm On the Ridge: New England Brush Wolf Hunting  
**Sunday, February 24**  
8:00 am Montague Update  
9:00 am Community land Trusts in Action  
10:00 am Denmark the View the Vision  
10:30 am Discovery Center: Fossil Tracks  
11:30 am Independent Voices 42  
12:00 pm Flight  
12:30 pm On the Ridge: New England Brush Wolf Hunting  
6:00 pm Wisdom Way Solar Village  
7:00 pm Underground Credits  
8:30 pm Refusal  
9:00 pm Preachin the Blues  
10:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson

**Monday, February 25**  
8:00 am Wisdom Way Solar Village  
9:00 am Underground Credits  
10:30 am Preachin the Blues  
11:30 am Carlos W. Anderson  
6:00 pm Chronicles of Czesostochowa: Mass for Mr. & Mrs. Lensey  
6:30 pm Cities and Towns Build our Economic Future  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live)  
9:00 pm Senses of Place  
10:30 pm Sustainable Energy  
**Tuesday, February 26**  
8:00 am Chronicles of Czesostochowa: Mass for Mr. & Mrs. Lensey  
8:30 am Cities and Towns Build our Economic Future  
9:00 am Senses of Place  
10:30 am Sustainable Energy  
6:00 pm Over the Falls: Children's Poster Book  
6:30 pm Naturalist: Laurie Sanders  
7:00 pm GMRSD (Live)  
9:00 pm Physician Focus Emergency Preparedness  
9:30 pm Montague Update:  
10:00 pm Independent Voices 43  
**Wednesday, February 27**  
8:00 am Over the Falls: Children's Poster Book  
8:30 am Physician Focus: Emergency Preparedness  
9:00 am Montague Update:  
10:00 am Independent Voices 43  
6:00 pm The Dancing Princess  
7:00 pm Eaton: Do Ryu Ichi San  
8:00 pm Common Man: Jeff Brewer  
9:00 pm Refusal  
9:30 pm Underground Credits  
**Thursday, February 28**  
8:00 am Dancing Princess  
9:00 am Eaton: Do Ryu Ichi San  
10:00 am Common Man: Jeff Brewer  
11:00 am Refusal  
11:30 am Undergrond Credits  
6:00 pm Western Mass Democrat: Chris Forgey  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board (2/19/08)  
9:00 pm Elder Law  
10:00 pm Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony  
11:00 pm Seabrook 1977

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Western Mass Electric Company connected a secondary feed to Riverside in Gill on Wednesday at the intersection of Main Rd and W. Gill Road to avoid Riverside's loss of power every time someone wipes out a pole on Route 2, in Factory Hollow, which happens all too often.

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**THE HEALTHY GEEZER**

# Environmental Health

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. What exactly does "environmental health" mean?

It's a catch-all term that encompasses how your environment impacts your health. It includes how you are affected by public safety issues such as water pollution, and personal habits such as smoking. The subject of environmental health covers just about everything but the influence of genes on your health.

I'm dedicating this column to interesting and useful facts about environmental health:

**POISON CONTROL** - Write this number down: 1-800-222-1222. It's a help number sponsored by the American Association of Poison Control Centers. Call immediately if someone may have been poisoned or if you have questions

about poisons. Trained nurses, pharmacists, and doctors provide emergency treatment advice 24/7. All services are free and confidential.

**CANCER** - Contrary to popular belief, cancer-causing chemicals in the environment cause fewer than five percent of cancer deaths in the United States. Most cancers are caused by family history and lifestyle choices such as smoking.

**IODINE** - If you don't get enough iodine from your diet, the thyroid gland in your neck can grow to the size of a baseball. When this happens, you get what is called a 'goiter.' These became rare after iodine was put into table salt. I recall seeing these often when I was much younger. Haven't seen one in many years.

**WORKER SAFETY** - About 137 workers die daily from job-

related diseases in the United States. This is more than eight times the number of people who die from accidents on the job. Many of these illnesses are caused by chemicals.

**LEAD** - Paint chips, dust, fumes and water containing lead can get into your body. Even small amounts of lead in your system can impede learning and generate behavior changes. Large quantities of lead can be fatal. A simple blood test can alert you before lead poisoning causes significant problems.

**MERCURY** - Mercury is a poisonous metal that can get into your body from eating contaminated fish. This silvery metal can build up in the body and cause health problems. Years ago, mercury was used to shape hats. Factory workers breathed fumes from the mercury, which can damage the brain, liver and kid-

neys. This phenomenon may be what is behind the saying, "mad as a hatter."

**THE SUN** - Deaths caused by melanoma - a lethal form of skin cancer - are increasing by four percent a year. You can shield yourself from the sun's dangerous rays by applying sunscreen, wearing protective clothing and avoiding the sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

**FLUORIDE** - Almost half of all Americans drink water that is either naturally fluoridated or treated with fluorides. This has lowered the incidence of cavities as much as 65 percent. Use fluoride toothpaste.

**CARBON MONOXIDE** - A fire alarm is not enough to protect you in your home. You need a carbon monoxide (CO) detector that you can get at the hardware store. Carbon monoxide is a byproduct of combustion that is produced by a home heating source. If a chimney from your furnace is blocked, carbon monoxide can collect in your home and kill you in your sleep.



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

If you don't have one in your house, get one.

**RADON** - Radon is an invisible, odorless radioactive gas that could be in your home. A naturally occurring gas that seeps out of rocks and soil, it comes from uranium buried in the earth and is itself radioactive. Radon poses a risk of lung cancer. Get your house tested.

**WARNING LABELS** - Read the labels on all house and garden chemicals, even the ones you have been using regularly. The directions change often.

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

## EAGLE WATCH

BY PAT CARLISLE

**GREAT FALLS** - The eagle nest camera is working, thanks to the crew from Northfield Mountain Station and First Light Power! Bob Perry, Dan Ryan, Dan Woitkowski, and Tony Rubinaccio spent many hours hauling replacement batteries and necessary equipment for repairs to the solar panel and wiring on Eagle Island that powers the remote camera above the eagles' nest. Clearing brush and vine entanglements was a big part of the repair job, all performed in very inclement weather.

The solar panel is now standing on level, clear ground for the best sun exposure. The old dead pine that cradles the nest - by some miracle - still bears the weight of several hundred pounds of nest, 75 feet in the air; cables help to keep it standing upright.



Let's put that stick over here!

The eagles at Barton Cove prepare for egg laying! This image was captured by the eagle cam at 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 21st.

We expect eggs to be laid in early March. We are watching the daily action of eagle mom and dad carrying sticks, twigs of white pine and lots of grassy layers to the nest. The *Montague Reporter* and MCTV channel 17 offer viewing times for daily eagle watchers to tune in and follow the progress.

The Great Falls Discovery Center also has a live TV monitor tuned to the eagle nest activity during all daylight hours. Winter hours at the museum are Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with special programs at other times: check their schedule in this week's paper.

Happy eagle watching!

## CALLING ARTISTS

Jury Dates for 4th Annual Great Falls Art Fest Announced

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Brick House Community Resource Center of Turners Falls is sponsoring its fourth annual Great Falls Art Fest on Saturday and Sunday, May 17th and 18th, on the grounds of the Great Falls Discovery Center on Avenue A. Along with a myriad of artists, the Great Falls Art Fest also offers two full days of live local music, fun children's activities, and delicious local cuisine. Proceeds from the event will benefit the community-based programs at the Brick House. The Great Falls Art Fest is a juried festival, which ensures a good balance and wide variety of arts and crafts. The jurying process, which begins February 25th, will continue with sessions on March 10th, March 24th, April 14th, and May 5th. This year's fest will offer artists the opportunity to set up their booths under a large tent or their own booth-size tents.

Artists interested in participating should call Karen Stinchfield at the Brick House (413-863-9576), or visit [www.thebrickhouseinc.org](http://www.thebrickhouseinc.org), to obtain an application or more information. The Brick House supports the well being of individuals, families, and communities in Montague and Gill through economic development, youth development, leadership development, and education.

**Northfield ARTSfest Seeks Artists for Sept. 20th**

The Northfield Arts group is looking for artists and artisans interested in displaying and selling their work at the 4th Annual ARTSfest! The ARTSfest will take place on the grounds of the Green Trees Gallery, on Main Street, in Northfield on Saturday, September 20th, 2008, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. The Artists Application is available online at [www.pvartsfest.com](http://www.pvartsfest.com). For further information: Linda Jacque at 413-498-5874; or via email at: [Jacque2@comcast.net](mailto:Jacque2@comcast.net).

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# JEP'S PLACE: Faith, Hope and Other Disasters Part LXVII

## A NEW TEACHER

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - When a new teacher began teaching at our red brick school that fall, the first thing she did was join us at play. The field across the road from the school belonged to a weekend farmer who did not object to us using it as a playground. We loved to play baseball and

thought our new teacher had come to admire how well we played, the way Miss Pogoda had. We waited for her to express surprise at how far the boys could bat the ball. To our surprise, the new teacher picked up the bat and socked the ball farther than anyone had ever socked a ball before, for a home run.

I'm sure she wanted to show

that she was 'one of us' but she took all the fun out of it. No one felt like playing baseball after that.

The teacher started me in fourth grade. I told her that Miss Pogoda was going to skip me into fifth grade.

"Well, I'm running things now. When I get through with you, you'll be lucky to get through the fifth grade, never mind skipping it."

I'm sure she'd grown sick of hearing about our great Miss Pogoda. As for my performance that year, she was absolutely right. I made all kinds of careless mistakes, could not memorize anything, began chewing my nails and stuttering. Life at home only compounded the problem. Pa was still not working steady, and money always seemed in short supply. I still didn't have enough sense to keep quiet, giving Pa an excuse to vent his frustrations. Whereas school had once been a haven, it now became another source of stress.

When the new teacher cast the Christmas play, I didn't get a part, no doubt because of my stuttering. My stomach began to hurt, and I started wetting the bed. I hadn't done that since I was little. Pa teased me about the skunk coming at night to pee in my bed, perhaps thinking he'd shame me into self-control. I was ashamed all right; I was so ashamed I wanted to die.

Sometimes, no matter how many times I got up at night to make a trip to the outhouse, or

to pee over the back porch railing, by morning I'd wet the bed. We didn't have pajamas and, in winter, I slept in my long underwear. My long johns didn't get changed but once, all winter. I knew I stunk, and the other kids in school were sure to remind me, just in case I didn't know.

The new teacher liked to sneak up behind students who were fooling around, or looking out the window. Despite her full figure, she'd stalk the offender with the stealth of a leopard and give them a chop on the knuckles with a metal edged ruler. She caught me gazing out the window every time.

Both my parents warned me, "Don't ever come home and tell us your teacher hit you because you'll get hit twice as bad at home."

One day, during lunch hour, the teacher checked the gas gauge on her car. The needle lay on 'Empty'. She lit a match to look in the gas tank. I knew a nearly empty tank was far more dangerous than a full one, because of the larger volume of explosive fumes. "Don't put the match near the tank; it'll blow up!" I warned. "Use a stick to measure."

"Mind your own business. I don't need a smart Alec like you telling me what to do."

Why the tank didn't blow up is a mystery to me.

I began having nightmares and walking in my sleep. One morning after a bad night, my sister Emmy said she was afraid I was going to step out

the upstairs window and get killed. Right about then, that didn't sound like too bad of an idea.

One day when I was looking through a humor magazine, I found an entire page picturing various ways to commit suicide. One guy was drinking from a bottle labeled with skull and crossbones. Another one had cut his stomach open and was snipping his guts with a big pair of scissors. An old bearded man held a pistol to his head. Other pictures showed people drowning, hanging, and killing themselves in interesting ways. It was comforting to know there was a way out.

Hanging sounded pretty good. My sisters used to sing, *I Died For Love*, a song about a girl who committed suicide. The words of the song, telling how her father found her, stuck in my mind: "He went upstairs, the door he broke, and found me hanging by a rope."

It sounded like a good way to go. My stomach hurt enough without drinking poison, and cutting up your guts with scissors didn't sound like anything I wanted to do either. Emmy caught me studying the magazine. I told her about my troubles at school and about being sick of being a bad boy all the time. She comforted me and ordered me never to read that magazine again. She stopped singing *I Died for Love*, and said things would get better. They didn't. They only got worse.

- Continued next week

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Any paid subscriber to the *Montague Reporter* may have one free classified ad in 2008, up to 20 words. Contact us at 413-863-8666 or [reporter@Montaguema.net](mailto:reporter@Montaguema.net) (Pay for a second week, get a third week free!)

## Rt. 63 Roadhouse



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Friday, Feb. 22nd - 9:00 p.m.

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## Upcoming at the Great Falls Discovery Center

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Winter hours open: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday & Saturday & by special arrangement

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd

*Before There Were Stores:* Join Gini Traub of DCR to explore rocks and local plants to see how Native Americans and early settlers met some of their everyday needs, like making twine, dye, tasty tea, pot

scrubbers, cutting and scraping tools and more. 1 to 2 p.m.

FEBRUARY 28, 2008

Film & Discussion: *An Inconvenient Truth*. Join the Firends of Great Falls Discovery Center and Refuge staff to see and

discuss this film on climate change. Refreshments available. Donations accepted, 7 to 9 p.m. **THROUGH FEBRUARY 28th** Green River Landscapes by Frank Gregory on Display in the Great Hall.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd**  
Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls:  
*The Mystic Rebels*, Bob Marley  
cover band, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Bill Downes* -  
Acoustic rock, no cover. 9 to 11 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
*The Equalites*, reggae, 9 p.m., \$5  
cover.

Montague Elks Club: Karaoke by  
TNT Productions, Turners Falls,  
8:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY to SUNDAY,  
FEBRUARY 22nd to 24th**  
Ja'Duke Inc. performs Disney's  
*High School Musical* at the Shea  
Theater. Fri. & Sat. at 7p.m. and  
Sun. at 2 p.m. Tickets at the Shea  
Theater box office 863-2281.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd**  
Psychic Fair, The National Spiritual  
Alliance, Thompson Temple, Lake  
Pleasant from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Readings and Reiki healings. Info  
at [www.thenationalspiritualallianceinc.org](http://www.thenationalspiritualallianceinc.org)

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls:  
*Slippery Sneakers*, Mardi Gras  
party - zydeco! 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *TNT  
Productions*, karaoke night, no  
cover. 9 to 11 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
*Hayward Jones Fitzpatrick*, jazz  
that thumps so sweet, 9 p.m., \$3  
cover.

Benefit Concert and Art Auction for  
the Owen Clarke Memorial  
Scholarship Fund at Pioneer Valley  
Regional School, Northfield. Two  
bands: 7 p.m. *the Move* followed by  
*the Galloway & Kelliher Blues Band*.

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*Shorby Jr. is among the works exhibited by Turners Falls sculptor Tim de Christopher, along with other sculptures, drawings and a new work in slate, on display in the East Wing Gallery in the LaFontaine Fine Arts Center, Mt. Wachusett Community College, Gardner through March 20th. Opening reception is Friday, February 22nd, 6 to 9 p.m. "Blank Slate/Clean Slate, is about old doings and new beginnings, forks in the road and second chances. It is about rethinking what we have done and choosing to do it another way. Or, in fact, doing something else entirely," says de Christopher.*

Local artists show and silent auction; 5-9 p.m. Info. 498-5747.

Wendell Full Moon Coffee House:  
*The Pangeans*. One of the Valley's  
favorite World Beat bands brings  
their high energy seven piece  
orchestra to Wendell Town Hall. Info  
at (978) 544-5557 or [www.wendell-fullmoon.org](http://www.wendell-fullmoon.org) Open Mike begins at  
7:30, feature 8 p.m.

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24th**  
Northfield Mount Hermon School  
Orchestra and Jazz Band presents  
their Winter Concert to benefit area  
Meals-on-Wheels programs. 3 p.m.  
in the chapel, Northfield Mount  
Hermon School, Gill Campus. Free  
admission! Refreshments served.  
Donations accepted.

Textile History Museum of Historic  
Deerfield: Winter Lecture Series.  
*The Basics: Linen and Cotton*, 2  
p.m., White Church Community  
Center, Deerfield. Diane Fagan  
Affleck, Director of Interpretation  
presents, free.

The Dead of Winter Film Series at  
the Montague Book Mill, Montague  
Center. Free film for the frozen: *The  
Station Agent* (2003) *The Station  
Agent* (2003) If you haven't seen it,  
come be surprised; if you have,  
come see it again, 7 p.m. All films  
are free (with a passed hat); food &  
drink available at the Lady Killigrew  
and the Night Kitchen.

Family Dance at the  
Montague Grange,  
Montague Center.  
Brendan Taaffe leads  
simple, happy dances  
paced for little feet. 4 to 6  
p.m. \$4/person, or fami-  
lies \$7 - \$12 sliding  
scale, snack too.

Montague Grange,  
Montague Center: All-  
Comers Contra at 7 p.m.  
Pick up band and open  
mic for callers. 6 p.m.  
pot-luck preceding. Info,  
call April (413) 584-7725.

At The Rendezvous,  
Turners Falls: *Le Monthly  
Cabaret du Voo* (call to  
get yourself on our  
stage!), 8 p.m., free.

Deja Brew, Wendell:  
*Steve Crow* - acoustic  
trio, no cover. 8 to 10 p.m.

**MONDAY,  
FEBRUARY 25th**  
Montague Center Library,  
Evening Sing-a-Long,  
6:30 p.m. Childrens  
Librarian Linda Hickman,  
plays guitar and banjo  
and performs a variety of  
children's music. Info: call  
the Carnegie Library 863-  
3214 during the week, or the  
Montague Center Library, 367-  
2852, on Monday evenings.

Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo,  
Turners Falls, *Chris Bakrises &  
James Dags*, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: ALL SMALL  
CAPS, a night of spoken word. The  
featured readers: Geoff Olsen and  
Alan Davies. Come read your  
poems at our open mic 7 p.m. and  
featured readers at 8:15 p.m.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26th**  
Book discussion led by Linda  
Hickman at Carnegie Library.  
*Omnivore's Dilemma*, by Michael  
Pollan. Join Linda Hickman at the  
Carnegie Library, Turners Falls for  
the first of our Eating Local Series  
programs. 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For ages  
12 and older. Copies of the book are  
available for loan at the library.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
Craft Night, 7pm on. Careful mixing  
knitting and drinking.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27th**  
Slate Roof poets Susie Patlove and  
Paula Sayword, along with guest  
poet Ann McNelly, will read from their  
work at the Leyden Town Hall,  
Leyden, wheelchair accessible. The  
program is free and open to the pub-  
lic, 7 p.m. Refreshments.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
*Montague Brain Exchange* (new  
monthly eclectic gala!), Chris  
Sawyer-Laucannon unravels myster-  
ies of the Mayan Calendar. Will the  
world come to an end? 9 p.m., \$3.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28th**  
Film & Discussion: *An Inconvenient  
Truth*. at the Great Falls Discovery  
Center. View and discuss this film on  
climate change. Refreshments avail-  
able. Donations accepted, 7 to 9 p.m.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls:  
Open mic hosted by Peter Kim,  
Jimmy Arnold with Jim K. All wel-  
come to play, 8:30 p.m. No cover.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29th**  
Potluck & NE Wind Farm information,  
Montague Center. Potluck at 6 p.m.,  
presentation, 7 p.m. of the New  
England Wind Fund Program and  
ways residents can help the Town of  
Montague to qualify for matching  
funds for a renewable energy project.  
House of Chris and Jeanne Mason, 2  
North St, 367-9923

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls:  
*TBA*, rock and roll covers, come  
to dance! 9:30 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
*Invasion* (brit/post-punk/electro DJ  
dance thang), 9 p.m., \$3, cover.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 1st**  
Celtic Heels Irish Dancers Live at  
the Shea Theater, Turners Falls, 6  
p.m. The unique choreography of  
this dance troupe beautifully blends  
the ancestral style of traditional Irish  
Dance with a toe tapping, hand  
clapping, vibrant modern flair!  
Information or reservations, call the  
Shea 413-863-2281.

Arcadia Players present Ian  
Watson, Organist in recital at First  
Church of Deerfield, Old Deerfield,  
7:30 p.m. with a pre-concert talk at  
7 p.m. Tickets and information:  
(413) 534-8888 or [info@arcadiaplayers.org](mailto:info@arcadiaplayers.org).

**SUNDAY, MARCH 2nd**  
*The Grapes of Wrath*, based on the  
novel by John Steinbeck, the film  
tells of the migration of the Joad  
family to California from their dust-  
bowl farm in Oklahoma during the  
Great Depression, 128 min., 3 p.m.  
at the Leverett Library.

The Dead of Winter Film Series at  
the Montague Bookmill, Montague  
Center. Free film for the frozen, *Tom  
Jones* (1963) Tony Richardson's  
kinetic, lovable version of Henry  
Fielding's novel, adapted by John  
Osborne, 7 p.m. All films are free  
(with a passed hat); food & drink  
available at the Lady Killigrew and  
the Night Kitchen.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 14th**  
*The Plow that Broke the Plains*,  
Historic documentary (made in  
1934) depicts the social and econ-  
omic history of the Great Plains  
from the settlement of the prairies  
by cattlemen and farmers through  
the WWI boom to drought and  
Depression; 30 min., 7 p.m. at the  
New Salem Public Library.

**UNTIL MARCH 16th**  
On display at Hallmark Museum of  
Contemporary Photography,  
Turners Falls: Paul Taylor *Themes  
and Variations* at Gallery 85,  
Susan Kae Grant *Night Journeys*  
at Gallery 52 & 56.

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**Sunday, February 24th 7pm**  
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1. JUNO PG13  
DAILY 6:30 9:00

2. THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES PG in dts sound  
DAILY 6:30 9:00

3. THERE WILL BE BLOOD R  
DAILY 7:00

4. MEET THE SPARTANS R  
DAILY 6:45 9:15

5. FOOL'S GOLD PG13  
DAILY 6:45 9:15

6. VANTAGE POINT PG13  
DAILY 7:00 9:30 in DTS sound

7. JUMPER PG13 in DTS sound  
DAILY 7:00 9:30

MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00

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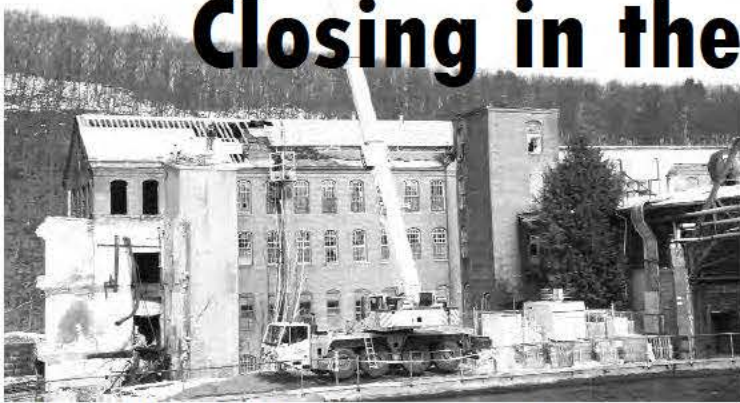
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# Closing in the Strathmore Roof

PHOTOS BY  
JOSEPH A. PARZYCH



**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - Renaissance Builders of Gill are hard at work replacing the roof of Building #1 at the Strathmore Mill, burned in the fire of May 26th that destroyed the 19,000-square-foot four-story Building #10 next door. Lead carpenters, Andy Stevens and Bryan Grunwald, under the direction of job foreman Michael Campbell, have replaced the burned roof rafters with two-by-

ing side of the roof, according to Stevens. Sheathing for the roof consists of 5/8" CDX plywood (C grade = outside layer, D grade = core and 'X' designates 'exterior.' CDX is made with waterproof glue to prevent delamination.)

Building #1 is part of the original mill construction, dating from 1871. The old roof sheathing appears to be tongue and groove one-inch white pine boards. The one-inch boards are



*Bryan Grunwald, left, and Andy Stevens, right, lead carpenters on the Strathmore Roof repair.*

ten and two-by-eight spruce timbers. Some hemlock rafters may be used on the western fac-

planned to virtually the same thickness of the modern 5/8" plywood. Typically, CDX ply-



*Foreman Michael Campbell, installing metal drip edge, works from the basket as Andy Stevens (left) and Bryan Grunwald (right) place plywood sheathing.*



wood is made from spruce or fir. "We'll begin laying the asphalt shingles today," lead carpenter Stevens said, "and we'll have the roof done in a couple of days, providing the weather holds." Look out for that storm blowing up the coast tomorrow, boys. Maybe it will

pass us by.

Since Monday's rain, the weatherman has been cooperating so far this week by furnishing reasonably good, but cold and windy weather.

Campbell applied metal drip edge along the lower end of the roof from the safety of a basket

suspended by cable from a Terex crane, as Grunwald and Stevens placed and nailed the CDX plywood with pneumatic nailing guns.

Wind gusts threatened to blow the men off the roof, especially when carrying the four-foot-by-eight-foot sheets of plywood, like leaf cutter ants toting sections of leaves as big as a sail. Fortunately, the carpenters were secured by tethers attached to harnesses strapped to their bodies, to keep them from falling four stories to the frozen ground, but which would not necessarily keep them from banging into the side of the brick building if they slipped. Not something you want to think about when fighting to keep the wind from blowing the sheet of plywood, and you, off the roof.

The job ran into problems, earlier, when the first crane employed did not quite reach the roof. The second time around, Paul's Crane Service provided a 100,000-pound Terex crane, with 221 feet of boom, that proved to be more than adequate for the job. Caleb Dillensneider operated the Terex crane, formerly owned by Deerfield Valley Construction and Crane service.

## IRAN from pg.1

Outside Legion Post 271, members of anti-war group Code Pink were busy handing out pairs of shoes to people as they entered the hall. Each pair identified a specific Iraqi civilian, with their name, age and date of death. (An estimated 655,000 Iraqis died as a result of the American invasion, according to a 2006 study by Johns Hopkins University. The Bush administration called that estimate wildly exaggerated, but U.S. Central Command famously "does not do body counts" of Iraqis. An Opinion Research Poll in January of this year offered an estimate of 1,033,000 Iraqi civilian deaths as a result of the war.)

Norma Akamatsu, a member of the steering committee for the Coalition gave a brief but enthusiastic welcome to the audience. "I think we've all learned from the rush to war with Iraq. Hopefully we can be on guard against similar exaggeration and manipulation in the situation with Iran. I'll repeat the quote famously garbled by President Bush: 'Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me'."

Michael Klare, professor of Peace and World Security Studies at Hampshire College, said, "My job tonight is to provide a bit of historical and military background to a possible U.S. attack on Iran."

Pointing out the U.S. has been

involved financially and militarily in the region since the end of World War II, Klare stressed, "Although the current administration is more bellicose than some, this is not a secret policy, an ambiguous policy or a partisan policy. We rely on Middle Eastern oil and must rely on it if we are to remain what Bush called an 'oil addicted' nation." Klare, who has authored books like *Blood and Oil* and *Rising Power, Shrinking Planet*, suggested that U.S. foreign policy should be "demilitarized," while America looks for realistic alternatives to oil.

Helfand took the podium next. "I just want to try and put a human face on this policy, if it's carried out to its logical conclusion," he began. Helfand pointed out that U.S. ground forces are presently embroiled in Iraq and Afghanistan. Given that, he said the likelihood is that a war against Iran would primarily take the form of a bombing campaign, with high civilian casualties.

Moreover, "There's a very real possibility that it would not be limited to conventional weapons [due to the fact that the target of the bombings, Iran's nuclear research facilities, are located in heavily reinforced underground bunkers]. The 340 kiloton nuclear 'bunker busting' bombs he speculated would be used in a U.S. preemptive strike against Iran would probably kill a million people

directly, with perhaps 1.6 million secondary casualties to radioactive fallout.

"Now, this isn't the most likely scenario, but it is important to understand that it has not been taken off the table, either," said Helfand. Pausing to let this sink in, he ended his speech by stating, "This would be a crime committed in our name. We would be the Nazis of the 21st Century. We must be firm and resolute that this does not happen."

Amir Mikhchi, who is both an American and Iranian citizen, offered an Iranian viewpoint on the situation. While acknowledging the controversial leadership of Iran's president, Mahmoud Amadinejad, Mikhchi invited the audience to view things from an Iranian perspective.

"Despite all my criticism of Amadinejad and his nuclear policy, there are 160,000 American troops in Iraq. There are 18,000 more in Afghanistan. In the Middle East what the Americans are doing is called genocide. Iranians see their country as being cornered. Who is a threat to whom?"

Mikhchi said, "Look at what has happened in this country since 9/11, with civil liberties, with phone tapping and water boarding. Imagine what it's like in a country under a 24-hour threat of attack. Will this really promote democracy?"

Former Marine captain Tyler Boudreau began his part of the evening's presentation by addressing previous comments by Helfand. "I would like to respectfully disagree with Dr. Helfand. If we go to war with Iran, I can guarantee you ground forces will be used. It's the only way to do it." Boudreau went on to describe how the nature of war desensitizes soldiers. "As a man who has trained thousands of soldiers, there is truth to this. But the training only brings these men to the threshold of war. Once the fighting begins, a soldier has to negotiate moral obstacles on his own."

Boudreau spoke at length of the gulf between what American soldiers have been told they are doing in Iraq and the reality of a war in which civilians are killed as often as enemy combatants. With a bluntness that stilled the room, Boudreau said, "After my first fire fight, I began to crave the elation of the kill. So did the men under me. And with every casualty we took, that increased... There is a disparity there. You cannot help a people you would prefer to shoot. Degradation of humanity is a natural result of war. To survive, a soldier must degrade himself. To support him, we must degrade ourselves as well. What hatred or apathy must I feel to support our troops?"

Boudreau directly addressed the issue of terrorism, which has

been used to justify American military intervention. "I am reminded by people of the threat of terrorism. They ask me, 'What do you have to say about that?' And I say if there are truly a people who hate so deeply, we should work very hard to not become like them, we should guard our consciences." This brought the audience to their feet for the only standing ovation of the evening.

Neal and Olver kept their comments brief. Congressman Neal stated, "Congress has stopped asking questions of this administration. We have to engage the administration every step of the way on this. Democracy is supposed to be noisy."

Congressman Olver called for "robust diplomacy" advocated by a recent Iran study, and reminded the audience, "You talk with your enemies." Recalling a conversation he had with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice prior to the invasion of Iraq, Olver said, "I told the Secretary of State that as many people that are willing to do suicide bombings against the U.S. now, there will be a thousand times more the day after we attack Iraq."

As the meeting broke up, Olver reflected, "Maybe it's only a hundred times as many, but it's basically true. We've created many more terrorists with our actions in the Middle East."